



Howard County Bird Club
A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society
Board of Directors Meeting - Minutes
Thursday, February 22, 2024

Attendance [In-person presence indicated by (√), virtual attendance by (#), Voting Member by (*)]

2023-2024 Club Officers:

President:* Gregg Petersen √
Vice-president:* Val Swan √
Secretary:* Chuck Stirrat √
Treasurer:* Tim Thompson √
Chap. Directors:* Lauren McDougle (1st yr.) #
Nancy McAllister (2nd yr.)
State Directors:* Donna Carollo
John McKitterick #
David Sandler #
Sherry Tomlinson #
Past President:* Mary Maxey √

Standing Committees:

Records:* Jo Solem #
Publicity/Outreach:* Kelsey Wellons #
Programs:* Mary Lou Clark √
Newsletter:* Megan Bolcar
Habitat:* Sue Probst √
Butterflies:* Kevin Heffernan
Field Trips:* Joe Hanfman
Conservation:* Robin Todd #

Working Groups

Webmaster/Membership: Bob Solem
Potluck: Sherry Tomlinson/
Meghaan Lane #
BBA3: Sue Muller

Others:

General Notes

The meeting was held in a hybrid format with the in-person portion held at the home of Mary Lou Clark. Total number in attendance was 16 (7 in person/ 9 Zoom). Attendance at the regular club meeting held February 8, 2024 was 65 (37 in person/ 28 Zoom). Kurt Schwarz gave a program entitled “Miles and Miles of Texas, Hill Country, and Big Bend.” As the Board meeting was getting started, Val awarded Mary Maxey an appreciation coin for her many past years and continuing service to the club.

Officer’s Reports

President’s Remarks (Petersen): Gregg thanked the Board for continuing service and reminded us our goal was to conclude by 9 pm. He also asked us to avoid discussion of politics. He had forwarded the updated list of those who had received appreciation coins since our last meeting. He noted that several board members had asked if we needed to have so many attachments to the agenda (e.g., the coin list). The board agreed we didn’t need to see the whole list but just learn who was a new awardee, and that should be included in the text of the minutes. This month the new recipients awarded by Gregg were Mark Wallace and Tom Seivert at the Mid-winter Count Tally; Val Swan, Ye-Ying Lee, and Guy DiRoma at the February club meeting; and Allen Lewis at the Lake Elkhorn Bird Walk. He mentioned that he would send Kelsey a picture to post on Facebook that the Fink’s had sent upon receiving their coin in December. Gregg reported that he had asked three current Board members to serve as mentors to the three board nominees that will be new members of the board next year. Lastly, he apologized for the late delivery of the agenda and attachments for this meeting. He has set a goal to try and have them out a week before the meeting so members will have time to study the attachments in advance of the meeting.

Vice-President’s Remarks (Swan): No remarks.

Review of Minutes/Secretary (Stirrat): Chuck reported that he had received several corrections to the draft he had sent to the board on February 17. He apologized for them taking so long due to conflicting tasks. In addition to several minor typos, the author of the paper with Loon release news links was generated by Gregg rather than Val, he implemented the practice of referring to Sue P. and Sue M. rather than just Sue as we have two with that first name on the board, added “a” to Brenda Lee where it was missing in two places. Gregg expanded the discussion of the action to work on a Winter Feeder Watch trip providing the following sentence. “In lieu of the Winter Feeder

Watch trip Val has organized two Beginning Birder Watch and Walks at HCC for March where the trip starts observing at the HCC feeders.” Gregg clarified that it was MOS, not HCBC, that had sent letters to Anne Arundel on the park parcel near Oxbow Lake, and that he had wanted the club to send similar letters as well. Gregg provided the following sentence to replace the sentence regarding a rumor about RNC. “Gregg shared that if anyone had heard a rumor that Robinson Nature Center was filling the Environmental Educator mission for the county, he had talked to Shannon Davis and that was incorrect.” Wording changes were made in two New/Continuing action items as follows: “REASSIGNED to Mary Maxey” and “OBE” changed to “Replaced by Val’s Beginning Birder Watch and Walks at HCC.” The Board Schedule was changed to reflect that Gregg and Mary Lou had swapped months and Mary Maxey had volunteered to host the March meeting. During the meeting Val pointed out that Cathy Hallam and Terri Berkheimer had volunteered to be co-leaders on “beginner” trips only. The minutes were approved with these corrections.

Treasurer’s Report/Treasurer (Thompson): Tim provided the attached Treasurer’s Report. It shows the club has a total balance of \$547,010.04. He reported that we had received a final settlement check from the Ponce estate in the amount of \$21,276.05 that has been deposited in the PNC checking account. The amount was added to the balance of the virtual Ponce fund. Chuck proposed, and the board concurred we didn’t need to maintain a balance in checking over \$20K, and we should deposit a portion of the funds in the money market fund with Vanguard. Tim was tasked with estimating near-term expected outlays and based on that, transfer some of the funds to Vanguard.

Tim reported that a set of final comments on the preliminary tax returns for our 2021 and 2022 tax year had been provided to the accountants. We anticipate having a final draft for review by the board in the next couple of weeks. Gregg proposes to have a Zoom session to provide the club an opportunity to ask questions and then vote to approve submission of the returns. We anticipate a tax preparation fee of ~\$1064 (recognizing that this is decreased by fact the firm is doing much of the extra work pro bono). The extra work resulted from us having not maintained records in the past suitable for the expanded tax returns mandated by the large Ponce bequest.

Lastly Gregg directed Tim to send our donation of \$300 to the YMOS Birdathon as it is an approved line item in our budget.

Standing Committee Reports

Records (Jo Solem): Jo had provided the attached report. She commented that it would be difficult to follow the prior season which had so many highlights. She mentioned reports of American Tree Sparrow and the first report of displaying American Woodcock which was reported day of Board meeting. She mentioned attempts to provide help to more advanced birding, making reference to the article on identifying Palm Warbler sub-species in the latest Goldfinch. She also recommended the series of discussions Bonnie has been posting on Facebook as worth a look. She ended by saying an interesting article on identifying winter swans by Dave Ziolkowski is planned for the May/June issue of the Goldfinch. Chuck mentioned that it looks like the final species count for the Mid-winter Count will be 90 species.

