

BRAW BOARD MEETING (DRAFT)

June 6, 2020

Online

Officers/Directors Present: Pat Ready, Steve Sample, Gene Kroupa, Dan Schroeder,
David Lucey, Steve Fallon, Kris Perlberg

Others Present: Andy Garcia-Rivera, Val Van Winkle

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by President Pat Ready at 9:15 a.m.
2. **Roll Call.** Roll Call was taken and we had a quorum.
3. **Changes to Agenda.** None.
4. **Minutes.** The minutes of the board meeting held on March 7, 2020 were approved on a motion made by Dave Lucey and seconded by Kris Perlberg.
5. **Communications to the President.** President Pat Ready advised that he has received communication from Rod Courtier via cellphone showing a bluebird pair looking in his window. Pat Ready said he was contacted by a freelancer writing for Gannett owned publications. The article will appear in the June 26th issue of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and possibly some other newspapers. An interesting question the reporter asked was: Why is Wisconsin the leader among NAB member organizations in bluebird production? Gene Kroupa suggested it might have to do with our 13 state universities getting the ball rolling early on. Now, we need to relight that flame and get them again involved with BRAW's work.
6. **Reports.** The following reports were given:
 - a. **Treasurer's Report.** Dan Schroeder reported that all of our accounts check out and balance. BRAW has been in the black with revenues exceeding expenses so far this year. He noted that lost revenue from the Annual Convention has been replaced via donations. He will check to see when the Crum family donation from the Natural Resources Foundation will be forthcoming. Holy Name Seminary has made its contribution for nest boxes. Gene Kroupa moved and Steve Sample seconded a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion unanimously passed.
 - b. **Editor's Report.** Pat Ready noted that the Summer issue of the *Wisconsin Bluebird* (WB) should be printed and arriving in mailboxes soon. Feedback about the online version has been very positive. There was discussion about making extra copies available in park information centers. Val Van Winkle has seen copies there. Gene Kroupa suggested County Extension office. Steve Sample suggested including membership form with all materials, including the information packet, that we distribute in this manner. Steve Fallon said such an effort should have a specific target audience.
 - c. **Website Report.** Andy Garcia-Rivera supplied a written report on conversion of the website to a more secure software. He asked that board members answer the questions he posed regarding: 1) what they liked, 2) didn't like and 3) would change to improve the new website. Steve Sample said he would like to see it made easier for someone to renew their membership. Thank you Andy for all the effort you put in the transfer and the improved website.

- d. **Public Relations.** Steve Sample noted that the main effort has revolved around recapturing expired memberships. Gene explained that Val supplied 130+ names of folks who did not renew with the Winter and Spring WB notices. These folks will get the Summer issue along with the mailed letter/membership form. Using first class outgoing and return postage allows us to track people who have moved or died to help us clean our mailing list. Steve Sample generously donated the materials, plus assembled the mailing, for this project. Thank you Steve for getting this done.
 - e. **Membership.** Val Van Winkle has assumed the membership committee chair responsibilities from Mike Ray. Val said the membership roster was transitioned smoothly with Mike's fine assistance. She now has access to the BRAW PO Box in Middleton to check mail for membership renewals. Thank you Mike for your past service and Val for assuming this important position.
 - f. **School & Youth Outreach.** Pat Ready noted that Mary Hollenbeck is trying to set up a program given the COVID – 19 challenges. He gave the freelance her name in case she wanted to include an educational slant to the story.
 - g. **Data Summary.** Steve Fallon reported updated 2019 data in the Summer WB. Adding over a 1,000 fledglings certainly improved BRAW members' total for the year.
 - h. **Promotions.** Gene Kroupa suggested continuing the special \$10 discounted rate for new members, as organizations like The Nature Conservancy have affordable (\$15) memberships. Also, he offered an idea for a "Pass It Along" program. Board members and county coordinators would be asked to send a link to the WB newsletter with a message something like: "Hi, thought you might be interested in the efforts of BRAW to ensure we all can enjoy bluebirds. Let me know if you have any questions about BRAW or bluebirds. Also, we have a trail starter kit whereby BRAW supplies 2 to 5 free nest boxes. Feel free to pass along the newsletter to anyone whom you feel would be interested." The BOD supported this program as there would be zero cost.
 - i. **Photo Contest.** Kris Perlberg explained that notice of BRAW's first ever photo contest was included in the Summer WB, plus an e-mail was sent to members who had one. She noted the high open rate for the email. Pat Ready said he has already received three entries. Discussion focused on getting a photo release with permission to use them in the WB. Most photos include implicit permission but Steve Sample will check. Kris suggested that entries be included in a photo gallery on our website. Gene Kroupa mentioned using photos in future WB issues to increase member engagement. Judges will be recruited to pick winners and finalists. Deadline for entry is September 1st. Great job Kris!
7. **Old Business.** The board addressed the following items:
- a. **Annual Convention.** Pat Ready recapped reasons why the September Annual Convention would not be held due to continuing COVID – 19 concerns and uncertainties involved with speakers and meeting places.
 - b. **Garden Expo.** Dave Lucey will again be coordinating efforts if it is held. Being located among commercial exhibitors was the preferred location. BOD agreed with Dan Schroeder to delay submitting the booth space request and speaking times, keeping in mind that advance fees are fully refundable if exp not held.

- c. **BRAW Awards.** Recognition of outstanding BRAW members and others will be done this year despite not holding an annual convention. Discussion centered on how many and types of recognition. Pat Ready read off a list of potential recipients and will refine this list for BOD consideration. Dave Lucey said it would be best to recognize only one county coordinator. So, an outstanding county coordinator, Mike Ray, Fred Craig and others will be considered for various named awards including: CC of the Year, Educator of the Year, Board Member Emeritus, etc. Gene Kroupa suggested having at least one outside agency person who supports bluebirds through their efforts. He also asked that a short bio and photo be provided for each recipient for PR efforts. Steve Sample will work with Pat in choosing recipients.

8. **New Business.** The board discussed the following items:

- a. **Rent a Storage Locker.** Pat Ready said Fred Craig has nest boxes and materials he wants us to have, plus BRAW has banners, exhibits, nest boxes, printed materials, etc. scattered among directors' homes. Pat and Steve Sample will look into cost of renting a facility in Madison.
- b. **Spring Thing 2021.** A decision will be made at the end of this year concerning holding an event in April 2021.
- c. **Strategic Plan.** Gene Kroupa suggested adding a new item under **Tactics: Recognition.** He felt that recognizing BRAW members for their outstanding service, as well as outside company, agency, institution, school, foundation and other personnel for their support, would be beneficial. Steve Sample moved and Dave Lucey seconded a motion to add a **Recognition** item under **Tactics.** Motion unanimously passed.

9. **Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting date will be September 5, 2020 via online.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m. Dave Lucey made and Steve Fallon seconded a motion to adjourn which passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gene Kroupa, Secretary