

WCAS Planning Meeting

January 13, 2013

Attending: Tom Romito, Mary Anne Romito, Susan Cucuzza, Kit Birch, Stan Searles, Kurt Miske, Liz Clingman, Barry Wolfe, Mark Hofelich, Nancy Howell, and Penny O'Connor

Tom opened meeting at 1:03 p.m. and Susan greeted the attendees.

Introduction. Susan displayed the following flip chart papers, which were based upon her phone conversations with each board member prior to this session:

WCAS Expectations:

1. Where we are going –common direction
2. Involvement
 - a. Board Members
 - b. WCAS Members
3. Carry the Mission Forward
4. Greater Visibility
5. Roles & Responsibilities
 - a. Shared Leadership
6. Clarity on goals
7. Financial management
8. Project Identification
9. Education

WCAS Vision (current version as of this session)

Encourage Awareness and appreciation of the natural world in our community.

WCAS Mission (current version as of this session)

Educate the public about conservation of the natural world through member involvement in chapter activities and community outreach

Ground Rules

1. 1 person speaks at a time
2. Take role hat off
3. Think outside the box, define box
4. No right or wrong
5. Share freely
6. No bad ideas
7. Eat

Visioning. Susan asked us to picture in our minds meeting people and imaging what they would be doing or talking about or what their facial expressions would be, knowing that WCAS has done extremely well.

1. Smiling
2. Caring & awareness about our environment and surroundings
3. Talking about WCAS programs, events, field trips
4. Excited to see a bird and identify it
5. Carefree. More at peace. Appreciation of nature
6. Calm not rushing around
7. Proactive. Taking responsibility.
8. Happy to see someone from WCAS. Ask us for help about their current environment problem.
9. Coming to WCAS to learn. Education of public.
10. People have a better understanding of why things are they way they are.
11. People more accepting of nature

Review of WCAS vision

1. Does it cover the how? *The vision is not intended to cover the “how” of the mission statement, but it rather as aspiration.*
2. Our vision is the basis of our mission.
3. What are our aspirations?
4. WCAS is already there. *The intent of this statement made during the session is not clear.*
5. Other groups are going to join WCAS to make WCAS stronger and educate the public and get involved through WCAS and grow WCAS.
6. Our job will still get done if others do the job.
7. Encouraging awareness and appreciation of the natural world and are doing something to achieve this through WCAS or other. That people are active involvement.
8. What are we about? Growing our membership? Educating people about natural world awareness? People are being active in a positive way.

New Vision Statement: Our community appreciates the natural world and actively works to preserve and create a healthy environment.

Review of WCAS mission

1. We are helping the public to accomplish this.
2. Educate the public by focusing on birds and other wildlife and their habitat.

New Mission Statement: The mission of WCAS is to educate the public about the importance of conservation focusing on birds & wildlife, & their environment.

How we will accomplish our mission (We broke out into pairs of people to brainstorm ideas, not specific objectives):

1. Membership (Kurt and Barry)
 - a. Increase overall communicate Mission – brochure or similar – to like-minded/birders
 - b. Get Current members more involved- short projects-better communication-education material
 - c. Form membership committee

2. Education (Kit and Penny)
 - a. Monthly programs
 1. Take advantage of Audubon’s focus on birds
 2. People like to meet bird experts.
 3. People like to learn more about birds
 - b. Consider Workshops
 1. Speaker
 2. Bird ID
 3. Bird by ear
 4. Technology
 - c. Field Trips
 1. Accessible to handicapped
 2. Evening ones
 3. General Conservation
 - d. Newsletter
 1. Think ahead about content that will go to all local members of National Audubon
 - e. Website & social media
 - f. Local People & Resources
 - g. Citizen Science

3. Communication/Marketing/PR (Mark and Nancy)
 - a. What we do now
 1. newsletter
 2. website
 3. events
 4. stickers
 5. meetings
 6. e-blasts
 7. facebook
 - b. New Ideas
 1. social media FB & Twitter
 2. TV/ Radio Press Release/Invites
 3. Print Ads

- 4. Nature column- Sun News/Observer- Free? Buy Ads too
- 5. ID Guide (local by WCAS)
- 6. Interactive website/bird book
- 7. Events-new types
- 8. Discussion Forum

4. Community Outreach/Advocacy (Stan and Mary Anne)

- a. Monthly programs-publicize better
- b. Science Fair, Film Festival, Field trips- Publicize
- c. Local Governments- Stronger presence-brochure
- d. UltraWalk/Bird Publicize
- e. Local civic groups

5. Research (Stan and Mary Anne)

- a. Local universities on joint projects
- b. Continue work with Metroparks
- c. Offer assistance to local governments on environmental issues
- d. Other groups on joint projects
- e. Western Reserve Land Conservancy.
- f. RRIBA?? What's next.

6. WCAS Leadership (Tom and Liz)

- a. Board Directors needs to direct or delegate – not do
- b. Recruit & delegating
- c. Activate members
- d. Follow up with those who have been active
- e. How do we find a successor?
- f. Must have officer succession rather than group leadership
- g. Financial leadership- plan to: sustain solvency
- h. Ambassadors for WCAS

7. Partnerships (Mark and Nancy)

Current

- a. Metropark/Zoo
- b. Rock Pile-Increase Exposure
- c. CIFF

New

- a. Other conservation Groups
- b. Birds Unlimited
- c. Lake Erie Nature & Science
- d. Libraries

- e. Schools
- f. Senior Citizen Outings:
 - 1. Events
 - 2. Bird Feeder-locations

Multivoting of strategies for the next five years

Communications/PR –5 checks This category will be flowing into all other goals

Increase level and media to reach the community.

Partnerships—1 check

Develop partners that will increase exposure and volunteer pool, project/research

Community Outreach—1 check

Enhance community outreach programs

Research/Projects—4 checks

Demonstrate environmental conscience through conservation project.

WCAS Leadership—6 checks TOP

Identify and develop leaders on the Board and within WCAS membership

Financial Sustainability—3 checks

Build and strengthen financial position/structure to sustain and grow financially.

Membership—5 checks TOP

Grow and strengthen membership to achieve our mission through our members.

Education—5 checks TOP

Strengthen, enhance education focused on birds & impact of conservation.

Notes:

1. WCAS Leadership, Membership, and Education/Communication will flow into all these goals.
2. Financial sustainability flows to all these aspects and should be an agenda item. We agreed to address this at all board meetings.
3. During the meeting, Susan developed the language that describes each strategy.
4. We multi-voted, each person casting three votes, to choose the top three strategies.

2013 annual goals (action plan)

Strategy: Identify and develop leaders on the Board and within WCAS membership.

Identify and develop leaders on the Board and within WCAS membership, President, VP

Confirm officer roles

Examine role of board/clarify board roles & identify successors

Operating procedures/ guiding principles

Board Composition of Skills experience

Identify natural leaders in membership

Ambassadors of WCAS

Strategy: Strengthen, enhance education focused on birds & impact of conservation.

Strengthen, enhance education focused on birds & impact of conservation.

Enhance our involvement with citizen science

Load Fall newsletter with content

Expand Field trips

Out reach to Libraries

Creation of new programs for community outreach

Develop educational material to target audiences

Develop more effective monthly programs

Develop workshops

Reach new audiences

Strategy: Grow and strengthen membership to achieve our mission through our members.

Grow and strengthen membership to have mission- achieve through our members.

Create a Membership Committee

Understand/track member demographics

Create a survey to learn membership interests

Instead of program hold a board meeting with membership.