

Hampton Roads Bird Club
Executive Committee (EXCOM) Meeting
July 13, 2017

1. The EXCOMM met at Sandy Bottom Nature Park. The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m.

2. Attendance:

a. EXCOMM Members and Committee Chairpersons Present:

President - Dr. Shawn Dash
Vice President/Programs Chair - Pete Peterman
Secretary - Bill Boeh
Treasurer - John Adair
Director (2015-18) - Andy Hawkins
Director (2016-19) - Dave Youker
Director (2017-20) - Walt Harris
Publication/Newsletter Editor - Tom Charlock
Website Editor - Ellis and Wendy Maxey
Field Trip Committee - Andy Hawkins
Host Committee - Jane Frigo, Dianne Snyder
Publicity - Katrina Dash
Membership - Gwen Harris

b. Non-Committee Members in Attendance:

Leader, Sunday Newport News Walks - Jane Frigo
Compiler, Christmas and Spring Bird Counts - Bill Boeh

3. EXCOMM Members and Committee Chairpersons Absent:

Field Trip Coordinators - Jason Strickland

4. Board member reports/topics for discussion:

a. President's topics for discussion:

i. 2016-17 Year in review—request for feedback. Shawn asked the attendees if they had any feedback or recommendations on how the club was managed over the past year.

1. Discussion/resolution: All agreed that the year had gone well and there were no recommended changes.

ii. Website update: Shawn related that he found the website rather archaic and unengaging in its appearance, layout, and structure. He recommended an

upgrade to the underlying software and offered to provide specific suggestions for improving the appearance and structure of the website, and asked the EXCOMM to provide recommendations' as well. Shawn also noted that the pictures at the website were quite old, likely because the process for getting pictures posted (i.e., via the webmaster) was quite cumbersome. Shawn suggested that the club should use a photo sharing website to make it easier for members to share their photos.

1. Discussion/resolution: the committee agreed that the website should be improved and new software be procured as required. Shawn will advise the Webmaster on site design. There was no resolution regarding use of a photo sharing website.
- iii. Topic: Outreach support for Mariner's Museum. Shawn advised that the Mariner's Museum had requested support in providing bird walks on the Noland Trail. The Museum will provide binoculars and field guides for attendees. Shawn asked the attendees if they would consider volunteering to lead the walks.
1. Discussion: Several members volunteered to assist. Other members articulated that they did not have the expertise to solely guide the walk but would be willing to help if they could partner with a more experienced birder. It was suggested that the membership be briefed on the idea at a after which signup sheet would be passed around to further encourage participation.
 2. Resolution: Shawn will present the idea at a member meeting after which a signup sheet will be passed around.
- b. The Vice President/Programs chair:
- i. Pete proposed that the standard offering fee for outside speakers should be increased to \$100 plus expenses. This increase, if approved, would require an increase in the Programs budget (proposed 2017-18 limit set at \$500).
 1. Discussion. The EXCOMM discussed the proposal and there was general consensus that the increased fee and consequent increase in budget was warranted.
 2. Resolution: EXCOMM voted to increase outside speaker fees to \$100 plus expenses and to increase the annual Programs budget to \$750.
 - ii. Pete requested feedback on the types of presentations that the membership preferred.
 1. Discussion. Several members stated that the current "balanced" approach that provides both members' trip reports along with educational

programs seemed to be what the membership wanted. Other members suggested using media (e.g., DVD) as another means to deliver a program instead of a speaker (as Shawn did by presenting the “Birders: The Central Park Effect” video) and continuing the practice of members giving programs; it was pointed out that use of media and/or member-provided programs would help keep costs down.

2. Resolution: The consensus was that Pete should continue the “balanced” approach and include media-based programs when available/practical.

c. Treasurer:

- i. John reviewed the proposed budget and solicited the committee chairs for changes and/or additions. The following budget items were discussed:
 1. Newsletter expenses. John advised that since the printing vendor had changed hands the charge for reproducing the newsletter had increased. As a result, Tom stopped providing area bird stores with free copies to “advertise” the club to store patrons.
 - a. Discussion: A suggestion was made that perhaps a club flyer could be developed that could be distributed to the stores, as well as other sites, instead.
 - b. Resolution: The committee approved the suggestion to develop a club flyer for distribution.
 2. Miscellaneous expenses: Shawn advised that the club laptop had become exceedingly slow and he expected it to fail in the near future. Additionally Shawn recommended procuring a portable sound system for presentation speakers. Several committees advised that they needed additional funding to cover expenses, including name tags, club flyers, and administrative supplies.
 - a. Discussion:
 - i. Funding requests for name tags, club flyers, and administrative supplies were discussed and all agreed that they should receive funding. All agreed that the cost of a new laptop and sound system should be researched and a proposal prepared for approval. Shawn and Katrina will research the items and prepare a proposal for approval.
 - ii. Resolution: An increase to the Miscellaneous budget from \$50 to \$175 was proposed and approved. The Miscellaneous budget breakdown is as follows: \$50 for nametags; \$50 for website software; \$50 for publicity (i.e., development and

production of club flyers, posters, etc.), and \$25 for administrative items.

3. Timing for the Club Fundraiser (auction or raffle):

- a. Discussion/resolution: The committee discussed the pros and cons of holding the fundraiser in conjunction with the annual Christmas Party, concluding that holding the fundraiser concurrently with the party was too onerous, and that the fundraiser should be held at the November meeting instead.

d. Field Trip Committee.

- i. August/September trips: Andy advised that the club would have an opportunity to visit Craney Island in August; he would email the members when the date was determined. The committee planned on going to Hog Island in September.
- ii. Remaining trips for the year:
 1. Discussion: The attendees discussed what sites the Club should visit this year. a boat trip, were discussed. A suggestion was made that the May trip might cover a Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas block that had not yet been covered by anyone. Several sites were recommended to revisit as they provided unique species and quantities of birds, including the CBBT. Various options, including Eastern Shore, Pleasure House Road, and a boat trip were suggested for future trips.
 2. Resolution/Action: The Field Trip Committee will make recommendations for future trips to the EXCOM.

e. Host Committee: Jane solicited the attendees for volunteers to provide the snacks for the September and October meetings. Several attendees volunteered.

1. Action: The EXCOMM will provide snacks for the September meeting.

f. Newsletter: Tom relating that he'd received several book reviews from Nancy Gruttman-Tyler, and requested input for upcoming newsletters, both written content and pictures.

g. New Business:

- i. Topic: Recognition of Club members. Dave advised that he'd been queried by members as to why the club no longer recognized members for their service to the club.

1. Discussion: The pros and cons of member recognition were discussed, as well as the idea of having a “meet a member” feature in the newsletter. Tom was amenable to the “meet a member” idea, but inquired as to who would be responsible for writing the feature. It was also suggested that the EXCOMM could recommend a particular member for recognition and submit an item to Tom to publish in the Newsletter.
2. Resolution: The issue is unresolved; no specific actions were approved.
- ii. Topic: Hosting the VSO annual conference. Dave advised that no bird club had volunteered to host the annual conference (held in April) for 2018, and recommended the EXCOMM discuss whether or not the club should volunteer.
 1. Discussion: Dave advised that the VSO had developed a detailed guidebook that for the hosting club which was extremely helpful; however hosting still presented a considerable workload and the membership should be consulted prior to volunteering. Dave recommended that the club partner with the Williamsburg Bird Club to share the workload. Dave recommended that the EXCOMM consider offering to host in 2019 instead of 2018; it was pointed out that it might be unfair for the EXCOMM to make the offer to host in 2019 which would impose the burden on a newly elected EXCOMM who had no say in the matter.
 2. Resolution: The EXCOMM agreed to present the idea of hosting the 2019 conference at the May meeting, at which the 2018-19 EXCOMM candidates would likely be present, providing them an opportunity to comment.
- h. Shawn closed the meeting with a request for ideas regarding more things the EXCOMM could do for the membership.
 - i. Discussion: Generally the attendees felt that the EXCOMM was providing excellent services for the membership in general. A suggestion was made that to improve members’ birding skills, some “mini-clinics” could be provided focusing on various birding topics, possibly held on Saturdays so as not to conflict with the Sunday walks.
 - ii. Resolution: There was no commitment to initiate the mini-clinic concept at this meeting; the idea may be reconsidered at a later meeting.
5. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.
6. Next Club meeting will be Thursday, September 14, 2017, 6:30 PM, Sandy Bottom Park.