

Howard County Bird Club
A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society
Board of Directors Meeting - Minutes
Thursday, April 28, 2016

Attendance [Presence indicated by check mark (√)]

2015-2016 Club Officers:

President: Robin Todd √
Vice-president: John Harris √
Secretary: Chuck Stirrat √
Treasurer: Cindy Albright √
Chap. Directors: Nancy McAllister (1st yr.) √
Meg Harris (2nd yr.) √
State Directors: Karen Heffernan √
John McKitterick
Kate Tufts √
Past President: Wes Earp

Chapter Committees:

Field Trips: Joe Hanfman
Bonnie Ott
Programs: Jane Geuder √
Conservation: Kurt Schwarz
Newsletter: Howard Patterson √
Records: Jo Solem √
Webmaster: Bob Solem √
Potluck: Kathie Lillie √
Publicity: Allen Lewis
Others:

General Notes

Meeting was held in home of Kate Tufts. Total number in attendance was 13. Attendance at the regular club meeting held April 14, 2016 was 62 people. Sue and Wes Earp gave a program entitled “On the Shores of Gichi-gami... .” Gichi-gami is the formal Ojibwe name for Lake Superior, vice the usage of “Gitchee-gumee” used by Longfellow in “The Song of Hiawatha.”

This regular meeting held April 14 was the annual club business meeting to elect the officers for next year. The slate of officers had been presented by the nominating committee at the March meeting and distributed to the membership by email/mail. The slate presented was President – John Harris, Vice-President – Mary Lou Clark, Secretary – Chuck Stirrat, Treasurer – Cindy Albright, State Directors – Karen Darcy, John McKitterick, and Robin Todd, and Chapter Director – Woody Merkle (1st Yr). Nancy McAllister will be serving the second year of her two year term. Sue Muller, chair of the nominating committee, announced the slate and moved that the slate be elected by acclamation. The motion was passed unanimously. Following the meeting the contact information for the new officers was sent to the MOS Secretary and President for inclusion in the State MOS listing of officers.

Officer’s Reports

Review of Minutes/Secretary (Stirrat): Minutes were approved with minor changes provided by Board members. Latest version of minutes, with changes, were sent to Bob for posting on the website.

Treasurer’s Report/Treasurer (Albright): The Treasurer’s Report for March was sent to Board in advance and is attached. New members continue to join using the automated web application.

President’s Remarks (Todd): No introductory remarks.

Vice-President’s Remarks (J. Harris): No remarks.

Chapter Committee Reports

Field Trips (Hanfman, Ott): Not present. Howard reported that Joe had no one volunteer to lead trips in May. As an experiment Jo and Howard put together a series of “Leaderless” trips and published them in The Goldfinch.

Records (Jo Solem): Jo mentioned that spring migration is in full swing. The Trumpeter Swan photographed by the Holm’s was accepted by the MD/DC Records Committee adding that species to the Howard County list. Albert

and Gail have joined the club. A Glossy Ibis was reported and photographed this week at Elioak Farm by a farm employee. Unfortunately it was on a pond not visible from public areas and was not refound.

Conservation (Schwarz): Kurt was not present and there was no report.

Newsletter (Patterson): Howard reported that he and Jo are taking a break from newsletter activity until the deadline for the September issue in late July.

Webmaster (R. Solem): Bob reported the website is up to date.

State Board Reports

State Board Meeting (Todd, Heffernan, McKitterick, Tufts, Etc.): Robin had contacted the Howard County Conservancy to see if their facility would be able to host the State Board meeting on June 4; however it was already booked. We subsequently learned that no place to hold the meeting on that date was located. Instead the meeting will be held on Saturday, June 11 after the general meeting during the annual MOS Conference in Salisbury.

Old Business

SkyWatch at Mt. Pleasant Update – Robin reported that a final draft of the MOU between HCC & the club and a map & site plan for the proposed SkyWatch at Mt. Pleasant was submitted via Woody Merkle. The Grounds Committee is to meet the next day after our meeting and Robin plans to attend. *Secretary's Note: I have attached the portions of the email reporting on this meeting that Robin sent to the Board right after the meeting.* Presuming the SkyWatch will be approved we agreed to tell the committee they are authorized to spend up to \$5000 in developing the site without seeking further approval. If additional funds are required given the potential cost of signage and/or ongoing maintenance they should submit a request to the Board.