Publicity/Outreach (Wellons): Kelsey reported that the Facebook page is doing fine. She stated that she will upgrade our subscription to Zoom to allow more attendees (limit 1000) at a cost of an additional \$50 per month to cover a potential large attendance at the March meeting. Evelyn Ralston, MOS President, is encouraging Montgomery chapter attendance due to having Mr. Franceschi speak at our March 14 meeting for 15 minutes, this is the day before our access to the reservoir opens for all MOS members. Kelsey will cancel the upgrade after the March meeting so we will only pay an additional \$50. Kelsey stated that she has purchased the camera microphone and will submit the invoice to Tim. Gregg has asked her to reach out to the county council members and explore whether they might include announcements of some of our activities in their newsletters. In addition, it was recommended that she ask Allen Lewis for his experience in trying to get our events included in news outlets like the Sun, Columbia Flyer, and Howard County Times. Chuck said he subscribes to the HC Times and would send her a reference for that.

Programs (Clark): Mary Lou thanked all the club members who have given programs. She asked for everyone to make suggestions for future speakers but did ask that if they approach any of these speakers, that they make no commitment as if she can’t support it, it is very embarrassing. She is already working on the programs for 2025.

Gregg announced that we will start the March meeting 15 minutes early to accommodate Mr. Franceschi speaking. We agreed to include the list of 2024 programs in these minutes, but eliminate the list as an attachment in future months,

Newsletter (Bolcar): Not present.

Habitat (Probst): Sue P. said she spoke to Brenda Lee about mowing policy, but it appears there is no real policy, but rather the mowing occurs when people are available to do it and it is unlikely to be able to schedule it around bird requirements. As for the contractor used for prepping the field west of the Davis Branch at HCC, it was done by the same firm as the first estimate HCC had received was from. Gregg reported that HCC has requested quotes from two other firms before proceeding further. In pursuing influencing mowing best practices of the 850 acres of grasslands at Alpha Ridge Landfill, Gregg had reached out to Councilperson Deb Jung. She is assisting with setting up a meeting with Howard County Department of Public Works to discuss this topic.

Butterflies (Kevin Heffernan): No report.

Field Trips (Hanfman): No report.

Conservation (Todd): Robin was in the Zoom from the Cayman Islands. He briefly mentioned those items he is tracking. He commented on the parcel of Anne Arundel School Board property adjacent to Oxbow Lake that MOS had opposed turning into developed park land. Jay Sheppard had informed Robin that a portion of the property includes a bog that precludes developing the property. The bill proposing an open Tundra Swan hunting season is still under consideration. Robin continues to work on a petition to the EPA on Neonicotinoids that urges them to require efficacy data, especially for seed treatment. At the recent I Bird / I Vote conference, he learned that there is a bill proposing a new state park (Gwynns Falls State Park) that would combine Leakin Park, Gwynns Falls Trail and Winans Meadow. There is a hearing on a lead shot ban in Annapolis on February 27. He and Kurt along with other HCC supporters including Woody Merkle attended in support of the HCC environmental educator position at the school board hearing on planned staff cuts. A bill proposing to protect vernal pools (by requiring a 100-foot buffer) has been proposed. Robin said he and Sue Muller attended the meeting on a new Howard County redevelopment plan for Columbia Gateway, but he didn't come away with a clear picture of what is being planned and its impact. MOS supported Montgomery funding of stream restoration if it was done in an ecologically sensitive manner. He has worked on testimony urging planting of native plants along Maryland highways with a focus on pollinators. In The Reclaim Renewable Energy Act would stop funding incineration of trash in Maryland in an attempt to decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

Work Group Reports

Webmaster/Membership (Bob Solem): Bob reported that the website home page has a new look (<https://howardbirds.website>). It moves important information closer to the top and makes the page more smart-phone compatible. He also implemented some email changes to preclude our messages being considered to be spam, following a number of new spam filter changes in browsers, such as Chrome. He has implemented alerts on the webpage alerting potential new members to the benefit that joining after March 1 gives them 18 months of membership vice the normal 12 months as the membership extends through the following membership year. He also has made it easier to give a gift membership (including the 18-month bonus as well). There have been a few renewals this month but no new ones as we have been advising them to wait until March 1, so they get the benefit. The current membership is 355 regular members and 22 affiliate members. Gregg has updated the new membership goal for the new membership year (2024-2025) to 371. In response to a question from Val, Bob reported he would provide the Board with the updated membership contacts list after the year's membership finalizes, which will be shortly after March 1. If Board members need contact information for or to confirm a specific individual is or has been a member, they can ask Bob.

Potluck (Tomlinson/Lane): Sherry reported that there are approximately 50 participants signed up for the March 23 potluck. Kelsey proposed that she could post an invitation on the club Facebook page and was told to do that.

Breeding Bird Atlas 3 / Safe Skies (Muller): Sue M. was not present. Gregg provided an update on the Robinson Nature Center Safe Skies window treatment. RNC submitted an invoice to Bob Linz for Howard County funding of

the Feather Friendly solution earlier in the week. He reminded us that we had offered to provide up to \$7K to help fund this but Councilperson Deb Jung had indicated that funding this had already been directed in the past. Gregg stated he would check with her on the status of this funding. Moreover, he noted that the treatment of high windows at RNC would require the use of a lift. He mentioned this since HCC learned they also would require renting a lift for their installation and their original request did not include use of a lift. They also had to change another aspect learned once the installer was on sight. As a result on Feb. 14, they requested we provide an additional \$1760. The Executive Committee approved this additional expense based on the unanimous approval of the original proposal by the Board. The total cost of the project that we are supporting is \$4928. Since our earlier support of the window treatment in the past was taken from the Chestem Fund it is appropriate to use that source for this effort. The Board had expressed a desire to have HCC acknowledge our contribution in a formal manner. As a result, a “meet-and-greet” between the club and HCC staff will provide an opportunity for a small ceremony recognizing the contribution and for both groups to get to know each other. In a related matter the sign that acknowledges the original gift and provides information on bird-safe window treatment has been corrected to have a current URL link to Safe-skies on the MOS website including the addition of a QR code. *Sec. Note: The meet-and-greet that was scheduled for March 23 at 9:00 am at the Gudelsky Education Center has been postponed.*

