

Rockingham Bird Club Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: 4/10/25

RBC President Mike Donaldson: Call to Order: The in-person April meeting of RBC will please come to order [7:04 was when Mike began the meeting; 7:13 is when he hit the gavel] at the Park View Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall.

There being no objections, they dispensed with the reading of the minutes. A copy is available on our website.

New members/visitors:

- Wayne and Roveen Yoder recently rejoined after attending some meetings via Zoom in 2022-2023. They are excited to attend some meetings in person.

Recent Bird Sightings:

- Zachary Peters was happy to report seeing a Ruffed Grouse at Hone Quarry as he hadn't seen one since he was a kid.
- Mike Donaldson requested a brief report from Herb Myers on his trip to Puerto Rico with Sarah Myers. Herb reported that they saw 16 out of 19 endemic species, one of those being the endangered Puerto Rican Nightjar. They had a Cuban guide who took them from the rainforest to the coast. They were able to see 77 species throughout their trip.
- Nathan Brewer reported that on their honeymoon in Sicily, he and Heather Brewer saw a Hoopoe.
- Mary Ruby was wondering if it is possible that she saw Lincoln's Sparrow at her feeder. Mike Donaldson didn't rule it out entirely but he and others said it is hard to give a definitive answer, especially without a photo. Someone asked if she could try to get a photo to help with identification.
- Tim Hulings was curious about Peregrine Falcons in the area. Mike Donaldson mentioned that there have been sightings and turned it over to Randy Cline who said that every year on January 1st you can find one at the Cargill Feed Mill.
- Anne Nielsen saw the Black-crowned Night Heron next to the poultry plant hunting sticks in the spruce trees.

Reports from Executive Committee:

Mike Donaldson (President):

- Mike Donaldson passed around the latest copy of *Cooperative Living* magazine, which has a nice article about birding at Oakwood Pond, which is next to the headquarters of Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative, and about birding in the Valley in general. The article can be found on the co-op's website. Mike expressed that it was super nice for them to reach out to the Club for that article, and it's really great that they are birder friendly on their headquarters property. He also passed around the 2024 Impact Report from the American Bird

Conservancy, which is the organization that tonight's presenter works for, and is one of the organizations that our Club donates to.

- Mike then segued into a vote on the Constitution and By-laws amendments. The draft of the Constitution and By-laws was circulated in the March and April *Goldfinch Gazette* and on our website. Mike provided background for the revisions: "The primary impetus for revision was to clarify that the Member-at-large positions are voting members of the Executive Committee". A special subcommittee composed of Art Fovargue, Debbie Harrison, and Bill Benish have been working diligently to create the revision documents. Mike gave them a big thank you. These revised documents, if adopted, will update the current Constitution and By-laws, which were adopted in November 2015.
- Mike then gave an overview of voting procedure: "Voting on these revised documents will consist of two votes. The Constitution requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote for adoption, whereas the By-laws require a simple majority vote, meaning more than $\frac{1}{2}$. These fractions apply to the total number of members voting. Before we vote, keep in mind that only members can vote and each family membership gets one vote. We will vote by a rising vote. In other words, members will stand to indicate their vote." Those who needed or preferred to raise their hand were encouraged to do so. Mike then led the Club through the voting process, requesting that a member make a motion and someone second the motion.
- Constitution (requires $\frac{2}{3}$ majority)
 - Mike, "To start the voting, we'll need a motion to approve the revised Constitution of the Rockingham Bird Club."
 - Bill Benish motioned for a vote and Linda Donaldson seconded.
 - Mike, "Those in favor of approving the revised version of the Constitution of the Rockingham Bird Club, please rise." An overwhelming majority of the meeting attendees stood. Mike, "Those opposed, please rise." Mike allowed a pause and no one stood in opposition. "The chair sees that the $\frac{2}{3}$ majority threshold has been reached. Therefore, the revised Constitution of the Rockingham Bird Club is approved."
- By-laws (requires simple majority)
 - Mike, "To start the voting, we'll need a motion to approve the revised By-laws of the Rockingham Bird Club."
 - Robyn Puffenbarger motioned for a vote and Randy Cline seconded.
 - Mike, "Those in favor of approving the revised version of the By-laws of the Rockingham Bird Club, please rise." An overwhelming majority of the meeting attendees stood. Mike, "Those opposed, please rise." Mike allowed a pause and no one stood in opposition. "The chair sees that the majority threshold has been reached. Therefore, the revised By-laws of the Rockingham Bird Club are approved."
- Mike gave another thank you to Art Fovargue, Debbie Harrison, and Bill

Benish.

