

Hampton Roads Bird Club
Executive Committee (EXCOM) Meeting
9 July 2015

1. The EXCOM met at Sandy Bottom Nature Park. The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m.
2. EXCOM Members and Committee Chairpersons Present:
 - President (Dave Youker)
 - Treasurer – John Adair
 - Secretary – Bill Boeh
 - Directors: Andy Hawkins (2015-2018)
 - Field Trip Committee (Stuart Sweetman)
 - Publicity Committee (Jessica Ausura)
 - Membership Committee (Gwen Harris)
 - Field Trip Committee (Stuart Sweetman)
3. EXCOM Members and Committee Chairpersons Absent:
 - Vice President – Brenda Gervais
 - Directors (Elisa Enders (2013-2016); Pete Peterman (2014-2017))
 - Programs Committee (Brenda Gervais)
 - Publication Committee (Tom Charlock)
 - Host (Katrina Weber)
4. Non-Committee Members in Attendance: None
5. Discussion topics:
 - a. The President brought up the following topics for discussion:
 - i. Club budget: The President advised that the club was in sound fiscal condition, with expected expenditures for 2015-2016 to be about the same as the previous year (with the exception of the fee to the IRS to obtain 501(3)c status.
 - ii. Membership: The President advised that two new members had joined since June, and that club membership currently stood at about 90.
 - iii. Programs.
 1. The President commented that while the club had budgeted the same amount for programs over the previous few years (\$500), the amount the club expended was really up to the membership. The amount to spend on programs was discussed, but there was no move to change the annual outlay.
 2. Program topics. The President had solicited the EXCOM for suggestions via email prior to the meeting. He noted that there were various types of

programs (e.g., members' birding trip reports, informational programs covering environmental/ornithological topics, etc.) being presented, and the Program Committee Chair needed club feedback to determine whether the club membership was satisfied with these programs. Attendees agreed that this mix of topics was probably best so as to appeal to a broad range of members. The Publicity Committee Chair offered to solicit club feedback via email and/or an online survey.

- iv. Katrina Weber (via email): Shawn has a colleague, Ashley Kennedy, from the University of Delaware that might be able to provide an interesting talk. She investigates bird insect-prey preferences by collecting pictures from birders and photographers.
- v. Field Trips.
 1. During the meeting the President advised the Field Trip Committee Chair regarding various upcoming events that coincided with the customary field trip dates. The Field Trip Committee Chair decided to reschedule field trips as necessary to avoid these events.
 2. The President had solicited the EXCOM for Field Trip ideas via email. Attendees did not suggest any new sites, but did confirm that the sites visited in recent years had yielded good results. Pete Peterman (via email) recommended Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, particularly the Mattaponi Loop which, along with other sites, includes the Cumberland Marsh Preserve, an 1100+ acre preserve on the Pamunkey River owned by the Nature Conservancy. It has a boardwalk and observation platform and serves as a migratory and wintering habitat for waterfowl. The Publicity Committee offered to include questions soliciting field trip feedback and suggestions on the online survey mentioned above.
- vi. Outreach. The President reminded all that one of the club's missions was to do public outreach to advance knowledge of and preservation of birds. While the club had sponsored several university students and internships, these efforts had yielded mixed results. The President solicited for ideas from the attendees. Stuart suggested "adopting" a portion of a local roadway; Jessica suggested donating bird houses to local schools. The bird houses, presented along with a brief presentation on birds, would provide a good learning opportunity for the students. This effort could be done in conjunction with the Virginia Master Naturalists' Monarch Initiative. Tom Charlock advised via email that he would bring ideas for outreach to other local organizations concerning the land now occupied by the Newport News City Farm at the August meeting.

vii. Club Records.

1. The President commented that there were no by-laws or standard practices for maintaining club records, such as meeting minutes, newsletters, general correspondence, records of club activities, and budget reports. The President recommended that the cognizant committee chair should maintain applicable records (in hard copy and/or electronic form) and pass them along to their successor; all present agreed that that practice should be adopted.
2. The President also related that extensive historical club records (several boxes worth) are currently being stored at the home of Mary Copeland. The President expressed concern that these records might someday be lost, and that there was currently no way of knowing their content. The attendees discussed various options, including scanning the documents. The President noted that due to the sheer volume of the records that this would be a daunting task. The President recommended that a committee might be formed to review the records and determine their disposition. No definitive decision was reached on this issue during the meeting; the topic will be revisited at the next EXCOM meeting.

b. Treasurer. No report.

6. Committee Chair Reports: None.

7. Open Discussion:

- a. Bill Boeh recommended the club consider doing surveys of the Western Marshes Important Bird Area (IBA). The President agreed that this was a good idea, noting that both the Hampton Roads Bird Club and Williamsburg Bird Club had jointly “adopted” the IBA, and recommended that perhaps a joint effort could be mounted to initiate some surveys, as well as other activities to support the preservation of the IBA. This topic will be revisited at the next EXCOM meeting.
- b. Bill also suggested doing bird counts in conjunction with the regular Sunday walks in Newport News Parks, which would provide valuable data on the bird population there. Bill volunteered to keep the count and enter it into eBird at least once monthly, and will discuss the idea with Jane Frigo.

8. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

9. Next EXCOM meeting will be Thursday, August 13, 2015, 6:00 PM, Sandy Bottom Park.