Sue M. had proposed encouraging people to participate in a planned Somerset County BBA3 block-busting weekend by subsidizing some of their costs. Gregg noted that the budget submitted by the MOS Budget Committee for next year included an increase in BBA3 support up \$3265 to \$6500 to “...focus on encouraging atlasers to cover underserved areas that may require substantial mileage. The increase would support travel costs, including mileage and food and drink for blockbusting events.” Since Sue M. was not present (due to an email address error by Gregg, Sue did not receive the board announcement), her proposal was tabled until next month’s meeting. *Pres. Note: At the March 2nd MOS meeting in Baltimore on March 2 Gabriel Foley stated the money would be given in some manner for mileage but in a manner for specific underserved areas that he would allocate in some manner.*

State Board Director Reports

State Board Meeting (Petersen, Carollo, McKitterick, Sandler, Tomlinson, Todd, etc.): A special MOS Board meeting was held on February 3, which conflicted with our Mid-winter Count. John McKitterick and Robin Todd attended. John reported that MOS has a proposal for a policy to cover club and chapter liability from a new company. Nationwide, who had been MOS insurer, is dropping out of the business. John understands the need for coverage to be reinstated (e.g., we need it to provide access to WSSC for counts and probably the broader access we have negotiated. John also mentioned that MOS is considering whether to accept a 125-acre parcel in Frederick County – Linganore Creek as another sanctuary. The current owner is 83 and has a dream of reinstating Bobwhite on the property. It has some wonderful habitat, and the owner is interested in leaving the farm to MOS. John says he will likely be putting together a field trip to show the property to more MOS members/leadership. One very long-term idea is that it might host a nature center for Frederick County.

Former MOS President, Bonnie Borsa, passed away on February 14, with services scheduled for Feb. 24. The next MOS Board meeting is scheduled for March 2nd at Cylburn Arboretum in Baltimore.

Old Business

Future Board Meetings- We still need a volunteer to host the May Board meeting. This is the meeting where the newly elected officers attend. Gregg floated the idea that we might want to have a social before the September meeting and get a Board picture.

Custom Imprint Logo Wear Additions – Gregg worked with Probst, Wellons, Clark, Swan, and Schwarz to request more items on the Logo Wear website (<https://howardcountybirdclub.itemorder.com/shop/home/>) as described in the attachment. In addition, an embroidered patch is under development, Women’s embroidered V-neck shirts & sizes are being added, club decal logo Windbreaker is being added, and Butterfly shirts have been ordered. We expect the embroidered patch for approval by early March. *Sec. Note – The links in the attachment do not appear to work, but items should be available once added to the club website link above.*

Request for Loaner Binoculars for Youth Events – Val Swan and Gregg reported that to address one concern raised last month, accountability, a preliminary list of club equipment to be reviewed monthly has been developed (see

attachment). We agreed the very old backup laptop (item 2) hasn't been used in over five years and can be deleted. This had been used to drive the display at back of room in past, but now you can just insert a USB stick in display screen so no longer needed. A pop-up canopy used for outdoor events is currently retained by Kristin Trouton.

Val had submitted an updated proposal request for loaner binoculars for young group events. See attachment. In discussion we agreed that a case/pack to carry the ten pairs in was necessary. Accordingly, the final motion specified providing \$1100 to purchase ten pairs of the recommended binoculars with hard cases and a carrying case/pack. The motion was moved, seconded, and approved unanimously. Sherry asked whether we should purchase hard copy field guides for the kids to use. Those who have been leading trips for youth recently said that it was now much easier to use the free field guide apps on smart phones than books.

“Nominating Committee” to fill Chapter and State Director positions – Gregg explained that since no one volunteered to be on a nominating committee at the last board meeting he took another approach. In lieu of the committee he individually requested nominations from each board member on January 30. He received 25 names by noon the next day. The list was narrowed to 14 candidates considered qualified. Gregg worked with the Executive Committee in lieu of a nominating committee to prioritize the list. The three top choices were approached and accepted their nomination. He shared the names, but they are not listed here pending the formal announcement of the slate at the March club meeting. Gregg also said he felt it was good practice to identify a mentor for each of the new board members to help them in serving on the board. David Sandler, John McKitterick, and Lauren McDougale have agreed to serve as mentors.

YMOS Committee Formation – Gregg has tabled work on a YMOS committee for now. Gregg has taken on an action to develop a “youth list.” Bob has provided a household list that Gregg can use in identifying potential youth for his list.

YMOS Backpack Competition– Gregg reported that Brittany Parsons has worked with Bob to establish a web page (link provided) on the club website. The competition starts March 1 and has a deadline for submitting forms by March 31. This will allow time to select winners and award the backpacks (Gregg obtained a 2nd one from George Radcliffe. Announcements were put out on the Scout round table last week and Ann Strozyk (HCC environmental educator) is posting it on the Howard County schools science bulletin board next week.

Waterford Flats – Gregg had collaborated with members of the Waterford Flats Committee to draft the attached memo that addresses access to Sharp's at Waterford Farm (SAWF) following questions being raised that some club members appeared to have preferential access to the SAWF. During this effort it was recognized that in the original MOU with Chuck Sharp a HCBC principal contact for scheduling our events at the SAWF and to liaise with the farm owner (Mr. Sharp). We are to notify Mr. Sharp should the principal contact change. John Harris was the original contact but since John had stepped aside Chuck had been contacting Val because she had been working with him on the seeding project. Gregg has appointed her as the our SAWF contact and informed Mr. Sharp that she is now our principal contact, with Gregg as an alternate. Gregg suggested that the proposal is not unlike what happens when Ralph Cullison, who has approved access for atlasng, finds a rarity at the Alpha Ridge Landfill. He and Joe liaise with the landfill staff to arrange a controlled access. The Board requested that they be given a chance to review the memorandum before being asked to approve it. Further consideration was deferred until the next Board meeting. Gregg mentioned that in accordance with the MOU the “Flats” committee needs to develop a work plan for the coming season by early March. Lastly, he reported that he had no luck in negotiating access for all MOS members, and Mr. Sharp has deferred the issue until the renewal of the current MOU, which expires July 15, 2025. Gregg has accepted an action to work with Russ and the committee on a new MOU. During the discussion it was observed that the video required to be viewed before accessing Waterford Flats is very lengthy and an equally effective one that is shorter is desirable. Gregg and Kelsey agreed to review the video and edit it to have the necessary content on the proper process for access while shortening it by eliminating extraneous material.

