

Minutes of the AOS Board Meeting, Winter 2017
Ken Ward, Secretary

The Board of Directors met on Saturday, January 29, 2017 at Lake Guntersville State Park. President Anne G. Miller called the meeting to order at 1 pm. **The fall 2016 minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.**

-Attendance:

Bianca Allen, Harry Dean, Robert Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Larry Gardella, Andrew Haffenden, Lisa Gardner, Greg Harber, Anne Miller (presiding), Bob Reed, Elberta Reid, Don Self, Ken Ward (recording), Rufina Ward, Marshall Iliff (guest)

I. Executive Board Reports

Treasurer

Treasurer Elberta Reid reported beginning checking account balance, as of 1/1/16, at \$10,462. Ending checking account balance, as of 12/31/16, was \$24,475.98, \$14,288.21 of which are operating (unrestricted) funds and \$10,187.77 restricted funds [Holliman fund (\$349.00), Fort Morgan fund (HBSG \$9,828.77), CBA (\$10)]. CD balance—\$27,114.45 (interest accrued, \$583.65). Education Fund—from silent auction about \$700. Thanks to Elberta for providing a very detailed budget separating operating and restricted funds, including amount allocated to the Holliman fund, and itemization of meeting expenses.

Point of Business—Treasurer's report unanimously approved.

President

1. eBird Initiative - Board consensus was reached to support an initiative to increase eBirding in Alabama counties where needed, through field trips and connecting with eBirders in some areas who are not AOS members. Marshall Iliff (Project Leader for eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology) was supportive of this initiative and will provide a list of counties with low counts of bird species, and those with a low number of eBird checklists, as well as those with a significant number of weeks unreported. Also Marshall will communicate with active e-birders in the state including those that are not AOS members, to get their cooperation in increasing eBird reporting in the targeted counties (and perhaps recruit them as AOS members). Spring meeting should include further discussion on other strategies to enhance the eBird Project.

2. Bird Collisions with towers (suggested by Bob and Lucy Duncan) - Board consensus was reached to look into the issue of bird collisions with towers that have steady (nonblinking) lights in Alabama, to get a better idea of the scope of the issue and what might be done to address it, as necessary.

Suggestions from the Duncans and others include: location of towers with non-blinking lights along ridges and other high migration areas, dialogue with owners on retrofitting with blinking lights, recruiting state Audubon chapters to get involved, etc. An ABC report on this issue was provided by the Duncans. This project would be excellent outreach for AOS and would increase our visibility as an involved and committed organization toward bird conservation.

3. Website update – Work continues on updating website (led by Joe Watts); Lisa Gardener and Anne Miller to start website training in January and others who are interested in helping with website updating (help is especially needed to update birding resources section) and management are encouraged to contact Lisa or Anne

4. Other – Photos are needed for AOS website and FB pages; Jennie Stowers will be hosting lunch for AOS during the spring meeting; members are encouraged to bring something to share.

Point of Business - Motion made and seconded to authorize \$500 for purchase of benches at Fort Morgan, from the AOS general fund, honoring Bob and Martha Sargent –

Unanimously approved by Board

Vice-President - no report

II. Committee Reports

- **Conservation** (Greg Harber)

1. Letters sent to federal representatives, President Obama, and the Secretary of Interior in support of:

-keeping Lesser Sage Grouse on ESA endangered list

-Endangered Species Act in its current form

2. Holliman Research Fund

Point of Business – Motion made and seconded to fund 2 proposed studies, at \$1,000 each:

Gary M. Manfredy, Ph.D, College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Natural Sciences, Division of Biology, Troy University, Dothan Campus – “A Population Study of *Progne subis* (Purple Martin) in the Wiregrass Region of Alabama.”

Ms. Emma Rhodes, graduate student, Department of Biological Sciences, University of South Alabama, Foley, AL – “Age Specific Patterns in Window Mortality in Avian Populations.”

Unanimously approved by the Board

Congratulations to Dr. Manfredy and Ms. Rhodes

- **Education** (Shirley Farrell) - no report

- **Membership Recruitment** (Larry Gardella) - Need more information as to what efforts are working and what are not for increasing AOS membership (e.g., outreach to Birding Alabama and Alabama Birding Trails, Social Media, increased and more timely publicity for meetings, etc.). Further discussion of how to assess efforts needed; it may be time to survey the membership.

- **Public Relations** (Lisa Gardner) The website update is mostly complete and access will be available soon. One possibility to increase access for members would be to link up articles from the YH with the AOS website and FB pages. Lisa and Bob to look into this. Anyone interested in helping with new website updating and maintenance in the future should contact Lisa and/or Anne.

- **Social Media** (Carrie Threadgill, not present) No report

- **Online Services** (Kathy Hicks, not present) – No report

- **The Yellowhammer** (Bob Reed) – Deadline for submissions for next YH is Feb 10

- **Meetings** (Rufina Ward) – The meetings committee report for the October meeting was inadvertently excluded from the Winter 2016 issue of the YH. Acknowledgements/appreciation to those who helped in various ways with the fall meeting will be included in the Spring 2017 issue of the YH.

Please note that Priscilla Tubbs has replaced Mike Wilson on the committee and Susan Barrow has replaced Charlotte Fanz, both of whom indicated their intentions of stepping down. The committee is grateful to Mike and Charlotte for their service in past years.

- **Censusing/Checklist/Fort Morgan** (Greg Jackson, not present)

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Unanimously approved by Board

- **Field trips** (Andrew Haffenden) – Field trips for spring meeting are mostly planned. Andrew proposed that an operating name be established for AOS that would be more appealing/memorable for PR. Official name of organization would remain AOS; consensus reached that such a proposed change should first be brought before the membership.

- **Membership services** (Bianca Allen) – Further discussion warranted on a secure place to store membership information that facilitates maintenance and addition of new member information. Dropbox had been considered but may not be secure enough.