In a related matter Jo reported that Russ Ruffing and Steve Collins are planning to conduct a Howard Big Day on Sunday May 8 as a bird-a-thon to raise funds for support of the SkyWatch at Mt. Pleasant. They will be soliciting pledges from club members, friends, and co-workers. Pledges will be in form of a specific amount per species seen during the day or as a fixed total amount. Bob agreed to put together an announcement of the bird-a-thon for a NEWSGRAM and web site. The announcement will need to use a generic future project as the purpose if the final approval is not received before the event.

Camp Ilchester – Robin reported that Kurt had supported the Camp Ilchester Girl Scout Camp Earth Day celebration on April 24. He had a few volunteers who helped man our exhibit table. Bob Solem brought and set up the display and stayed to man it for a while. Megan Lu, one of the club's few young members, had her feeder watch display set up next to the club table. Kurt was able to show the Great Horned Owls at their nest to a few visitors.

GreenFest – Robin coordinated our participation at the annual GreenFest celebration held at Howard Community College on April 16. He had several volunteers who manned our table. He reported that the event was well attended if not as large a crowd as some past GreenFests.

Brief talk to Master Gardeners at MPEA on May 24th – Robin had sent an email reporting that Jeff Claffy (Assistant Resources Manager for MPEA) had contacted him regarding his Master Gardener partners' interest in the birds of MPEA. These volunteers spend a lot of time in MPEA and know about its flora, but much less about its birds. They have asked Jeff for a '101' briefing on the birds of MPEA. This group is interested in how MPEA birds are impacted by the vegetation which they are encouraging, as well that which they are discouraging. There is also interest in which migrants pass through, and which nest in, this area. Jeff had asked if there is anyone from the Club who would be willing to brief this group for 1-2 hours at MPEA on the morning of Tuesday, May 24th. He had reported that if this date does not work, he is flexible. The MG's are an 'easy crowd' according to Jeff, so no need for anything formal. It was agreed that since the club has a field trip scheduled for May 24 that will probably not work but we should see if anyone would be interested in doing this at a future date agreeable to Jeff and the Master Gardener partners. In rescheduling we should be aware that it is rumored that construction on the new parking area at Trotter Road will begin this fall.

John Harris stated that if the construction is to begin in the fall he may want to move the location of his Robinson NC sponsored Woodpecker Walk to the RNC grounds.

Mission Statement – Chuck reminded the Board that we had agreed to revisit the topic of a “mission statement” for the club at this meeting. He summarized the email discussion of the earlier draft that followed the last meeting and then read what the statement would be if those inputs were incorporated. After a series of proposed changes were considered it was moved and approved that the club would adopt the following as our mission statement:

“The mission of the Howard County Bird Club is to promote the knowledge, development, protection, and conservation of bird life and other naturally occurring species and their habitats.”

New Business

Film shows at some Club meetings instead of guest speakers? – Jo explained that Sue Muller had requested the club purchase a copy of the documentary film “The Messenger” for her use in promoting the cause of birds with groups she works with. With Robin’s approval she was reimbursed for the \$25 purchase price. Jane attended the meeting to ask if we felt it was appropriate that a film be substituted for a guest speaker at our meetings when one such as The Messenger is available. We discussed a couple of issues this would present. One is their enough time to show the film within our meeting timeframe, in this case the film runs 1 hour 29 minutes so we would need to limit or eliminate the business meeting if we wanted to permit a period of discussion following the showing. Also we would need to confirm that the A/V capabilities in the auditorium support showing the film with sufficient quality. Given these constraints the Board felt it was appropriate to show a film occasionally and this one specifically as Jane can fit it into her schedule of programs. Jo then proposed the club officially donate the copy of The Messenger that Sue is holding to Howard County Recreation and Parks. In this way Sue will be able to manage use of the film as part of her job responsibilities and won’t require a member of the club to participate in every showing she sets up. Robin agreed to send Sue (and other R&P staff?) an email donating the film to them and informing Sue we tentatively want to use the film at our October 2016 meeting, presuming the test of A/V equipment is successful.

Jane then asked the Board for guidance on a request she has received via a second party informing her that a Tour Leader from Uganda is available to give a program to the club and would like to do so at the September meeting as he will be in USA attending an ABA event. Jane stated she has another speaker tentatively scheduled in September, namely Chan Robbins, if his health permits, and she has no intention to change that. However her issue is does the Board support talks by Tour Leaders who will obviously make an appeal for business. We discussed briefly and the consensus is that it is really a matter of degree, but if the speaker is focused on providing information on birds and other species, and only marginally marketing his services this would probably be alright. Robin agreed to take an action item to draft a general policy (probably revising prior direction to be quite restrictive on marketing content) that Jane can use in lining up speakers.