“Carbon Footprint as a Birder” – Gregg confirmed that Robin had asked to let Mary Maxey take the lead on this effort. No update to the original paper, that Robin made a good faith effort on in Mary's absence, had been received. Gregg indicated it was his intent to reach a resolution on this by the March Board meeting.

Club Information Card Update – Mary Lou Clark recommended closing this action item for now. We have plenty of cards on hand. The card can be given with the business card (QR code) for latest contact information.

Detailed implementation of board reorganization for website – Gregg is still working on a detailed implementation of the reorganized board that can be posted on the website. He has worked with Kelsey on fleshing out the role of the Publicity/Outreach standing committee. He hopes to put together an updated Organization Chart with the faces of the Officers & Chairpersons.

MOTUS Tower – Gregg had provided the fact sheet last meeting and was hoping to have time to find out the Board's thoughts on this project, but time didn't permit at this meeting. Gregg included the following points in the agenda but said we will need to discuss this later.

- \$7.5K as a ballpark for the purchase, installation, and maintenance of a "typical" station.
- HCC has begun looking for where they might install a tower with thoughts toward showcasing it as a learning opportunity.
- West Friendship Park? Western Regional Park? Tower needs a decluttered 20-kilometer radio reception line of sight.

Summary of Board Actions Taken between Regular Board Meetings (document as Old Business)

- Butterfly Logo Design Approval – On February 8, the butterfly committee working on the design for a scarf to use on the butterfly table at events submitted their final design. To allow ordering the scarf in time for GreenFest, Gregg submitted the design to the Board via email, and asked for expeditious votes of approval or disapproval. The majority of the Board responded with approval prior to the club meeting that evening, so Gregg shared the design with the membership at the meeting and approved for Sue P. to go forward and purchase the scarf. Sec. update: As of March 11 long- and short-sleeved T-shirts with the new Butterfly Logo design in men's, women's, and youth sizes are available for purchase on the Custom Imprint site.

New Business

Black Birders Week request for trip guide for HCC – Gregg had received an inquiry from the Conservancy regarding them hoping to have a bird walk during Black Birder Week (May 26 – June 1). They were hoping we could find a Black birder to lead it. Gregg has put out a few feelers, but we may not be able to find a Black birder who could lead it. Joe Hanfman, Gregg, and others are working to find someone. Gregg briefly floated the possibility of offering free memberships to black birders who applied during Black Birder Week, but we quickly dismissed this as inappropriate.

MOS Awards list for information – Gregg provided the attached list of MOS Awards that we can use to recognize members and others for their support of the club. He hopes to make use of these as worthy awardees are identified.

Review of Prior Action Items

- Review and edit the club information card when it is sent to the board – All CLOSE FOR NOW
- Prepare a formal proposal on "Carbon footprint as a Birder" for consideration – Mary Maxey
- Continue to develop a detailed implementation of the restructured organization – Gregg
- Speak to Brenda Lee about Howard Rec & Parks pollinator meadow mowing policy – Sue Probst DONE
- Draft new/updated MOU for Waterford Flats addressing MOS access - Gregg, Russ Ruffing, and Flats Committee
- Find hosts for Mar and May Board Meetings – All NEED MAY
- Develop design for the Butterfly scarf for tabling events with input from the Butterfly committee – Probst, Heffernan, Litzinger DONE
- Renew Zoom subscription – Kelsey DONE
- Prepare response to latest responses from tax advisor – Tim, Chuck DONE
- Provide Bob with information to post "Merlin" class on website – Val DONE
- Develop mailing inviting members to potluck and establish on-line registration – Meghaan, Bob DONE
- Research others experience with providing children loaner binoculars – Val, Gregg DONE
- Buy microphone – Kelsey DONE
- Coordinate the YMOS Backpack competition – Brittany Parsons, Gregg

New/Continuing Action Items:

- Prepare a formal proposal on “Carbon footprint as a Birder” for consideration – Mary Maxey
- Continue to develop a detailed implementation of the restructured organization – Gregg
- Draft new/updated MOU for Waterford Flats addressing MOS access - Gregg, Russ Ruffing, & Committee
- Find hosts for May Board Meetings – All
- Coordinate the YMOS Backpack competition – Brittany Parsons, Gregg
- Transfer excess funds in checking account to Vanguard money market fund – Tim
- Send YMOS Birdathon our contribution of \$300 – Tim
- Raise participant limit on Zoom subscription prior to March meeting & then cancel after meeting – Kelsey
- Explore additional news outlets for club announcements (check with Allen Lewis, others) – Kelsey
- Provide Kelsey with contact information for Howard County Times calendar section – Chuck
- Coordinate making arrangements to start March club meeting 15 minutes early – Gregg, Kelsey, Bob
- Make arrangements with Deb Jung to meet with the Howard Department of Public Works to discuss potential best practices for mowing Alpha Ridge Landfill - Gregg
- Provide Board members the member contact information after March 1 membership finalizes – Bob
- Purchase youth binoculars, hard cases, and carrying case/pack – Val
- Develop a “youth” list – Gregg
- Identify potential “leader(s)” for Black Birders Week bird walk at HCC – Joe, Gregg, ??

Around the Room

Nothing of note reported as time was late.

