Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis—Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
January 25, 2021, 7 p.m., Zoom on-line meeting

Attending: Keith Olstad, Siah St. Clair, Ann Laughlin, Diane Hofstede, Katie Burns, Wilmer Fernandez, Marian Weidner, Constance Pepin, Sam West, Amy Simso Dean, Brandon Lentz, Jim Egge, and guest Lisa Hakanson

I. Meeting Called to order at 7:05
   A. Keith made a statement acknowledging our presence on land inhabited historically and presently by native tribes.

II. Minutes of December 28, 2020 approved as emailed. Siah was asked to add to the June 2020 Board minutes that Jim Egge was included in the nominations for another term as a board member, and approved.

III. Treasurer’s report received as emailed.

IV. President’s report
   A. Smart Growth Minneapolis: no news regarding timing for decision from Minnesota Supreme Court. Press releases are being drafted for release when decision is public. Smart Growth wants only a press release if the case is won. Keith intends to have a press release in case the case is lost, at very least for distribution to ACM members, to voice ramifications of no environmental review. Funding strategies for next round are in place.
   B. Chapter Leaders of five Audubon chapters in Minnesota met via Zoom on Jan. 12, to discuss possible collaborative efforts.
      1. Anticipate possible public education event for installing native plants at Governor’s mansion in early May.
      2. Likely opportunity to contact state legislators to advocate for Audubon issues.
   C. ACM’s annual report to National Audubon is almost ready to email. Thanks to assistance from, Amy, Siah, Wilmer, Constance, David, Katie, and Irene.
   D. Our chapter recently received another $1,000.00 Collaborative Grant from National Audubon to support the Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery Project. Thanks to Jerry Bahls for tending the grant application.
   E. Keith printed and mailed another 30+ thank you letters for donors and forwarded another set to the RhWR project, Friends of Roberts and Smart Growth for sending their thank you letters, and entered all on a log for record keeping and future contact.
   F. He participated in three National Audubon webinars about EDI, as did Amy.
   G. After conferring with Amy and Constance, he sent a letter of support from ACM for a funding request for State money for the Cullen Nature Preserve in Minnetonka.
   H. He urges board members to regularly check our own ACM website, but also check emails from National Audubon
   I. He requests articles for the ACM blog & weekly email blasts.
   J. A revised board roster with contact information with corrected terms was emailed with this agenda
   K. Also accompanying the emailed agenda were the Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, and Policies.
V. Committee Reports including questions or comments to committee reports sent out
A. Community engagement committee. Katie commented that the regular program had been moved from Monday to Wednesday, February 10, for the month of February—no questions of the committee. Update emailed by Irene on 1-18-21.
B. Advocacy committee (update emailed by Constance on 1-23-21)—Constance commented that the Friends of the Mississippi River deserve much of the credit for the work done to have the Minneapolis City Council approve the new MRCCA ordinance. No questions of the committee.
C. Migration Partners committee—Wilmer commented that activities in Honduras are on hold because of the pandemic. There are still plans to start the banding station up but no dates are set yet. Jim asked if they have sources of income besides ACM. Wilmer said yes, that the Universities pay salaries of the lead researchers. Keith commented that this is an example of a project ACM works with that has been essentially shut down because of the pandemic. Keith mentioned that ACM also works with other projects that have been fortunate enough to be able to refocus and do well, such as the Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery Project and the Christmas Bird Count.

VI. Board Task Force updates
A. EDI Task Force—Amy
   1. Amy stated that the EDI Task Force did not meet in December so there is no report.
   2. Jim asked about the process for considering an ACM policy statement about “land inhabited historically and presently by native tribes.” Jim suggested that we need to focus on our mission and members. Amy responded that the National Audubon EDI meetings have prompted local chapters to consider this area of discussion. Amy stated that the task force will discuss the issue to make sure there is a holistic approach to these issues. At the February task force meeting they will have a “meaty” discussion about land and mission.