Funding for Howard County Rec & Parks – Cindy had sent an email to Board requesting the Board address the funding in our Habitat Fund (~\$4500), primarily the funds in the Emy Holdridge memorial fund designated for pollinator plots being developed by Howard County Rec & Parks (\$2365). She requested clarification on who authorizes her to send gifts such as this to the recipient. In answer we stated that this requires an action by the Board. Jo reminded Cindy and the Board that Rec & Parks had indicated that the Centennial pollinator meadows were a test case and future efforts would depend on how they work out. As a result they specifically did not want to receive the funds until the way ahead was clear as funds received without clear path to expenditure can be swept up into unrelated activities. They were considering hiring an intern to coordinate and oversee volunteer activities on the plots as one use for the funds we are holding. Jo recently inquired whether any progress had been made on this idea, only to learn that this idea had not progressed but was now again being pursued following Jo’s recent inquiry as they realize that formal supervision of volunteers is a necessity now that they have held several weeding sessions. It was suggested they may want to contact the Master Gardeners as they have been helpful in this regard at Mt. Pleasant and MPEA. Cindy was directed to hold off sending any funds to them for now. Jo agreed to continue to be liaison to Rec & Parks on this matter and will attempt to motivate them to take action.

Funding request from HCC/Mt. Pleasant – bird display – Robin had received the attached letter from the Howard County Conservancy asking the club to donate \$5000 toward their campaign to expand the Gudelsky Environmental Education Center (letter attached). The funds are being requested to go toward the design and fabrication of display

signage in the outdoor classroom to showcase common birds of Howard County. Jo had discussed the proposal with their staff. Nancy shared her experience with coordinating the development of professional indoor signage at the Conservancy's Belmont location. It was her opinion that \$5000 was not excessive for professional quality signage consistent with the guidelines which the Conservancy has as policy. It was also agreed that we would need to have an input as to what species are selected and the information incorporated to ensure its accuracy. Jo moved and it was seconded and approved that we authorize Cindy to disburse \$5000 for this purpose. Robin took an action item to inform the HCC staff of our gift and request to consult on signage content. *Secretary's Note: Robin informed them the next day and they agreed they want our assistance with content. Robin will draft a letter to accompany the check that Cindy will prepare.*

President's Chapter Report to MOS – items needed from chairpersons – Robin reported that he needs to prepare the annual report the club needs to submit to MOS prior to the annual conference in early June. He plans to send a request asking club chairpersons to provide him with material for inclusion in the report.

Review of Prior Action Items:

- Identify other projects or causes for us to support with our habitat preservation funds – All DONE
- Proceed with development of Sky Watch/Hawk Watch site including finalize a formal written proposal and keep the Board informed of progress – Mike Kerwin DONE
- Coordinate Green Fest participation including draft a NEWSGRAM announcement for Bob– Robin DONE
- Inform Mike Kerwin that the formal Sky Watch proposal should be ready by mid-April (in advance of Conservancy committee meeting) – Robin DONE
- Draft MOU between The HC Conservancy and the HCBC regarding the Sky Watch site – Robin DONE
- Check with The HC Conservancy on availability of facility to host the MOS Board meeting on June 4 – Robin DONE
- Draft NEWSGRAM article on YMOS raffle ticket sale – John Harris DONE
- Draft NEWSGRAM article on Camp Illchester Earth Day display – Bob DONE
- Add Mary Lou as Vice President to the slate read at the March meeting and distribute the election notice along with the club directory – Bob DONE

New/Continuing Action Items

- Attend the meeting of the Howard County Conservancy Grounds Committee meeting on April 29 to present SkyWatch plans and MOU – Robin
- Solicit volunteers for a future Birds 101 presentation to MPEA Master Gardeners – Robin/John
- Prepare Bird-a-thon announcement for NEWSGRAM and website – Bob
- Send email to HC Rec & Parks staff donating copy of “The Messenger” – Robin
- Draft a proposed policy for Program Speakers and amount of marketing content permitted – Robin
- Prepare letter formally informing HCC of our donation toward signage for the outdoor classroom - Robin

Board Meeting Schedule

Board meetings are generally held 4th Thursday of month at 7:30 PM

September 24, 2015	-	Robin Todd
October 22, 2015	-	Karen Heffernan
November 19, 2015	-	Cindy Albright (this is 3rd Thursday to avoid Thanksgiving)
December	-	NO MEETING
January 28, 2016	-	Bob & Jo Solem
February 25, 2016	-	John McKitterick
March 24, 2016	-	Robin Todd
April 28, 2016	-	Kate Tufts
May 26, 2016	-	Meg & John Harris (Joint meeting with new and old members)

