

Minutes - Audubon of SW Florida Board of Directors Meeting held at Rutenberg Park, Ft. Myers on **January 18, 2007**

Present: Pete Quasius (Chair), Gerri Reaves, Vince McGrath, Connie Langmann, Kathie Zunich (Treasurer), Dan VanNorman, Carl Veaux, Sally McPherson and Mary McAuliffe

Meeting began at 7:00 pm. After a welcome and introduction by the Chair, presentations were made by Brie Jamison, Park Services Specialist at Lovers Key State Park and by Pam Jones-Morton, Volunteer. Brie shared photos of turtle nesting, migratory birds and habitat restoration at the park with an invitation for Audubon Chapter members to visit and participate in scheduled activities. Members are welcome to lead bird watching tours.

Pam, a FI Master Naturalist, who has completed all 3 training modules in Freshwater Wetlands, Coastal Wetlands and Uplands, shared her ready-for-travel presentation board. She uses laminated photos and text for a variety of subjects; using materials that are easily removed and attached to meet the location or audience needs.

Pam shared information about the Cornell home study course in Bird Biology. The cost is \$299.50 and includes a 1300 page text book, audio CD, exams and instructor support. Pam would like to take the course and requested the Chapter pay for it.

The business meeting began with a motion to approve minutes (as posted) from the meeting held on 12-21-06 Minutes were approved. Mary McAuliffe agreed to take minutes in absence of Christina who appears to have resigned . Vince to try and find out if we need new secretary.

Continuing problems with mailing list and membership were discussed. Chris Andrews and Maria Q are using MS access to create program to track membership, create mailing list, send out renewal letters, etc. Mailing list about 1800. Vicky Barnhorst (sp?) considering taking over Membership at which point Maria will help with hospitality.

Kathie reported on membership and finances. Annual donations have been made to several organizations (USC, Eco-SWF, SWFCEE, CNC&P, Riverwatch, Friends of Six-Mile Cypress, Estero Bay, RGMC) Discuss at next meeting. List for updated information for new business cards circulated. New design is owl. PQ to order.

Vince asked Pete to add color photos to the online version of Flyways, the chapter's newsletter which is mailed and available on-line. The newsletter is issued 6 times per year. Jan edition, posted to web on Jan 2, still not mailed. Online edition can be enhanced with more pix and stories.

Motion was made & approved for chapter to pay \$250 to become a supporting member of Lee County Parks & Recreation Dept. In return, Chapter gets a free meeting place at Rutenberg Park and Chapter name on their meeting notice flyers. Chapter will co/host event on March 9 at the park.

Sally shared news of her adventure with chapter members aboard the pontoon boat from Manatee World. Highlights were historical information as told by the captain and sighting of wild hogs. The Audubon five chapter SW Florida Regional Conservation Committee meeting was held on board the Delta Lady after the bird watching tour ended. Both events took place on Saturday, January 13th. Details at the Audubon SWFL RCC website www.SWFRCC.org. Thanks to Gerri and Maria for hosting. Raffle proceeds covered expenses.

Pete suggested expanding the chapter's relationship with Manatee World. Chapter could provide a birding expert, book tours, rent the boat for \$650/event and make money.

Details for Annual Meeting on Delta Lady at Manatee World March 7th firm. Maria doing raffle items. Notice posted to website and will be in Flyways. Cost for optional dinner cruise \$30. - Only 100 tickets available - book early. Board at 5 pm. Meeting is at 8 pm on boat after it returns to the dock and is free and open to all members.

Motion was made and accepted for Pete to work with Manatee World to plan 4-6 events/yr to include use of their educational facility/boats.

Pete asked our webmaster, Steve Brookman, to register website names for the chapter at AudubonSWFL.org (.net and .com) for \$10/yr each.. Some local groups have had their website names claimed by commercial interests including Collier Audubon and ECOSWF.

Scholarships and donations were discussed. Scholarship page for website to be posted. The 3rd Annual Audubon Academy will be held March 23-25 at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg. (unfortunately also our Bird-a-thon). Registration and participation costs will be paid by chapter for interested members of the Board. Lodging and travel costs will not be covered or reimbursed.

Dan and Gerri agreed to work together on publicity for Calusa Bird Group; with better exchange of news, events and field trips. Dan asked members to participate in the annual Bird-a-thon, March 24th, and STA-5 bird watching events led by Margaret England, Hendry/Glades Chapter. Photographer will take pix at Feb. 17 trip for our Birding 101 DVDs.

Corkscrew Nature store has Audubon logo gear available.

The Audubon Aviary at Calusa needs repair. Gerri to coordinate efforts by chapter. Donation should be made.

Vince will have a chapter booth display on 2/17 at Rotary Park in Cape Coral for the burrowing owl festival and on 3/3 for the Lee County Bird Patrol. He needs volunteers to help at the booth for these events. Chapter will also participate in Earthday at Koreshan Park April 21, PQ to coordinate.

Motion made & accepted for Pete to address the BOCC at their next meeting to discuss proposed expansion of the Gateway landfill. The alternative to expansion is trucking to the landfill near Okeechobee.

Opposition to coal-fired plant on Moore Haven is being led by SING, among others. The meeting with FPL at Glades-Hendry was postponed but public meeting now scheduled in Moore Haven Feb. 20th. Audubon FL has a draft position on the subject of coal fired plants but neither we nor H/G Audubon has taken position on proposed Glades County project.

Discussion followed about the Mirasol project denied by COE; Letter to COE asking for review approved. Babcock Ranch. Lee County BOCC "denied" request for a special taxing district. If they had approved the request, Lee County would not be responsible for infrastructure costs such as roads, utilities, etc. Instead, the taxing district would levy taxes to pay for these costs. Until land is sold or homes (other) built, Kitson Partnership would pay all costs levied by the special taxing district under regulations set by the state. Kitson has withdrawn COMP and DRI applications for Lee county portion of the project. Charlotte portion of project approved.

Motion was made & approved to offer scholarships for the Cornell home study course in Bird Biology. The first \$300 scholarship will be awarded to Pam Jones-Morton if she meets the requirements. Program to be posted to scholarship page of website.

Meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.