**BRAW BOARD MEETING**

**June 2nd, 2018**

**Mauston Park Oasis Restaurant**

**Mauston, Wisconsin**

**Officers/Directors Present:** Pat Ready, Steve Sample, Daniel Schroeder, Claire Romanak, Fred Craig, Mike

Helgren, David Lucey, Steve Fallon

**Officers/Directors Absent:** Brad Zinda

**1. Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by President Pat Ready at 9:10 A.M. at the Mauston Park

Oasis Restaurant, Mauston, Wisconsin.

**2. Roll Call.** Roll Call was taken and we had a quorum.

**3. Changes to Agenda.** The Garden Expo was added as a report in place of a website report.

**4. Minutes.** The minutes of the board meeting held on November 11, 2017 were approved on a motion

made by Dave Lucey and seconded by Steve Sample. The minutes of the convention held on April 7, 2018

were approved on a motion made by Steve Fallon and seconded by Fred Craig.

**5. Communications to the President.** President Pat Ready was contacted by a NABS representative from

California to talk Bluebirds as they like to keep in touch with their affiliates.

**6. Trail Updates.** Pat Ready reports that his Bluebirds are a month behind and that there were lots of

Tree Swallows that showed up in May, after the 12” snowstorm in April. Fred Craig also had lots of snow in April, his trails were way down and some boxes were empty. His contacts reported finding dead Bluebirds in boxes after the storm with the majority being males. Pat Ready stated that there were more empty boxes in trails to the north but that the Bluebirds seem to have fared better along Lake Michigan. Ellen LaFouge has had her best start ever in Mequon and Rick Fair of Racine had Bluebirds hatching in

April. Dave Lucey reports that of his 36 boxes, 11 are Bluebirds and all boxes are occupied. He had a box that was forgotten in a prairie that was burned and that the box was charred and smoking. There were eggs in that box that hatched a week later and all of the young fledged. Steve Fallon reported finding dead Bluebirds in boxes. The Tree Swallows have returned and he has only 2 pair of Bluebirds. Steve Sample reported that he started with only 2 pair of Bluebirds but now has 5 pair out of 33 boxes. Pat Ready thinks that we may have a strong finish to the season after our slow start. Mike Helgren also found dead Bluebirds in several boxes. He has 5 or 6 Tree Swallows pairs, one box with Chickadees on eggs and Wrens competing for boxes with Bluebirds. Dan Schroeder reports that he has not seen any Bluebirds since the April snowstorm. Claire Romanak reported that she had 18 pair of Bluebirds last year but has only 10 this year and 3 empty boxes. Pat Ready had copies of the Wisconsin Bluebird, with a cover picture of a Tree Swallow nest with five white eggs and one Bluebird egg. He thinks that the Bluebird egg will hatch and he plans to move the hatchling into a Bluebird nest at about 10 days old. Fred Craig reported that he found a monitor for some of Leif Marking’s boxes and that they repaired and replaced 19 boxes. The new monitor is keeping records, has some Bluebird eggs and has joined BRAW.

**7. Reports.**

**a. Treasurer’s Report.** Dan Schroeder reported that we are in the black now, that our numbers are normal and membership numbers also normal for this time of year. Material Sales are our best revenues right now and our total revenue is higher than anticipated for now. Printing costs are as expected. Dan anticipates that at the end of the year we will be close to our expected outcome which is a $5,000 loss. We need to find additional sources of revenue and it was proposed that we register with

Amazon Smile and promote this to generate some additional income. Dan proposed putting a link on our

website. Steve Sample will follow up on this and will also promote this in BRAW presentations. Steve

Sample made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report, Dave Lucey seconded it and the motion passed.

**b. Editor’s Report.** Pat Ready reports that the Wisconsin Bluebird is printed and ready to mail. There

has been an issue with the Post Office involving changing the contact name from Sue Schultz to Pat Ready

but that has hopefully been resolved and it should mail next week.