Attachments (Copies of handouts provided at meeting and club correspondence filed with original minutes)

- Agenda – April 28, 2016
- Treasurer’s Report – March 31, 2016
- Portions of Robin’s email dated April 29 with results of initial meeting with HCC Grounds Committee on SkyWatch (post-Board meeting)
- Howard County Conservancy letter to Howard County Bird Club – April 27, 2016

Minutes submitted by:

Charles R. Stirrat
Secretary, Howard County Bird Club

**Howard County Bird Club
Board of Directors Meeting**

Agenda

April 28, 2016

1. Additions? All
2. Review of Minutes Chuck
3. Treasurer's Report Cindy
4. President's Remarks Robin
5. Vice President's Remarks John

6. Committee Reports
 - Field Trips
 - Records Jo
 - Conservation Kurt (away)
 - Newsletter Howard
 - Web Master Bob

7. Old Business
 - SkyWatch at Mt. Pleasant update – Robin
 - Camp Ilchester – Robin
 - GreenFest - Robin
 - Brief talk to Master Gardeners at MPEA on May 24th – Robin

8. New Business
 - Film shows at some Club meetings instead of guest speakers? - Jane Geuder
 - Funding for Howard County Rec & Parks? - Cindy
 - Funding request from HCC/Mt. Pleasant – bird display – Jo
 - President's Chapter report to MOS – items needed from chairpersons - Robin

9. Action Items Chuck

10. Around the room

Meeting Location:
Kate & Dick Tufts
2830 Duvall Road
Woodbine MD 21797
(410) 489-7052
ktufts@verizon.net

**HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB
TREASURER'S REPORT
5/1/15-4/30/16**

	Budget 2015-16	March Current Month	Year To Date
Operating Fund			
Income			
Membership Dues		249.24	5,495.77
State Dues Paid		(20.00)	(3,095.00)
Net Membership Dues	2,000.00	229.24	2,400.77
Contributions to Habitat Preservation		100.00	2,211.33
Contributions to Emy's fund			2,365.00
Contributions to MOS			110.00
Total Operating Income	2,000.00	329.24	7,087.10
Expenses			
Supplies for Bird Counts	100.00		
Meetings:			
Programs	600.00	300.00	815.00
Hospitality-Chapter & State	50.00		
Special Supplies			
Internet Account	200.00	330.33	330.33
Postage, Copies	250.00	135.00	286.83
Projector Expense			
General Supplies			
Equipment			
USPS Postal Box rental			
Donations			
Pot Luck Supplies	50.00		
Newsletter & Directory	400.00	131.00	497.00
Miscellaneous			
Pollinator Plots - Emy's fund			
Habitat Preservation - All Creatures G & S			300.00
Greenfest	35.00	35.00	35.00
YMOS Birdathon			
DOS Bird-a-thon	1000.00		1,000.00
Total Operating Expense	2,685.00	931.33	3,264.16
Income over Expense		(602.09)	3,822.94
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T Rowe Price Prime Reserve acct.			
Reserve Account beginning bal. 3/1/16			\$10,649.36
Interest Received in March			0.06
Marjorie Mountjoy Fund Balance			5,540.00
Total T Rowe Price ending balance 3/31/16			16,189.42
PNC Bank Balance			
Checking Bal. 03/31/16			12,184.25
Petty Cash			45.03
Total Assets			28,418.70

Portions of Email From Robin Todd to HCBC Board dated April 29, 2016

Subject: SkyWatch discussed by HCC Grounds Committee.....

Hello All,

As promised, I presented our SkyWatch (SW) proposal (MOU, Mike's map and site plan and HCC's sign policy) to the HCC's Grounds Committee meeting this afternoon.

Woody Merkle introduced me, Meg Boyd presided, while Groundskeeper Tabby Fique took the minutes. I did not catch the names of other 5 members present.

The committee accepted our proposal in principal and felt that it is in line with HCC's vision. The committee complimented the Club on its plan.

The items discussed were:

Liability: one of the guys present wondered if the MOU statement was adequate to protect HCC. HCC has lawyers among their board: they may review the MOU.

Termination: Meg said there needs to be termination clause - now it is open-ended - if they ever want to close it down. Therefore HCC will add a clause allowing them to close the SW. I said that HCBC also needs a termination clause (e.g. if we find it is too much to maintain or it is not being used).

