

Minutes

Executive Committee of Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones.

August 21, 2024

7:00 PM on Zoom

Voting Members Present:

Noel Ocen, President

Quyen Edwards, Vice President

Margo Rebar, Treasurer

Gail Simmons, Secretary

Beth Bradburn (Newsletter/Website Editor, At-large)

Ann Klobucar (Mentorship/ Site Visit co-Chair)

Mike Klug (Past President, Wild for Monarchs Chair)

Paul Laferriere (Community Projects Co-Chair)

Mel Luna (Program Chair, Publications Chair, At-large)

Paul Olexia (Past President, Community Projects Co-Chair)

Ester Ruohonen (Membership Chair)

Mike Weis (At-large)

Voting Members Absent:

Jessie Davis, Immediate Past President

Ilse Gebhard (Monarch Watch)

Jessica Hagen (Outreach and Education Chair, At-large)

Kathy McGoff (Hospitality Chair)

Dave Wendling (Mentorship/ Site Visit co-Chair)

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.
2. The Minutes from June 19, 2024 were approved unanimously, Moved by Margo, seconded by Mike K.
3. The Treasurer's Report for July/August 2024 was approved unanimously, moved by Gail, seconded by Beth.
4. Old Business

- a. Fall Plant Exchange -- The EC needs to clarify the date for the fall plant exchange, which currently appears on the website as September 29. It was agreed that information about the invasive Jumping Worms, and how to use a mustard solution to reduce them, would be distributed to anyone taking plants at the Exchange.
 - b. Urban Bird Treaty (Noel) – As previously agreed, KAWO is supporting Kalamazoo’s application to sign on to the Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds (the Urban Bird Treaty) sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services. Kalamazoo’s participation has been spearheaded by Gail Walter, Audubon Society of Kalamazoo. On behalf of KAWO, Jessica Hagen completed and submitted a survey outlining our support for the program. The UBT is a program working with municipalities and community partners to conserve migratory birds through education, hazard reductions (e.g. reducing light pollution and window collisions), community science, conservation actions, and habitat improvement strategies in urban/suburban areas. Additional information will appear in Seedlings.
5. New Business
- a. Election Process for 2024 elections (Gail) – Gail attended a Zoom meeting with National to discuss how elections are run. In most chapters they have been handled by the Secretary. However, there does not seem to be any prohibition against them being handled by another EC member. Many chapters are running their elections online, and National has a Google Forms template we can use if we wish to. Chapters that still run in-person elections often have a tradition of a members-only end-of-year party at which elections are held. It is acceptable to have members vote for a slate of candidates rather than for individual offices if there is no contest. National has a best-practices document for elections. Noel will follow up with Kathy to see if she is still willing to run elections; Beth was involved last year in sending out electronic ballots using MailChimp.
 - b. Minutes-taking Process (Gail) – National is encouraging Chapters to experiment with using Zoom recordings and their AI function (or other AI such as ChatGPT) to create draft minutes of meetings, which the secretary can then edit. There is a best-practices document for secretaries as well. A job that they recommend for the secretary is archiving photos, but this is not something KAWO has been doing. There is a collection of photos on the Google Drive connected to our KAWO email address, but it is not being curated. The group agreed that Gail can experiment with using the AI function in Zoom to generate minutes from the September meeting.
 - c. Writing for Spark Magazine (Gail) – We were contacted by Kristi Chapman, who volunteers for SWMLC, about writing an ongoing column for Spark Magazine about KAWO’s work. <https://swmspark.blogspot.com/> She’s been writing about SWMLC and hoped someone in our group would be interested. Gail will reach out to the Spark editor to see if it would be acceptable to use articles from Seedlings for this purpose, which would give them a wider audience.
6. Committee Reports

- a. Membership (Ester) -- From June 19 to August 20, we had 32 renewed memberships, 10 new memberships, and 19 lapsed memberships. We currently have a total of 253 members.
 - b. Program Committee (Mel) – Please read the attached Program Committee Report from Mel Luna.
 - c. Outreach and Education (Jessica) – Outreach and Education will be tabling at the WMU Sustainability Day event on Friday September 27. KAWO will be represented by Noel, Gail, and Barbara Sagara, a new member of the Outreach and Education committee.
 - d. Monarch Group (Mike) – Carol and Mike tabled at the Love Creek Nature Center’s Monarch Festival. An enthusiastic audience took almost 400 milkweed plants, and lots of seeds and printed material. Making a caterpillar pin was very popular with the kids. They delivered 9 flats of milkweed to Quyen which will be used for her monarch related activities at the Portage library. Cindy Vigneron, Joyce Leppard, Laurel Bruska, Carol Hand, Carol Klug and Margo Rebar weeded, mulched and dead headed plants at the Gilmore Gardens on two occasions in July. The Monarch committee gave out over 1400 milkweed plants and 1500 seed packets this year.
Carol and Mike will be stepping down from their coordinating roll in January, and have been working on plans for the future with Noel. Dave Wendling contacted Western about growing milkweed plants next year, and it looks like that might be possible.
 - e. Hospitality (Kathleen) – Kathy will help provide materials for the WMU tabling event. Please see the attached list of Food Options Kathy has provided for our 25th anniversary celebration at the Fall Plant Exchange. The group agreed that likely attendance at the Fall Exchange is smaller than in Spring, probably 50 to 75 people. It was agreed that a couple of cakes is a good option, and maybe one or two other options, but this will need further thought.
 - f. Community Projects (Paul O./Paul L.) – No report.
 - g. Mentorship/Site Visit Committee (Dave and Ann K.) – This group has been quiescent for the summer, and has had only 3 requests.
 - h. Publications (Mel) – No report.
7. UPCOMING EVENTS and ACTION ITEMS
- a. Noel will follow up with Jessie on the date for the Fall Plant Exchange and notify the EC of any change from the current date of September 29.
 - b. We will produce fliers about Asian Jumping Worms to distribute at the Plant Exchange.
 - c. We will put information about the Urban Bird Treaty in the next issue of Seedlings.
 - d. Noel will follow up with Kathy about running elections this fall.
 - e. Gail will follow up with the editor of Spark magazine about using Seedlings articles for their publication.
 - f. The food for the Fall Plant Exchange needs to be finalized.

- g. The Annual Conflict of Interest Statement will be distributed to all EC members in September.
 - h. Saturday September 14 is the final Field Trip of the Summer, with Laura Moss at WMU's Parkview Campus.
8. ANNOUNCEMENTS
- a. Beth has re-formatted the resource list on the website: <https://kalamazoo.wildones.org/resources-2/>. If anyone has any additions, they can send them to Beth.
 - b. Quyen is looking for a date when artist Olivia Mendoza can come to one of our meetings to show the new artwork she is doing for us.
 - c. Quyen announced that all dates for Fall events are now on the website; Pints and Plants dates are confirmed for 9/12, 10/10, 11/14, and 12/12.
9. ADJOURNMENT –The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m., as moved by Paul Olexia.

Submitted by Gail Simmons
Approved Sept. 18, 2024