Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis—Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2021, 7 p.m., Zoom online meeting

Attending: Keith Olstad, David Hartwell, Amy Simso Dean, Diane Hofstede, Wilmer Fernandez, Marian Weidner, Irene Bueno Padilla, Sam West, Ann Laughlin, Brandon Lentz.

I. Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Minutes of March 22, 2021, approved as emailed by Siah on April 3.

III. Treasurer’s report accepted as emailed by David on April 4.

IV. President’s report
   A. Keith noted that Zoom board sessions have been set up for the rest of the year. David requested a Zoom invitation that goes directly into our calendars. Sam said he could set this up through Audubon email.
   B. On April 7, the ACM/SGM legal team filed a motion for a temporary restraining order in Hennepin County District Court against any continued actions by the city based on the Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The judge asked for more detailed pleadings, which the team submitted. By April 29, the judge should have all documents needed to make a ruling, which he then has 90 days to issue. An outdoor fundraising event is planned for June or July.
   C. The ACM webinar about implications of the 2040 lawsuit, “Elevating Livability: Lawsuit Implications of 2040 Lawsuit,” is available on ACM’s YouTube channel.
   D. Audubon chapter leaders met via Zoom on April 14:
      1. The native planting at the governor’s mansion will happen in late summer/early fall; Constance Pepin is arranging a site visit with two members of Twin Cities Wild Ones. The project has been well received by the governor’s family and staff.
      2. Kim Scott, Audubon Minnesota lobbyist, has been arranging Zoom sessions between state legislators and several board members.
      3. A calendar of statewide Audubon chapter programs and selected chapter meetings is now in use.
   E. The Legacy of Nature Alliance (LONA) continues to get organized formally and is considering opt-in and opt-out options for its advocacy letters. Keith, Ann and Constance have been attending the meetings.
   F. Lisa Hakanson, David, Sam and Keith are working on a simplified system to record donation acknowledgements so that donors can be integrated into the ACM mailing list.
   G. Keith urged board members to regularly check the ACM website and also check emails from National Audubon. He noted that NAS President/CEO David Yarnold and Chief Network Officer David Ringer have resigned.
   H. Keith requests that board members consider writing articles for the ACM blog and weekly email blasts.
   I. Please notify Keith of changes to contact information. Ann suggested that Constance Pepin and Stephen Greenfield be added to all board communications since they co-chair the Advocacy Committee.
   J. Keith will return from Portland in early June; in the meantime he is available by phone and email.

V. Committee reports including questions or comments on committee reports sent out
   A. Community Engagement Committee. Update emailed by Irene on April 21.
      1. ACM monthly program featuring Amy will be Tuesday, May 11, at 7 p.m.
   B. Advocacy Committee. Update emailed by Ann on April 25.
      1. The request from MEP to renew ACM membership was referred to the Advocacy Committee.
   C. Migration Partners Committee. Update emailed by Wilmer on April 22.
      1. Wilmer is working with Huellas Latinas to organize a May bird outing. Registration will take place through that organization with the goal of adding participants’ emails to the ACM list.
   D. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Update emailed by Amy on April 21.
Amy said that while participating in EDI webinars, she’s become aware of the need to create an institutional platform for EDI within organizations. The EDI Committee proposed four board actions to accomplish this goal:

1. Discussion of board members’ candidacy.
   Amy said she would like to see the board discuss any concerns about board members who are renewing their terms, with the board member under discussion absent from the “room.” She said that she would not personally care if she was being discussed and wasn’t told about the concerns, but feels like such discussions are needed. Ann said she didn’t see the value of such a discussion if the board member is not informed of any board concerns. David said any concerns should be brought to the Nominating/Governance Committee. Keith noted that the Nominating Committee has addressed such concerns in the past.

2. Training and mentoring of new members.
   David said training and mentoring is a best practice that ACM should implement. Wilmer likes the idea of having some structure for onboarding. Diane said onboarding and training is critical work for any board.

3. “360-degree” annual reviews for board members.
   David said although he likes the idea of a review of board members, he has never seen a 360-degree review done well. In the alternative, he suggested that the board carve out time once or twice a year to discuss what the board is doing well, what could be done differently, and whether board members and committees are meeting their goals. He likes the idea of term limits but thinks the limit should be three three-year terms, rather than two three-year terms, since it takes time to get up to speed. Exceptions could be made if a member is in the middle of work that needs to continue past their term limit.