Benches: HCC wants more details and the right to review what type of bench we propose to install. There was some concern that someone might carry them away.

Schedule: I advised that we want the SW installed and functioning by September. We will not delay this for the signage, but this will be in place without undue delay. Tabby said she would suggest suitable contractors.

Next steps:

1. HCC will add termination clause - and possibly make other revisions to the MOU - and return to HCBC for comment. We will add an HCBC- initiated termination clause. Return MOU to HCC.
2. Revised MOU and associated documents will be discussed at the May or June General Board meeting of HCC. This will be when the official decision will be made.



Gina M. Zawitoski
President

April 27, 2016

Randolph S. Sergent
Vice President

W. Craig Engelhaupt
Treasurer
Immediate Past President

Robin Todd
President
Howard County Bird Club

Kimberly Dorsey Bronow
Secretary

Dear Mr. Todd,

Trustees

Marianne Alexander
Alice Giles
Elmina J. Hilsenrath
Jonas Jacobson
Edward J. Kasemeyer
Woody Merkle
Charles H. Miller
Brett S. Plano
Mark Southerland, Ph.D.
Holly Stone
Ryan Sturm
Audrey Suhr
Cheron Victoria Wicker
Nat Williams

Now in its 26th year, the Howard County Conservancy serves central Maryland by providing educational opportunities for students, preserving open space and connecting people to nature. To further its mission, the Conservancy has embarked on ***Fulfilling the Mission: The Next 25 Years for the Howard County Conservancy***, a \$1.8 million campaign to renovate and expand the Gudelsky Environmental Education Center. This Center, which opened in 2005, is the heart of the 232-acre property, and it hosts school groups from pre-K school through high school as well as numerous community programs.

Thanks to the increased popularity of the Conservancy and its programs, the current space is no longer adequate. Program growth includes:

- Our educational programs have grown by 150% in the last three years, with more than 27,000 participants last year alone from 169 school programs and 49 public events
- Attendance at our public events has increased by 230% in the last 5 years
- To keep up with the increased demand for programs, our staff has increased five-fold and now includes 10 regular and eight seasonal employees

To serve our growing programs for both students and the public at large, the Conservancy is scheduled to break ground on the expansion of the Gudelsky Center in November 2016, with a target completion date of spring 2017.

The expansion will enlarge and relocate the nature center, which is used both as a classroom and exhibit space, to a space adjacent to a new outdoor classroom. A community meeting room, a volunteer work room, and a dedicated space for animal care will also be created.

MT. PLEASANT LOCATION
10520 Old Frederick Road
PO Box 175
Woodstock, MD 21163

BELMONT LOCATION
6553 Belmont Woods Road
Elkridge, MD 21075

Phone 410-465-8877
www.hcconservancy.org

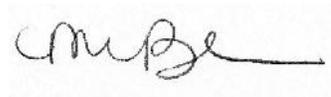
The new outdoor classroom will overlook the John L. Clark Honors Garden. The space will allow us to better accommodate student groups, which are larger and more numerous than in the past. In addition, the outdoor classroom will be an excellent observation point for the Honors Garden. This one-acre garden is filled with native plant species that attracts birds and other pollinators.

This is an ideal location for visitors to see the variety of birds and pollinators that are attracted to the native plant garden. To educate both students and the general public about the garden and the important role native plants play in our ecosystem, we will be creating and installing several displays in the outdoor classroom. One of these displays will be devoted to the birds of Howard County to assist visitors with identifying birds and understanding the role they play in a healthy ecosystem. The display will be professionally designed, waist-high angled signs to maximize opportunities to learn about birds and pollinators while observing the garden.

Mt. Pleasant Farm is an important viewing spot for both migratory and non-migratory birds in Howard County, and we are grateful for our long-standing relationship with the Howard County Bird Club. The display in the outdoor classroom will encourage more people to study birds at Mt. Pleasant, as well as help them understand the importance of providing habitat for them in their own yards.

We are requesting that the Howard County Bird Club consider a donation of \$5,000 toward the design and fabrication of display signage in the outdoor classroom to showcase the birds common to Howard County, and in particular, ones that visitors may encounter in the John L. Clark Honors Garden. We will recognize the Club for this donation on the sign and on a permanent plaque, along with other donors to the campaign, within the Gudelsky Environmental Education Center. Thank you so much for considering this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meg S. Boyd", written over a light blue rectangular background.

Meg S. Boyd
Executive Director