Kathy Byers (Vice President of Programs): Unable to attend

- Kathy Byers was not able to attend so she left Mike with information on the upcoming programs:
 - In **May**, Bruce Beehler, author of *North on the Wing*, will recount the highlights of his more than five months in the field in search of Godwits and other shorebirds.
 - In **June**, we will celebrate our 50th-anniversary Goldfinch Jubilee with a carry-in dinner. The evening will include a slideshow, some Rockingham Bird Club trivia, and door prizes. We hope to make this a reunion of sorts, so please help us spread the word. Maybe even offer to drive an older member that hasn't been able to attend meetings recently. Please do remember that this is a nut-free facility when choosing a food to bring.

Diane Lepkowski (Vice President of Field Trips): Unable to attend

- Diane Lepkowski was not able to attend so Mike made a few announcements on her behalf.
- **Saturday April 12-** Madison Run with Greg Moyers. Join Greg at 9:00 AM to seek some of our earliest returning warblers and more. This is a great spot to see Louisiana Waterthrush and other early-returning birds such as Pine Warbler, Blue-headed Vireo, and Black-and-white Warbler. Please see additional details in the April newsletter.
- Tom Mizell is leading a lawn-chair birding expedition to **Shenandoah National Park** on Wednesday, May 7. This trip will involve carpooling from Harrisonburg. Please refer to the newsletter for additional details.
- The monthly **Hillendale Park** bird walk will be on Tuesday May 13 at 8:30am at Shelter 12.

Allie Sawyer (Secretary):

- Mike recognized Allie Sawyer

Audrey Shenk (Treasurer):

- No reports

Art Fovargue (Club Historian): Unable to attend

- Mike gave a shout-out to the ongoing Best Bird Memory Project on Art Fovargue's behalf. The submission form is on the Club website; Mike encouraged folks to take a moment to write their own.

Bill Benish (Christmas Bird Count Coordinator):

- No reports or announcements, other than a funny quip, “8 months in counting!”

Denise Hoodock (Newsletter Editor):

- Mike recognized Denise Hoodock’s great work on the newsletter.

Members at Large:

- Mike recognized Herb Myers and Andrew Troyer, noting that he appreciates their continued service.
- Good people to talk to if you have questions or concerns

New Business/Announcements:

- Mike turned it over to Robyn Puffenbarger with an announcement about the Rocktown Author Festival. Robyn notified the Club that she will be presenting the second edition of *Birds of Rockingham County*. The event takes place from 10am-3pm on Saturday, April 12. She noted that even though the trip to Madison Run Gap will be on the same day, folks who are interested in both should be able to pop in to make it for the panel that will include Robyn. She reported that two weeks ago Louisiana Waterthrush, Barred Owl, and wildflowers aplenty were present on her visit to Madison Run Gap.

Mike Donaldson gave a reminder that the next Club meeting is at 7pm on Thursday, May 8 at Park View Mennonite Church. He then hit the gavel to adjourn the meeting at 7:27pm.

Mike then welcomed Dr. David Wiedenfeld as the presenter this evening. Dr. Wiedenfeld is the Senior Conservation Scientist with American Bird Conservancy (ABC). He received his PhD from Florida State University. Dr. Wiedenfeld’s work has focused on bird population ecology and conservation biology. He served for five years as Director of Research at the Sutton Avian Research Center, working primarily on prairie-chickens. He was also Head of the Department of Vertebrate Ecology at the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos Islands.

This evening Dr Wiedenfeld will present an overview of the important work that ABC does, and new research on bird habitats in North America.

Total Participants: 49

Minutes recorder: Allie Sawyer

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