4. Communications about gaps in skill sets, etc.
   Sam said he thinks it’s most important to have discussions about skills when we’re looking at someone new joining the board so that the board can ask how they fit into the board strategically. Marian suggested developing a structured questionnaire for candidates, rather than having them submit just a personal essay. Sam also asked that the Nominating Committee convey to the board why they are forwarding a person for membership. The board generally agreed that when someone is proposed for membership, the board should discuss the candidate without that person present at the meeting. Keith noted that the board has greatly evolved since he joined the board and that the Nominating Committee does need to be more strategic about recruiting candidates. Irene said the goal of the EDI Committee is to have a more diverse and inclusionary board and Marian said the long-term goal is greater diversity and the creation of an inclusive culture.

   Amy said the EDI Committee would assess this discussion and bring the topic back to the board.

5. Ongoing EDI work (see second half of attachment for 4/21 email)

Brandon joined the meeting at 8:05 p.m and began taking minutes at this time.

VI. Preparation for annual adoption of goals, budget, and elections at June 28 meeting: Keith
   A. Keith will send an email with a list of the ACM goals from last June. The agenda for the 28th will include discussion and recap of the goals from last year.
   B. Each committee will need to come forth with goals and budget for the upcoming year.
   C. We are committed to a certain number of board members. There is a minimum of six, but the number of board members is up to the rest of the ACM board.

VII. Update on ACM communications: Sam
   A. Email blasts have a great click engagement.
   B. Website visits are up month over month by 18%.
   C. Unique visitors makeup most of the traffic for the ACM site.
   D. 1,600 visitors, 500 new visitors.
E. On our home page, “birding for everyone”, “upcoming events and meetings,” and the “Minnesota/Honduras shared bird species challenge” net the heaviest traffic.

F. “Easy birding games to play with kids” is in the top five for content.

G. Face book views are up 8%.

H. Other indicators such as page likes, reach, and post engagement are down over the past 30 days.

I. Top performing posts: George Floyd post and Fun eagle ID meme.

J. Website redesign is still in the works. New content will include archived minutes, bylaws, and how best to contact donors via customer relations management tool.

K. T-shirt printing: designs are in the works. 3-5 images are possible. Sam will have further information by our next meeting.

L. We need content for the facebook site! Anything bird related is useful. Please send anything you find interesting to Amy and/or Brandon.

M. Despite not being promoted our instagram channel continues to see growth, averaging 5-10 new followers every week. Please tell folks about our instagram. It is filled with Keith and Brandon’s photography.

VIII. Red-headed Woodpecker update

A. Project update for anyone who has previously volunteered: Very limited volunteer work has been able to be done during the pandemic. Given those limitations amazing things have been accomplished.

B. Newer volunteer opportunities: Via Zooniverse, volunteers will receive an invitation to help review videos in order to identify any wildlife activity. Please email Siah if interested in helping review material.

C. Bioacoustics project will be the next major work, but it depends on the omnibus environmental bill passing the senate.

D. Fieldwork has begun at Cedar Creek! There will be more information to report at our next meeting.

E. No RHWOs had returned as of April 26, but everyone is prepared for their arrival.

F. Possible project restructuring; how to function most effectively is being explored.

G. Siah/volunteer—please write an invitation to the general public on how to engage with the Zooniverse project as soon as it is ready to launch.

IX. Upcoming meetings

A. Community Engagement Committee Zoom Meeting: 5/16, 2:30 PM contact Katie or Irene.
   1. ACM monthly program meeting: Tuesday, May 4, at 7 PM

B. Advocacy Committee Zoom meeting: Wednesday, May 19, 2:00 PM. Contact Constance or Steve Greenfield for call information

C. Migration Partners Zoom meeting: Tuesday, May 11, at 6 PM. Contact Wilmer for call information.

D. EDI Committee meeting: Wednesday, May 5, at 5 PM. Contact Amy for call information.

E. ACM board meeting Monday May 24, 7 PM via Zoom. Agenda and call info will be emailed by Keith. Call Keith for more info.

Minutes by Ann Laughlin and Brandon Lentz. Combined and sent out by Siah St. Clair