

BRAW BOARD MEETING

September 12, 2020

Online

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

Others Present: Andy Garcia-Rivera, Mike Crawford

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by President Pat Ready at 9:10 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 June 6, 2020 were approved on a motion made by Dave Lucey and seconded by Mary Sobol.
5. **Communications to the President.** President Pat Ready advised that he has received communication from the National Resources Foundation that they would giving BRAW one annual payment instead of two from the Harold Ramon Memorial Fund which Catherine Cram helped set up.
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. A total of \$6,000 in donations have been received, including \$2,000 from the Lafayette County Bluebird Society which is shutting down. Gene suggested asking Carol Mc Daniels if the organization would like for BRAW to store its historical records. Steve Sample moved and Dave Lucey seconded to move another \$2,000 to I-Bonds. Unanimously approved. Gene Kroupa moved and Dave Lucey seconded a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion unanimously passed.
 - b. **WB Editor's Report.** Pat Ready noted that the Fall issue of the *Wisconsin Bluebird* (WB) has been printed and mailed. He noted that some mailing labels had the wrong first name and Econoprint is checking into. Gene noted that one member said she was happy that BRAW printed a quality publication and did not go online unless preferred.
 - c. **Website Report.** Andy Garcia-Rivera noted he has been very busy dealing with all aspects of the website. Dave suggested activating the "Learn" section. Gene asked Andy to remove the "access to members' only" section from Trail Builder details page as it is not currently up and running. Andy suggested having some "testimonials" from members' trail reports, etc. be put on the website.
 - d. **Public Relations.** Steve Sample recapped efforts in conjunction with Val to get membership renewals from lapsed members. Letters with eye catching stamps were sent to 93 folks who did not renew in 2019 and in 2020. He also noted that the lapel pins BRAW is purchasing will be sent to county coordinators and new members, as well as BOD. Steve has been sending a packet of info for cc's to use in presentations and working with new members. Kudos the Steve for the presentation that got the

freelance writer to do a 2-page spread about BRAW and bluebirds in the spring *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* garden special section.

- e. **Membership.** Val Van Winkle was not at meeting but new memberships and renewals have been strong resulting in much higher revenues for BRAW.
- f. **School & Youth Outreach.** Pat Ready noted that nothing much can be done due to COVID – 19.
- g. **Data Summary.** Steve Fallon said that reports are coming in steadily, including one from Ann Wick who reported 501 bluebirds fledged. He added that there were some interesting comments. Gene suggested running some of these in the WB and putting on the website.
- h. **Promotions.** Mary reported that 56 nest boxes have been distributed to 14 new members and that at least four more are ordered. This means that BRAW has met and will exceed its goal of placing 60 nest boxes with new members in 2020 and clearing Steve Lang's inventory. More boxes are in storage at Goose Lake and Madison, plus Fred Craig has more boxes. Dave Lucey has volunteered to go to Onalaska and get Fred's inventory and other materials. Due to scarcity of cedar lumber and cost, it is getting harder to make affordable nest boxes for the program. Gene suggested recognizing Steve Lang for his contribution of the nest boxes and predator guards. The Trail Builder promotion will run through the end of this year. Thanks to Mary for handling distribution in these challenging times.
- i. **Photo Contest.** Pat mention that the quality of submissions has improved and that folks at the Camera Company will do the judging. The overall winner's photo will be featured on the cover of the Winter WB. A short story will be included about where and how photo taken for top three photos in future issues of the WB. Pat also noted that we have gotten some new members who joined so they could participate in the contest. Thanks to Kris and Pat for making the contest possible.

7. **Old Business.** The board addressed the following items:

- a. **Garden Expo.** The event is canceled but there might be a virtual event. This led to a discussion about how BRAW might host a blog or virtual seminars, especially for new members, covering topics, e.g. answers to 10 basic questions. Mike Crawford volunteered to spearhead this effort.
- b. **BRAW Awards.** Discussion covered whom should receive recognition and it was agreed that the final list to be determined by Pat will probably include:
 - Joe O Halloran Lifetime Achievement - Gene Birr
 - BRAW Achievement Award - Rita Gundry
 - BRAW Achievement Award - Andrew Struck
 - Educator of the Year - Sue Hall
 - BRAW Communicator Award - Val Cunningham
 - Bluebirder of the Year Award - Steve Lang
- c. **Storage Locker.** Pat Ready reported that a storage locker had been rented for \$80 per month on the westside of Madison. It will provide space for nest boxes and predator guards, exhibit materials, records, etc.

- d. **Spring Thing 2021.** Pat Ready noted that it is doubtful that an April event will be held but that he was impressed with the facility and would like to use it in the future. It is possible that BRAW could consider a virtual event.

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

- a. **Vote on By-Laws.** Steve Sample presented the revised bylaws. A motion by Steve Fallon seconded by Mary Sobol passed unanimously.
- b. **Strategic Plan.** Gene Kroupa noted that the only two areas of the strategic plan that might be given more emphasis are “build partnerships” and “research and reporting.” There was agreement that no changes were needed in the plan.
- c. **Personal Information.** Following a discussion, it was decided to only include officers’ and directors’ names in the *Wisconsin Bluebird* and on the website, unless needed for contact purposes, e.g. as for the membership coordinator.
- d. **Working with Other Bird Groups.** Pat Ready recounted some past history with NABS, but will reach out and suggest that it could help affiliates by: 1) getting national visibility for status of bluebirds and ways to help, 2) conducting a survey of affiliate members to learn about their needs, membership in bird groups, etc., and 3) setting up a national database for trail reports.
- e. **New Board Member.** Steve Sample explained to Mike Crawford that his initial appointment to the BRAW Board of Directors was for one year. Following that year, the appointment could be extended for three years if both parties are amenable to that action. At the December meeting extension of Mary Sobol’s and Kris Perlberg’s terms will be made. Both have made many worthy contributions to BRAW.

9. **Next Meeting Date.** The next meeting was set for December 5, 2020 via online.

Meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m. Dave Lucey made and Steve Fallon seconded a motion to adjourn which passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gene Kroupa, Secretary