**c. Garden Expo.** Pat Ready reported that we sold over 20 nest boxes and Dan Schroeder reports that

46 Van Ert sparrow traps and 51 hole guards were also sold. Mike Helgren stated that most of the

volunteers were the same from past years. Pat Ready wondered when we would get the renewal

paperwork for next year’s Expo and if it would be before our next meeting in September. Mike Helgren

stated that he is the one that usually receives the notice and that he will contact Pat when he receives it.

Mike said that although the location of the booth was not optimal we still had many people come through

and that sales were similar to past Expo’s. He also stated that we will need to get more hole guards made

up and Fred Craig said that he has someone to do that. Mike wondered if we could also get Noel guards

made up to sell and that we will also be needing boxes and traps. He has 5-10 boxes and will need 40-45

for the next Expo. There was a discussion on our booth location and Mike Helgren agreed to try to get us

located in more of a central area. Pat Ready felt that we should have some influence on location since we

do two talks while there which are very well attended.

**d. Public Relations.** Steve Sample had a request from Larry Liegel, a county coordinator, for an

Appreciation Certificate to be given to monitors. Pat Ready thought that this would generate too many

requests and that the certificates were designed as a “thank you” to places that allowed trails on their

property. The board was asked if we should do this for monitors, just new monitors or leave as is. Pat

Ready had the idea of utilizing a PDF file that the County Coordinators could use to print certificates if they

choose. Steve Sample thought that we should go that route and the board agreed. Fred Craig stated that

we donate the boxes for trails, although there is still some expense for mounting posts. Steve Sample also

questioned the BRAW pins that were previously purchased. The intention was to send them to new

members, but that never happened. Steve asks if we should purchase more, and if we do send them to

new members there would be additional cost for postage and boxes. We have sold some at $5 and given

them to speakers at the convention. Mike Helgren stated that we haven’t sold many and Steve Sample

said that we purchased 100 in 2015 at $3 each. Pat Ready and Steve Sample are working on a poster to

promote Bluebirds that could be sent to schools which would require postage as well. Dan Schroeder said

that we could use the $1000 that is budgeted for promotional programs but he questioned whether a pin

really spreads information versus a poster. Dave Lucey stated that he is not supportive of pins and that we

should look into doing a Utube video. Steve Fallon thought that we could post a video of How to Monitor

a Bluebird Box on Utube. Pat Ready stated that the posters will be expensive but more effective than pins

and would reach younger people. Steve Sample made a motion to purchase more of the pins, there was

no second so the motion died. Pat Ready will have the poster and postage cost for us at the next board

meeting. Steve Sample will find out how to get a list of appropriate schools.

**e. Nest Box Design.** Fred Craig still thinks the NABS box is the best and that the selling points with the

ability to lower the side panel to vent for heat, the line on the back for ubolt placement and the pre-drilled

hole for easy Van Ert trap installation make it an easy sell for BRAW. Pat Ready has been trying Gene Birr’s

boxes for House Sparrow deterrent. They have a hole in the roof covered with plexiglass to keep the rain

out and let in the sunlight. He is also trying a box with a double entrance hole, also supposed to deter

House Sparrows. So far, both types have not had House Sparrows in them, even though they have nested

there before. Pat feels these need more trials to see if they will continue to deter House Sparrows. Fred

Craig said that his new monitor is trying the plexiglass covered box, so far has had grass inside but unsure

what species it is. Pat Ready helped set up boxes on a trail that used T posts and attached a 1x2 to the

back of the box which fit into the groove on the post. He then attached it with radiator clamps, it was very

fast to set up and sturdy. Fred Craig recommended a pvc predator guard on T posts, cut on an angle and

tamped into the ground to keep out mice. Steve Sample reports that he is using a cedar 2x4 block guard

on the entrance hole and has had no predation. He feels it is thick enough that raccoons cannot reach

inside. Dave Lucey questioned when to vent boxes and Pat Ready usually recommends Memorial Day.