Board Meeting Schedule

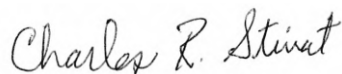
Board meetings are generally held 4th Thursday of month at 7:30 PM (hybrid)

- September 28, 2023 - Gregg Petersen
- October 26, 2023 - Mary Maxey
- November 2023 - NO MEETING (moved to the first Thursday of December to avoid
- December 7, 2023 - Val Swan (Gregg absent) Thanksgiving & even out time between meetings
- January 25, 2024 - Gregg Petersen
- February 22, 2024 - Mary Lou Clark
- March 28, 2024 - Mary Maxey
- April 25, 2024 - John McKitterick
- May 23, 2024 - (Joint meeting with new and old members)

Attachments (Copies of handouts provided at meeting and club correspondence filed with original minutes)

- Agenda – February 22, 2024
- Treasurer Report – January 1 – 31, 2024
- Records Committee Report – February 22, 2024 (January 23 – February 19, 2024) – Joanne Solem
- Howard County Bird Club Programs 2024 – Mary Lou Clark
- HCBC Additions to the Custom Imprints Website
- Howard County Bird Club Property Inventory – as of Feb 22, 2024 (preliminary)
- Request for Loaner Binoculars for Young Group Events (update in red)
- HCBC Information Paper – Waterford Flats & Greater Sharp’s at Waterford Farm Access is an approved Waterford Flats procedure memo by the WF Committee. Mary Lou requested to review and discuss this at the March Meeting.
- MOS Awards

Minutes submitted by:



Charles R. Stirrat
Secretary, Howard County Bird Club

Howard County Bird Club Board Agenda February 22, 2024

Topic: HCBC Board Meeting - Feb. 22 @ 7:30

Time: Feb 22, 2024 07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81017527880?pwd=VTRaK3Z5aGV0U1VpdHFLZXg1Yytsdz09>

Meeting ID: 810 1752 7880

Passcode: 473474

Agenda

- President's Remarks –
 - Thanks for your continuing service!
 - 2 reminders: 9pm conclusion and no politics please.
 - Appreciation Coins (Update enclosed-2)
 - Other MOS state awards – discussed at new business
- Vice President's Remarks – Val Swan
- Review of Minutes - Chuck Stirrat (Minutes enclosed-3)
- Treasurer's Report-Tim Thompson (January report enclosed-4)
 - 2021/2022 Filing correction update – final draft
 - Will need board review – probably in the next 2 weeks via Zoom.
 - Bill for tax preparation @\$1064. (Significant amount is pro bono effort by preparer)
 - YMOS Birdathon Support **ACTION: Board vote to approve.**
- Standing Committee Reports
 - Records-Jo Solem (enclosed-5)
 - Publicity/Outreach-Kelsey Wellons
 - County rep newsletters?
 - Programs 2024 Schedule-Mary Lou Clark (enclosed-6)
 - March meeting will start 15 minutes early to accommodate Mr. Franceschi (day before 2024 WSSC access opens)
 - MOS President Evelyn Ralston requested Montgomery and other clubs' access to Zoom, Gregg approved \$50 surge charge for one month zoom increase.
 - Newsletter-Megan Bolcar
 - Habitat-Sue Probst
 - Gregg reached out to Deb Jung this week for meeting with HoCo DPW concerning Alpha Ridge best practices for grasslands.
 - Butterflies-Kevin Heffernan
 - Field Trips –Joe Hanfman
 - Conservation-Robin Todd
- Work Group Reports

- Webmaster/Membership – Bob Solem
 - New membership goal for 23-24 is 371.
 - New website home page look! <https://howardbirds.website>
- Potluck-Sherry Tomlinson w/Meghaan Lane March 23, 2024
 - [HCBC 2024 Potluck](#)
- Safe Skies/BBA3-Sue Muller
 - HCBC funding proposal for Somerset County Atlasing On
 - Robinson Nature Center – submitted their invoice to Bob Linz of HoCo for funding Feather Friendly solution on Tuesday, Feb 21.
 - Depending on HoCo response, HCBC has previously agreed to help cover expenses up to \$7000.
 - Gregg to check with Deb Jung on previously directed funding.
 - HCC – **Requested additional funding of \$1760 for lifts for high window on Feb 14**, Executive Committee approved based on prior unanimous support by board: **Total cost supported: \$4928.**
 - BBA3 Somerset County Atlasing: Breeding Bird Atlas: Made MOS budget request made Feb 3 for \$6500, which was \$3265 above the current year budget. “...focus on encouraging atlasers to cover underserved areas that may require substantial mileage. **The increase would support travel costs, including mileage and food and drink for blockbusting events.**”
- **State Board Director Reports** – Carollo, McKitterick, Sandler, Tomlinson
 - Bonnie Borsa passed away Feb 14-services Feb 24.
 - Next meeting March 2nd
- **Old Business**
 - Need Host for May Board Meeting – All Board Members. Social before last meeting in May (take straw poll)?
 - Custom Imprint Logo Wear Additions – Probst, Wellons, Clark, Swan, and Schwarz (**enclosed-7**)
 - Embroidered patch under development, Women’s embroidered V-neck shirts & sizes being added, Decal logo Windbreaker added, Butterfly shirts ordered. We expect embroidered patch for approval in the next 2 weeks.
 - Request for Loaner Binoculars for Youth Events – Val Swan and Gregg
 - One concern last month was accountability. Items will be accounted for monthly: (**enclosed- 8**)
 - (**Enclosure 9**). **ACTION: Request Board vote to approve Loaner Binoculars for Youth Events (\$1000)**
 - “Nominating Committee” to fill Chapter and State Director positions.
 - Mandatory annual task: Noone volunteered to be nominating committee members at last board meeting. “Mr. or Ms. Blank Space” would not get the job done.
 - ILO the committee, Gregg individually requested nominations from each board member on Jan 30:

- 25 names were submitted by noon the next day, ultimately 14 candidates were qualified then prioritized by the Executive Committee ILO a Nominating Committee
 - Our top 3 choices accepted their nominations plus David Sandler, John McKitterick, and Lauren McDougale have agreed to serve as “board mentors” to orient the new members-a best practice for new board transitions.
 - YMOS Committee Formation-tabled.
 - Bob gave Gregg a household list to be developed into youth list. **ACTION:** Gregg
 - [YMOS Backpack Competition](#)– Brittany Peters will run the award competition.
 - March competition in time for award at the April meeting.
 - Gregg obtained a second backpack from George Ratcliffe.
 - Information put out for the scout round table last week and Ann Strozyk to post to HoCo school science bulletin board next week.
 - Waterford Flats-Petersen
 - Access memo and update of event and access liaison (enclosed-10)
 - Work plan for 2024 due by early March.
 - Still no luck including all MOS members for access. Mr. Sharp deferred to wait until renewal of 5-year MOU. **ACTION:** Gregg work on new MOU Waterford Flats draft with Russ and Flats Committee. MOU expires July 15, 2025.
 - “Carbon Footprint as a Birder”- Mary Maxey
- **New Business**
 - Black Birders Week request for trip guide for HCC – Joe Hanfman working.
 - Free memberships for Black Birder applications May 26 to Jun 1?
 - MOS Awards list for information (enclosed – 11)
- **Review of Prior Action Items**
 - Club Information Card Update – Mary Lou Clark Recommend closure for now. Plenty of cards on hand. Can be given with QR business card.
 - Butterfly table scarf design approved and being ordered – Sue Probst
 - Microphone buy @ \$250 status– Kelsey Wellons
 - “Carbon Footprint as a Birder” final recommendation/COA – Mary Maxey
 - Detailed implementation of board reorg for website – **ACTION:** Petersen –
 - Worked on publicity details with Kelsey.
 - Reimbursement of BBA3 Atlasing mileage outside county? Covered by MOS budget submitted Feb 3– Sue Muller Action complete.
 - May Board Meeting **ACTION:** Need host.
 - MOTUS Tower – Fact sheet submitted last meeting. What are board thoughts?
 - \$7.5k as a ballpark for the purchase, installation, and maintenance of a “typical” station.
 - HCC has begun looking for where they might install a tower with thoughts toward showcasing it as a learning opportunity.

- West Friendship Park? Western Regional Park? Tower needs a decluttered 20k radio reception line of sight.
 - Updated MOU Waterford Flats MOU **ACTION:** Petersen work on new MOU with Russ Ruffing and Flats Committee to consider add of all MOS access.
- **Around the Room**
- **Upcoming Schedule**
 - 2024 Board Meetings
 - Need hosts for March and May HCBC Board Meetings (attendance @7-9 people)
 - March 28, 2024 – Mary Maxey host (THANK YOU!)
 - April 25, 2024 – John McKitterick host
 - **May 23, 2024 - Needs host (Val Swan absent)**
 - September 26, 2024 – Gregg Petersen (prior social-board picture)
 - October 24, 2024 –
 - December 5, 2024 –

Howard County Bird Club - Treasurer Report

Printed: 2/20/24 8:37 PM

Financial information for period

Starting:

1-Jan-2024

Ending: 31-Jan-2024

Financial Account Balances

Account	Balance	Net Change	Comment	Date
PNC Bank	\$22,488.11	\$20,700.14	See sheet below	1/31
Vanguard	\$524,521.93	\$3,368.04	See Notes 3	1/31
Current Total	\$547,010.04	\$24,068.18		

Virtual Fund Balances

Operating Funds

Date (Latest Update)	Fund (Code)	Balance	Comment
1/31/24	Operations Fund (O)	\$16,489.13	Implied balance (Total Financial Accounts - Sum of 6 other virtual funds)
12/29/23	Habitat Fund (H)	\$7,896.92	no activity
12/29/23	Butterfly Fund (B)	\$587.63	no activity
1/31/24	Unrealized Vanguard Market Change (U)	\$73,955.85	virtual fund tracked in the right most columns of Vanguard tab

Gift Funds

7/17/23	Mountjoy Fund (M)	\$3,068.48	no activity
10/24/23	Chestem Estate Fund (C)	\$13,735.98	no activity
1/15/24	Ponce Estate Fund (P)	\$431,276.05	Received \$21,276.05 for final settlement of Ponce Estate

Income Activity

1-Jan-2024

to

31-Jan-2024

Description	Purpose	Method	Amount	Code
Total FY Income as of Prior Report			\$2,722.73	FYTD
Ponce Estate	Final settlement of Ponce Estate	CK	\$21,276.05	O
Income for this Period			\$21,276.05	
Total Income - Fiscal Year To Date			\$23,998.78	FYTD

Expense Activity

1-Jan-2024

to

31-Jan-2024

Description	Purpose	Method	Amount	Code
Total FY expenses as of prior report			\$4,758.85	FYTD
Sue Muller	Speaker Honorarium	CK	\$100.00	O
Expenses for this Period			\$100.00	
Total Expenses - Fiscal Year To Date			\$4,858.85	FYTD

SEE note 1

Income over Expenses for Club Fiscal Year	5/1/23 - 4/30/24	\$19,139.93	FYTD
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Additional Remarks/Comments:

- 1. Club Fiscal Year is May 1 - Apr 30.
- 2. Net change of Vanguard account is net of \$3,368.04
 - o No dividend for VESGX
 - o Monthly dividend from VMFXX \$187.84
 - o Month **increase** in market value of VESGX (Global ESG Select Admiral Fund) **\$3,180.02**
- 3. Vanguard Performance To Date
 - o Total Deposits since established \$ 440,000.00
 - o Total Account Balance as of 1/31/2024 \$ 524,521.93 (including unrealized market changes)

Note 2 & 3 is updated with Jan data

Gift Funds Activity	1-Jan-2024 <u>Month Activity</u>	to	31-Jan-2024 <u>Current Balance</u>
Mountjoy Fund Transactions No Activity.			
Chestem Fund Transactions No activity	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
Ponce Fund Transactions Received final settlement		\$21,276.05	\$431,276.05

Records Committee Report February 22, 2024 (January 23 – February 19, 2024) – Joanne Solem

Two White-fronted Geese at Larriland on 2/10 and a flock of 35 Cackling Geese at Scott's Pond, So. Trotter Rd on 2/16 headlined the geese.

A pair of Trumpeter Swans that spent 1/27 at Centennial Pk elicited extensive discussion when observed field marks were not entirely consistent with those often described for Tundra's or Trumpeters. *Published material may lack ample warning regarding the wide variability within both species.* In order to make a species decision, it is important to first examine the bird's underlying structure; combine that with behavior and voice; finally, note multiple field marks. Neither quick nor easy—and sometimes species determination may not be possible!

Ducks were widely reported. After the polar air mass moderated in late January, all water was again open. Race Road Wetlands continued to produce its usual winter variety of dabbling ducks. The 21 Northern Shovelers counted there on 1/7 remained the winter's high. Birders during Howard County Mid-winter Count (HCMC) 2/3 were surprised by a mass of at least 375 Mallards at the north end of Triadelphia Reservoir. The fact that the flock took off when spotted was an indication that they were wild birds. Over the years, such flocks have appeared occasionally at that location where they are well away from most human traffic.