VII. Discussion of current organizational structure—see organizational structure emailed with agenda
A. Keith asked if there were any comments or questions about this. Siah commented that in the section about ACM projects that the statement “have received ACM Board approval” can be misinterpreted to suggest that projects are a function of ACM. Siah stated that historically many of these “projects” have been and are separate independent organizations with a conservation objective that house their funds through ACM because of its 501c3 status. There was discussion about how the terminology here could more accurately recognize these organizational relationships. Ann agreed to summarize suggested changes from comments made into a draft rewording of this statement and send it to Siah for the minutes. Ann’s draft: “Projects—ACM projects are Board-approved collaborations with organizations from which the ACM board receives and approves an annual budget and for which ACM serves as the fiscal agent. Current ACM projects include the Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery Project and Migration Partners.”
B. Keith asked if people felt this chart was helpful. Sam responded that for him it is helpful. He stated that it is easy to get lost in the many things that are going on with ACM. Keith asked if it should be on the website. Several people said no. Sam said that it may be possible to make an info-graphic about this. He will put it on his task list. Brandon commented about making a flow chart.
C. Keith responded to Jim’s request to discuss the Tiffany Bottoms Train bird field trip. Keith stated that this is a discussion for the Community Engagement Committee. Jim commented that there is a February
1st deadline for this field trip that ACM has participated in many years. Katie stated that she would connect with Jim on this right away after the meeting.

VIII. Participation in an emerging alliance called “Legacy of Nature Alliance.”
A. Keith discussed a newly forming organization called the Legacy of Nature Alliance. Keith said the mission of the new organization will be “preserving and enhancing wildlife habitat in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.” Keith said it is not an official organization yet but in the planning stages. Keith asked all to let him, Ann, or Constance know if this is something you think we should participate in.
B. Amy asked if the organization is focused on lobbying or community involvement. Ann responded saying the goals are to redirect legislative grant monies and also to do community activities, so the focus will be both. There was discussion about working to change the individuals currently on specific local governing boards. Siah commented that 501c3 organizations cannot be involved in political lobbying for individuals.
C. Keith said this will be an alliance of organizations not of individuals. Keith asked for a donation of $50 from ACM to help the organization get organized.
D. Amy moved and Ann seconded a motion to approve a $50.00 donation to the Legacy of Nature Alliance to help it get organized. Motion approved

IX. ACM communications: Sam
A. Fall fundraiser thank you letter has been posted on the blog and in a separate email blast.
B. Information that can be derived from the member list is being worked on. Sam would like to be able to identify who donates year after year, do donors also attend activities, and other info. He commented that we really don’t have any information about the involvement of our members.
C. Zoom has been returned to the $100 level where up to 100 can attend any specific meeting/program. Sam would like to have a way for non-members to pay a fee to participate in activities. Ann commented that since we changed the Zoom level back to the $100 level that we are not able to convert activities to a webinar, although we have paid for it. This will be worked on.
D. There are primary individuals responsible for each of our social media activities now. They are:
   1. Brandon—Instagram
   2. Amy—Facebook
   3. Marian—Blog, Email, and You-tube
   4. Sam—Website
E. Constance made a request that individuals in leadership/oversight roles be a part of discussions about changes being made.

X. Friends of Robert’s Bird Sanctuary report—Constance
A. Constance commented that they are in planning mode at this time for spring activities to remove invasive plants and other spring activities.

XI. Red Headed Woodpecker update—Siah
A. Siah reported that there had been a volunteer planning meeting within the last week. Volunteers will probably not be able to work at the Cedar Creek site this coming season, although there may be some other activities available.
B. The research committee met within the last week and is meeting again soon to make decisions to assist Dr. Elena West in needs for the upcoming research field season.
C. Fundraising has been going very well with members and grants.
D. Siah suggested everyone take a look at Dr. Elena West’s recent “from the field” post on her research blog site. It can be found at rhworesearch.org. The blog post has interesting videos and still pictures of wildlife that use RHWO nest cavities while the RHWOs are gone.

XII. Next meeting dates and sites
   A. Next Community Engagement Committee videoconference: Sunday, 2-21-21, 2:30 PM; contact Katie or Irene. Note program date change to Wednesday, February 10, 7:00 PM
   B. Next Advocacy Committee videoconference: 2-17-21, 2:00 PM; contact Constance or Steve Greenfield for call information
   C. Next ACM board meeting: Monday, 2-22-21, 7:00 PM, videoconference via Zoom; agenda and call info will be emailed beforehand: contact Keith for call information
   D. Migration Partners Meeting TBA, contact Wilmer for call information

XIII. Meeting adjourned at 8:25

Minutes submitted by Siah St. Clair