Apalachee Audubon Board Meeting Minutes 1-13-2021

Submitted by Nelson Ball, Secretary

In attendance: Kathleen Carr, Rob Williams, Donna Legare, Amelia Fusaro, Harvey Goldman, Peter Goren, Peter Kleinhenz, Heather Levy, Caroline Andrews, Chase Brestle, Nelson Ball, Dara Wilson, Norma Skaggs, Howard Kessler, Tallulah Biletzskov

* Minutes from Nov. meeting were approved
* Harvey emailed out a treasurer’s report
  + Records of specific bat house donations are kept, Kathleen is double checking on some donations to see if they were specifically for that.
  + Other donations are general donations to our chapter
  + Kathleen is forwarding a national Audubon membership dues to Nat’l Audubon
  + AAS now has a debit card for our checking account
  + Stoddard Bird Lab thanks AAS for our donation
* Communication
  + Newsletter system of passing all things to Donna, then to Pete is working out well
  + Donna will send a Thank You note to Chris— others should as well, if possible
  + Dara will get back to us about the cost of upgrading Zoom to a yearly subscription. We will likely keep less expensive plan and bump up to higher capacity Zoom meetings for our bigger programs.
  + Facebook posts and Instagram are looking great, Tallulah will be helping with Twitter
  + Amelia got in touch with Westminster Oaks—the director is willing to add our events to their newsletter. Amelia will forward them information about our events moving forward.
  + Pete says FL Conservation Coalition is also willing to add our events to their notices. Pete will forward whatever we want over to them.
* Environmental Education
  + January 24th Bird Walk
    - Heather is picking up binoculars from Howard’s house this week
    - The ten spaces filled up so we are entertaining the idea of putting together another walk in February
      * Heather will contact Natasza about potentially taking lead since she was interested in working with kids and families
  + Program meetings
    - Dara is in contact with Nicole Jackson to give a talk in April
    - Native Nurseries is including the January program in their newsletter
  + Pines to Palms (Old Growth Forest Network)
    - Wakulla County forests are being highlighted
    - The group would like to attract people from that area out to the event, with focus on people who may not typically be attending our Audubon program meetings. If you have ideas on how to get the word out in Wakulla County, please email Amelia directly!
  + Deep Roots Meat in Greenville
    - Donna gives an update in Peter Kelly’s absence
      * Peter Kelly is hoping to have an AAS field trip there—the farm suggested sometime in May
    - They do have wetlands and other interesting habitat surrounding their farm.
  + FSU Sustainability Fellows
    - Sarah is signed on to continue her Fellowship through the end of this school year and will focus on an interpretive sign about the bat house
    - Pete talked about how our relationship with this program has been great so far and raises the point that we can have more than one Fellow if we have ideas for projects
  + Boy Scouts leadership training
    - Rob will help the Scouts with this in March
  + Field trip to Lake Elberta for FSU Outdoor Recreation
    - Pete will be working unless we can find a different date/time with them, Nelson may also be working but is interested in helping
    - Tentative date/time is April 1st from 2-4:30pm
    - Kathleen and Donna may help if need be
  + Wildlife Friendly Yard Tour
    - Pre-recorded video
    - Zoom event hosted for viewing, with ticket sales for fundraising
    - Q&A for our attendees
    - ½ hour at Jeff VanderMeer’s yard
    - Shorter time at Brian Bryson’s pond
    - Dara will conduct the Zoom
    - Amelia will set up the “ticket sales”
    - Donna can “interview”
    - Tammy Brown will get the word out for this event
    - Pete can help if need be
    - Peter Goren suggests including a plant list and info about what wildlife the plants attract
    - Amelia suggests including information about water features or other wildlife fun.
    - Norma will help with lists
  + Friends of Lake Jackson
    - Dara tells us that Caitlin has asked about doing a waterfowl program with us
    - Possibility of a paddling birding event with a small group, maybe around 10 people
    - No date set, just an idea at this point
    - Pete says Jeff O’Connell is an expert in birding at Lake Jackson
  + Collaborative grants
    - Waiting to hear back. Skipped until next meeting.
  + Chapter Sales
    - T-shirt idea generally liked by all in attendance
    - Good advertisement and gives purchaser sense of “belonging” to a group
    - Harvey raises the point that they aren’t huge fundraisers and sales add more financial work for not a lot of gain
    - Trouble with shipping during Covid and storing until sold
    - Kathleen mentions possibility of using an online vendor that prints and ships them to order, we only need to upload our art and options for people to choose from
    - Amelia suggests maybe membership levels can include a shirt, Kathleen brings up that a lot of our memberships go through National Audubon. May be too tricky to take on doing our own memberships
    - Dara likes our logo but brings up potentially changing it, coming up with a more colorful design, or holding an open call for submissions
    - Donna suggests revisiting during retreat
* Conservation
  + Braille Trail Workday
    - Kathleen says things were rolling but came to a halt because Covid has picked up in Monticello. We are on hold for now.
  + Climate Watch
    - Liz Schold is not in attendance, so we may revisit next month
    - Heather has experience doing it in Athens
    - Citizen Science project with specific points to record about simple to ID species
    - Spring is probably not possible at this point due to planning needed, but maybe Fall
    - Idea is tabled until Retreat
  + Conservation Updates
    - Parks Service will get part of land between Ochlockonee and Bald Point, Forest Service will manage interior portion
    - FL vs GA court case: was sent back to a Special Master and he ruled against FL again. Little hope for this lawsuit for FL now that we have even more conservative judges. National Audubon not interested in getting involved. Amicus Brief to contest the Environmental Impact portion of case since it leaves much to be desired.
    - Wakulla Springs Alliance aim to challenge rapid infiltration basin being put in nearby and look for other groups to stand with them in a letter of opposition. Rob will attend meeting with them. AAS agreed to sign on.
  + Leon County Democratic Party – Environmental Committee
    - Audubon is non-partisan, but we may be involved as private citizens
    - Starting an Environmental Committee to work on local policies and push local candidates on environmental issues
    - First meeting is this Friday (Jan. 15th) at 6pm to meet each other and vote to seat a temporary Chair of the committee. You need not be a voting member (internal position) within the party, but if you would like to be, that is also possible. Contact Nelson if you would like to be involved at any level.
* Next Board Meeting is Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2021 at 6:30 via Zoom