Diving ducks spotted during the period included Canvasback, Redhead, Greater Scaup, and Long-tailed Duck. As is typical, after the extensive ice at Triadelphia in mid-January caused most of the waterfowl to leave, it took until late February for more than a few dozen Common Mergansers to return.

Although a few Wilson's Snipe wintered; as yet, American Woodcock have been noticeably absent. No white-winged gulls were detected.

As described verbally at the January board meeting, one of the rarest birds of the winter was the Blue-headed Vireo photographed at Oakland-Vantage Point on 1/23.

One of the final days of the report produced one of the best birds of the period: a Tree Swallow was photographed at Race Rd Wetlands on 2/19. There are fewer than ten February records for this species. Of the county's five breeding swallow species, Trees winter the farthest north and are least dependent on flying insects. Still, only a brave (or reckless) few risk moving a month ahead of the beginning of the major migratory push.

Comparisons of various species totals between the Triadelphia Christmas Count (conducted in late fall) and the HCMC (scheduled in midwinter) can reveal much about the severity of the season. Numbers of half-hardy species surviving the period between late December and early to mid-February are useful indicators. The 2023-24 totals of the two counts showed that many Carolina Wrens, Gray Catbirds, and Brown Thrashers lingered successfully. Numbers of Eastern Bluebirds were also relatively high, reflecting ample fruits/berries. The one mid-January period with two modest snowfalls followed by low temperatures did not affect numbers of any of these species significantly.

Boreal species were, in general, a bust. Within the last month, there were a handful of Purple Finch reports—probably more will appear during April as they move back to their breeding grounds. Even fewer valid Pine Siskins were reported. The few Northern Saw-whet Owls were elusive.

As is typical, few winter Rusty Blackbirds have been reported. Numbers normally rise during late winter and early spring.

The HCMC (2/3) totals are still being compiled as there are a couple of species that, so far, lack adequate details.

Howard County Bird Club Programs 2024
Mary Lou Clark-Programs

March-Explore the Macro World by Bonnie Ott – also Eddie Franceschi, WSSC

April-The 2023 Howard County Butterfly Survey Results by Kevin Heffernan

May- Recent Advances in Owl Biology and Conservation by Steve Sheffield

Sep- TBD by Dave Ziolkowski

Oct-Marbled Murrelet Research by Josh Ward

Nov-RaptorQuest, Chasing America's Raptors by Scott Harris

Dec- Birding in Idaho by Sue and Wes Earp

HCBC Additions to the Custom Imprints Site

1. Butterfly T-shirts to be added-styles and colors below.
2. Women sizes in T-shirts to be added.
3. Decal logo Rain Jacket in Men's and Women's sizes Available NOW-2 ordered in last 2 days
4. Design of Simplified Embroidered Logo underway.
5. Goldfinch picture un-squashed.

1. Butterfly T-shirt Styles and Colors-To Be Added to the Site

Men's Short Sleeve

- Color choices: White, Athletic Heather, Light Blue, Bright Gold, Candy Pink, Flash Green, True Celadon, and Silver

Women's Short Sleeve

- Color choices: White, Athletic Heather, Light Blue, and Candy Pink

Long Sleeve Shirt

- White, Bright Gold, Athletic Heather, and Flash Green

Youth Short Sleeve

- White, Bright Gold, Athletic Heather, Light Blue, Flash Green, Silver, and Candy Pink

Select Colors in Addition to White



2. Women's Shirts and Styles-To Be Added to the Site

- Ladies' sizes, long and short sleeve, multiple colors, cotton
 - V-neck Long and Short Sleeve
 - <https://catalog.companycasuals.com/p/7460> TeamNavy
 - <https://catalog.companycasuals.com/p/7913> TeamNavy
 - Crew Neck Short Sleeve
 - <https://catalog.companycasuals.com/p/8069> TeamNavy

- Ladies' sizes, long and short sleeve, multiple colors, cotton/rayon blend (good activewear)
 - V-neck Long and Short Sleeve
 - https://catalog.companycasuals.com/p/23185_NvyFrost
 - https://catalog.companycasuals.com/p/7464_NvyFrost
 - Crew Neck Short and Long Sleeve
 - https://catalog.companycasuals.com/p/9204_NvyFrost (short sleeve)
 - https://catalog.companycasuals.com/p/7463_NvyFrost (short sleeve)
 - https://catalog.companycasuals.com/p/8678_NvyFrost (long sleeve, "tunic")

3. **Men's and Women's Rain Jacket/Windbreaker (Decal) -On the Site Now**

<https://howardcountybirdclub.itemorder.com/shop/category/373250/>

Howard County Bird Club Major Property Inventory -as of Feb 22 24

ITEM

1. Computer
2. Back up Computer (11 years old) **TO BE SURPLUSED**
3. Computer Camera
4. HCBC Display Board, case, panel, power cords
5. HCBC Butterfly Display board, case
6. Projector Screen
7. Projector
8. Hospitality Bin
9. Meeting Material Bin
10. Appreciation Coins
11. Stuffed bird basket
- 12. Pop-up Umbrella**
13. (Loaner Binoculars by admin number)

RETAINED BY

John McKitterick
John McKitterick
John McKitterick
Mary Lou Clark
Mary Lou Clark
Chuck Stirrat
John McKitterick?
Lauren McDougale
Gregg Petersen
Gregg Petersen
Gregg Petersen
Kristin Trouton

Request for Loaner Binoculars for Young Group Events

Request for approval of \$1000 for purchase of 10 pairs of Celestron Outland X binoculars plus hard cases to protect the investment. Increased to \$1100 to cover cost of a carrying case/pack.