Pat Ready said that Carol McDaniel has already had problems with black flies, they are early. He

recommends spraying boxes with permethrin. Dave Lucey uses this for ants and Fred Craig had gnats in

two houses and has sprayed lightly. Pat Ready recommended diatomaceous earth under the nest for ants.

Bay leaf or cinnamon is also recommended but he has not tried them. Dan Schroeder said that

Beekeepers use cinnamon around hives to keep ants out. Dave Lucey thinks that we need to promote

the Noel guards, find a manufacturer and sell them. Pat Ready thinks that we should offer both the Noel

guard and the 2x4 block guard that Steve Sample is using. Pat thought that Gene Birr might make Noel

guards for us and asked Steve Sample to bring an example of the block guard that he is using to the next

meeting.

**f. School & Youth Outreach.** There was no report sent.

**g. Data Summary.** Pat Ready had some feedback from the convention indicating that people would

like to see their names and totals in the Wisconsin Bluebird. Mike Helgren would like the names to be in

alphabetical order and would like to be able to compare his numbers to others in his county. Steve Fallon

said that the names were listed in order received but that he can easily do alphabetical. Steve Fallon

wondered if the mapping data showed areas on which to focus restoration efforts. Steve Sample

said that he could see on the graph that Lafayette County monitors were not sending in their reports and

he spoke to them about that. Pat Ready said that you could easily see where the large trails were and that

north of about Wausau the habitat did not support Bluebirds.

**8. Old Business.**

**a. BRAW Convention Update.** Pat Ready had good comments on the convention. The facility was

well liked as was the location. People also liked the ½ hour later start and were ok with one less speaker.

The facility charge was less than anticipated and there were 60+ people in attendance.

**b. More BOD Members.** Pat Ready will ask some Madison members. Mike Helgren wonders if the

Stehlings from Sauk City would be interested. Brad Zinda will be missed.

**9. New Business.**

**a. College BRAW Scholarship - $500.** Pat Ready saw that a Nebraska newsletter asks college students

to apply for a $500 scholarship and should we do this, using the donations we receive for education.

Pat Ready states that we get $500 from the Natural Resources Foundation and that they want to know

where it goes. Steve Sample thinks that we should give this money to an organization that promotes us.

He used the example of the UW Veterinary Research School, where your name goes on a plaque. Mike

Helgren said that in the past we have given money to people who requested it, such as purchasing

cameras for school nest boxes. Dan Schroeder shared that designated donations would need to be in

a pass thru account and cannot be used for budget. Dan stated that posters could be educational or

promotional and that the board could specify which. It would be better to keep funds in a more general

education category and we can decide how to allocate them.

**b. Spring Thing with Horicon Bird Club.** Pat Ready and Steve Sample are asking if we want to partner

with the Horicon Bird Club at their Spring Thing, usually held in early March. We usually supply a speaker

anyway, there would be no cost to us for the room, there is usually no lunch and it ends at 1 PM. Steve

Sample offered that we should do a Q & A session, that is always well received. Fred Craig wondered if we

could sell boxes and Pat Ready said we would supply a speaker, sell boxes & traps and have a display

there. Fred suggested that for the Q & A session we should ask a Horicon Club member to join us, perhaps

Jeff Bahls. Pat Ready will put this in the Winter newsletter, since it is held so early. Fred suggested we

send a card reminder to members about the Spring Thing and renewing memberships. Pat Ready thought

that would be a good idea and could be done. Pat said that the date for this would be March 2nd. Steve

Sample made a motion to pursue partnering with the Horicon Bird Club for their Spring Thing, Dave

Lucey seconded and the motion passed.

**c. Fall Convention.** Pat Ready suggested the convention should be held in the southwestern area of

the state next year. The date will be sometime in September-October, 2019.

**d. Next Meeting Date.** The next board meeting will be held on September 8th, 2018 with the location

to be determined. Fred and Mary Craig will be researching meeting locations.

A motion to adjourn was made by Dave Lucey and seconded by Fred Craig, the motion passed and the meeting

adjourned at 12:15 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Claire Romanak, Secretary