

PSO Board of Directors Summary of Teleconference Meeting – March 20, 2024

Members participating: David Barber, Chelsea Beck, Dan Brauning, Brian Byrnes, Carolyn Hendricks, Laura Jackson, Jeff Kenney, Mary Alice Koeneke, Wayne Laubscher, Doug Wentzel, Frank Haas.

Members absent: Valerie Dunn, Tony DeSantis, Julia Plummer, Emily Thomas, Karter Witmer, Mark Bonta, Margaret Higbee, Sean Murphy, Nathan Weyandt.

Invited guests: Sheree Dougherty, Frank Moore

Meeting called to order 7 pm - Dan Brauning. A quorum was present.

- **Motion to approve the January 2024 minutes passed unanimously.**

Festival updates - Brian Byrnes

- Registration will open online at 8 am April 1, 2024, for members followed by social media outreach to solicit additional registrants.
- There is plenty of capacity, with multiple field trips that can accommodate 150-160 participants on Saturday and Sunday.
- Multiple vendors will participate including Audubon Society of Western PA.
- There will be a bird book exchange.
- The banquet meeting was circulated including a Chef's Choice vegan option.
- There are some unassigned opportunities for board members to volunteer for the meeting including IT/laptop setup on Saturday night which is a pressing need.
- Registration materials also need to be decided on and prepared. Mary Alice Koeneke volunteered to staff the registration table.
 - Frank Haas will send the meeting pins to Mary Alice Koeneke.
 - Frank Haas and Jeff Kenney will make sure that Brian Byrnes gets the T-shirts to sell.
 - Brian Byrnes will prepare the badges in advance of the meeting.
 - Carolyn Hendricks will prepare and print meeting materials which will also include some content from Sheree Dougherty from the Washington County Tourism Bureau.
- Meeting costs are about the same this .
 - Registration cost will be set at the following rates:

PSO Member	\$43
PSO Member Family Member	\$38
PSO Non-Member	\$53
PSO Non-Member Family Member	\$48
Student	\$23
Banquet Fee (Actual Cost \$52)	\$49
 - Registration will be linked with one year of digital membership for new members. This is a good marketing approach and should streamline voting during the Annual Meeting.
 - With 130 paid registrations, these prices should result in a break-even costs for the PSO.
 - The cost assessment factors in a \$1000 donation from sponsorship by the National Aviary which has not been received yet. They will receive banquet tickets.
 - Additional sponsors are needed for subsequent meetings. Laura Jackson proposed that the PSO consider organizational sponsorship/membership, not specific to meetings.
- **MOTION from the Planning Committee to approve the entire financial package passed unanimously.**
- Brian Byrnes thanked all directors who have participated in meeting planning.
- The committee will meet again on March 27, 2024 at 7 pm.

Nominations Update

- Four board members are departing: Tony DeSantis (Lackawanna County), Margaret Higbee (Indiana County), Julia Plummer (Centre County) and Emily Thomas (Clearfield County)
- Four current directors will be voted on for reelection: Brian Byrnes (Delaware County), Frank Haas (Lancaster County), Laura Jackson (Bedford County), and Wayne Laubscher (Clinton County)
- Four new board members will be voted on: Sheree Dougherty (Allegheny County), Joseph Gyekis (Union County), Brian Miller (Crawford County) and Richard Rieger (Schuylkill County)
- Five new ex officio members will be: Dan Brauning (Lycoming County) – Past President, Mark Bonta (Blair County) – Editor Pennsylvania Birds, Julia Plummer (Centre County) – PORC Chairperson, Kaitlyn Stouch – Editor Newsletter and Sean Murphy – State Ornithologist
- The following officer candidates have been nominated:
 - President Brian Byrnes (Delaware County)
 - Vice President Carolyn Hendricks (Bedford County)
 - Secretary Valerie Dunn (Lancaster County)
 - Treasurer Franklin Haas (Lancaster County)
- Dan Brauning will present these nominations to the full membership at the meeting.

Preparations for the 2025 meeting:

- A discussion was held of two potential sites: Wilkes Barre Lackawanna/Luzerne (this has some phenomenal habitat because of the elevation and would be terrific in the summer for breeding birds for atlasing but we have hosted there before) and Allentown/Lehigh Valley (this would be ideal in the spring (avoiding graduations and Memorial Day) because of proximity to multiple hawk watches). Dan Brauning has had some outreach to both Lehigh Valley and Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon societies.
- Dan Brauning will continue to investigate Allentown/Lehigh in May/June as the site for the 2025 Festival.
- This will be discussed further and ideally voted on during our May board meeting.

Conservation Committee Update – Laura Jackson

- PSO received eight applications (the highest ever) and awarded three to: Allegheny Land Trust (Southwest region), Pocono Environmental Education Center (Northeast region), and Rider Park (North Central region).
- The flagship species (those of greatest conservation need that would benefit from these projects and inspire fundraising) are: American Black Duck, American Woodcock, and Black-and-white warbler.
- The Blitz website opens for applications on April 1, 2024. The blitz will be held on June 7 – June 17, 2024.

Journals Update

- Kaitlyn Stouch will be editing her 1st newsletter immediately after the festival.

Events and Field Trips Committee Update – Jeff Kenney

- Jeff Kenney reported on the Forest County Spotlight.
- The Fulton County Spotlight will occur in last week in April 2024. The Warren County Spotlight will occur in October 2024.
- Chad Kaufmann continues to establish the Spotlight schedule and will ideally incorporate some atlas hot spots next summer.
- Jeff Kenney and Brian Byrnes are working on out-of-state field trips including one through HillStar that would be offered to PSO members including a 7-day trip to Glacier National Park in Montana tentatively in June 2025 and a land-based and pelagic trip out of Ocean City, MD in 2024.

Bylaws Update – Dan Brauning

- Dan Brauning had our proposed bylaws revisions reviewed by a local attorney.
- The Education and Field Trips and Events Committees have been combined.
- **MOTION to amend the draft bylaws by deleting the PA residency requirement was approved unanimously.** Dan also plans to review this with the attorney.
- **MOTION to ADOPT THE REVISED BY-LAWS was approved unanimously.**
- Dan Brauning thanked all who were involved in the revisions process.
- After final approval, they will be circulated and posted on the website.

New Business

- PSO has had a request for an exhibit at Middle Creeks' International Migratory Bird Day May 11, 2024. This is short notice, has no precedent, and would require finalizing our new brochure. PSO should prepare for these requests in the future but will decline this specific request.
- Frank Haas is working on a comprehensive Meeting Planning Checklist to help facilitate meeting planning. Frank Haas plans to request input from the entire board about the Checklist after this year's meeting.

Next meeting May 8, 2024 at 7 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Recorded by Carolyn Hendricks for Valerie Dunn.