- Binoculars needed for young group events.
 - Scout (formerly Boy Scout) Walks 2 times a year 9 scouts. (Gregg)
 - Brownie Walk 11 Brownies. (Lauren)
 - Community Ecology Institute 12 young people multiple times per year. (Terri Berkheimer)
 - **Therefore, requirement assessed at a nominal 10 binoculars.**
 - Some augmentation with personal binoculars. Personal bins is NOT a systemic solution.
- Type of binoculars in the YMOS backpack: [Celestron Outland X 8 x 42 Binoculars](#)
 - Overall pick on Amazon with 4,786 ratings for 4.5-star rating
 - \$80
 - \$800 for 10 plus \$16/for hard cases to protect the investment
 - Val Swan bought Celestron and Oberweck binoculars to conduct a user jury this month:
 - [Celestron Outland X 8 x 42 Binoculars](#) compared to [OBERWECK 6.5 x 32](#)
 - **Results:** While Oberweck was incredibly durable, the focus wheel was too difficult to adjust and the Celestrons are lighter. Celestrons best for young groups.
 - Celestrons are chosen by George Radcliffe for YMOS program and backpack.
 - Other observations by George:
 - “Cheap” binoculars nowadays are good quality’– hence the use of Outland X binoculars for YMOS.
 - George maintains a pool of binoculars for young birder use. Sometimes gives a set away to a promising birder.
 - Youth (ages 7-18) handled the Celestrons well regardless of age with no discernable issues compared to other binoculars like Oberweck.
 - **George recommends the purchase of binocular hard cases to protect the investment: cost @\$16/case**
 - Robinson Nature Center discussion with Kelly Vogelpohl.
 - Uses a mix of binoculars that have been donated. No real pattern.
- **Accountability Question:** See separate inventory document including other HCBC property. Accountability not expected to be a problem.
 - Bins expected to be retained by VP or President when not in use. Possession will be documented monthly on inventory sheet for board review (along with other items not previously explicitly tracked). Bins will be assigned a number and have an HCBC sticker on them.

Can kids handle “adult” binoculars? Charlotte P. Age 2 ½ (photos used w/Kate Plough permission)



Mom's 8 x 42 bins



Kurt donation so mom got her 8 x 42s back

Howard County Bird Club Information Paper
Waterford Flats and Greater Sharp's at Waterford Farm Access

HCBC MOU Access: Members of the HCBC have access specifically to the Waterford Flats Shorebird Habitat Area (SHA) and the path thereto **from 1 Apr to Jun 15 and Jul 15 to Sep 30** IF they have viewed the orientation video or have been oriented by a club member that viewed the video.

Extralimital Access on Sharps at Waterford Farm (SAWF) During the HCBC MOU Authorized Access Period: Since the establishment of the MOU, there have been other areas of the SAWF property with birds of interest. When those exceptional birds such as shorebirds, have been observed in the upper pond for instance, access to those parts of the property for HCBC members has been coordinated with the farmer by the HCBC SAWF liaison. **ACCESS TO THOSE AREAS ARE AT THE SOLE DISCRETION OF THE FARMER.**

Off Season Access to SAWF for RARE BIRDS

Off-Season SAWF Access for RARE BIRDS is coordinated by the HCBC SAWF Liaison and granted AT THE DISCRETION OF THE FARMER.

Off-Season Access for HCBC Members: This access is granted at the free will of the farmer-IT IS NOT A RIGHT OF DEMAND OF ANY HCBC MEMBER. If a RARE BIRD has been identified, the HCBC SAWF liaison will try to coordinate access for HCBC at the good will of the farmer.

Off-Season Access Requested by Farmer: There have been instances where the farmer has requested assistance from the HCBC SAWF liaison to identify birds. It is recommended that if an eBird list is generated on one of these visits and no RARE BIRDS are present, that the liaison or their representative make their list private to prevent confusion and concerns about access to the property. If a RARE BIRD is observed, see the paragraph above.

Waterford Flats Committee Access to SAWF

Waterford Flats Committee: The HCBC Waterford Flats Committee has year-round access to Waterford Flats to conduct the affairs of the committee such as water level observance and adjustment, coordination with the farmer, execution of construction projects, seeding of buffers, update of the Flats information binder, and other related tasks. In the off-season, they coordinate with the farmer for their presence on property for support of the related MOU. They may observe birds on the property and generate an eBird list. Again, to avoid confusion it is recommended that they make their list private to avoid confusing HCBC birders during the off season. If a RARE BIRD is observed, they will notify the SAWF liaison to try to coordinate with the farmer for greater HCBC access to that bird. The decision for RARE BIRD access in **off-season** is the SOLE DECISION OF THE FARMER and not subject to appeal or external adjudication by the HCBC.

All Year Public Access to SAWF Unrelated to HCBC MOU

Sharp's Farm maintains a website and a contact email for the public. ANY member of the public can contact them at farmquestions@gmail.com (410) 489-2572 to request access. In general, [Sharp's Farm](#) is

open from April 18-August 18 and September 30 to November 5, but requests for access at other times MAY BE HONORED BY THE OWNER and again is OUTSIDE THE PURVIEW OF THE HCBC and the related HCBC SAWF MOU.

Reference:

MOU for the Shorebird Habitat Area at the Sharp's at Waterford Farm dated July 24, 2020

This Memorandum was reviewed and approved by the Waterford Flats Committee on February 20, 2024.

MOS Awards

MOS has three primary award certificates:

1. **The Valued Service Award:** This is our formal certificate. It's usually given to someone for outstanding sustained performance in some role or capacity. It has an embossed MOS gold seal in the lower middle center of the certificate. It is presented in an elegant dark-blue presentation folder with the MOS seal in gold on the front. The award is accompanied by a "Valued Service Award" lapel pin.
2. **The Attagirl/Attaboy Award:** A light-hearted certificate. Usually it is awarded for performance over a short period of time, and given to recognize hard work, perhaps at a new job, or for a specific task well done. It is usually (but not always) presented in an acrylic "sign holder."
3. **The Blood, Sweat and Tears Award:** This is a humorous certificate that recognizes someone who rolled-up their sleeves and tackled a hard, gritty, unglamorous job. It's a comical certificate, torn, stained, and wrinkled. It is usually (but not always) presented rolled-up in an MOS coffee mug and tied with a strip of frayed bandana.

Other types of awards that MOS prepares are:

1. Certificate of Appreciation,
2. Conservationist of the Year,
3. Distinguished Service Award,
4. Friend of the Society,
5. Bird of the Year,
6. **Rookie (birder) of the Year,**
7. Volunteer of the Year,
8. Feeder Champion,
9. List of the Year,
10. and so forth.

We're happy to work with you to create an award that meets your specific needs.