

Agenda
TOS Board of Directors Meeting
April 27, 2024

Call to order and determination of quorum – Dr. Michael Collins called the meeting to order at 2:32 pm. Cyndi Routledge determined there was a quorum.

Approval of Fall Minutes - Approved unanimously.

Reports of Officers and Directors-at-Large:

- VPs:

East TN – Chris Welsh – Spending time organizing this meeting it was discovered that hosting a meeting is a good springboard for membership participation. Knoxville Chapter involved with campaign regarding window strike prevention. Knoxville Chapter had a joint meeting with Chattanooga last fall and conversation continues to do it again. Joint initiative for a Young Birder’s Club started by Seven Islands and Iams supported by KTOS has been successful.

Middle TN – Steve Routledge – NTOS is representing TOS as a stakeholder for Urban Bird Treaty in Nashville/Davidson County. Which is a collaborative effort with like-minded folks to promote conservations, education, safe habitats and reduce hazards for birds. Congratulations to Chris Sloan, long-time NTOS member who is the new Chair of the Board of American Bird Association. NTOS has reached out to Chris to offer our assistance with any collaborative initiatives that ABA undertakes.

West TN – Dick Preston – Memphis Chapter will host the Fall meeting weekend of September 27-29, 2024. Holiday Inn Express in Millington will be host hotel. TOS Grants Committee has awarded 3 Memphis Chapter members.

- Directors-at-Large:

East TN –Susan Hubley – all 3 Chapter very involved with Outreach and bird walks in the area which are always listed on the TOS webpage.

Middle TN – Mac McWhirter – no report

West TN – Allan Trently – no report

- Secretary – Cyndi Routledge – Deferred to announcements at end

Treasurer – Pam Lasley - 2023: Assets for the Society at the end of 2023 were \$447,216 including cash of \$6,967 and fair market value of our Vanguard investments at \$438,456. Our investments rebounded nicely with a gain in market value of \$51,331. We transferred \$10,000 to our operating checking account in 2023. The reserve for Migrants to be printed reflects four issues were outstanding for 2023 at estimated current costs. There was no change in the long-term conservation reserve.

Non-investment revenue for the year was \$15,537 for memberships and subscriptions and \$6,206 from contribution including two memorial donations. Total expenses were \$26,264. Publications and communications at \$14,628 are our largest expense and includes 3 issues of *The Migrant*, MailChimp fees to electronically send *The Tennessee Warbler*, website maintenance contract, and expenses related to the integration of our local websites with the state. We awarded only \$2,260 in research and conservation grants. A new expense this year is State Meeting Support as established at our Fall 2022 meeting. Our insurance was renewed this year at a lower rate of at \$895 per year, prepaid for three years. Overall, the net revenues over expenses were \$62,198, but Operating net income was \$10,867 which excludes the gain on our investments. Dividends and interest for 2023 were slightly lower at \$15,389. Investment performance was 17.9% for 1 year return, 3-year annualized is 4.5%, 5 year is 8.9% and 10-year annualized return on investments is 7.3%. Total individual membership decreased overall 1.8 % to 719, and we lost one institutional subscription. Sellars had a very large increase for a small club. For the larger clubs, Chattanooga had a 5% increase, but Memphis, Nashville, and Knoxville all fell in membership numbers slightly. At Large membership is down for 2023. Total memberships stand at 734

As required by the Constitution, an examination of the 2023 financial records was performed. The Finance Committee (S Routledge, Pyles, Preston).

2024:

TOS remains in excellent financial shape. Revenues, expenses and publications are running as expected, with Individual memberships roughly the same as last year.

The Conservation and Research Fund has funded \$20,000 in grants this year which is our budgeted limit. *The Migrant* publications are running at their scheduled pace and *The Tennessee Warbler* e-mail seems to be working well. All publications are available on the TOS website. Unfortunately, our MailChimp subscription is no longer free, rather we are paying \$29 per month for this service.

During the first quarter, our Vanguard investment account increased in value by \$25,971 but we have withdrawn \$20,000 to go to our operating account to fund this year's grants. The full results of 2024 will be presented at the Spring 2025 meeting.

Discussion of the restricted Conservation Research Fund was brought up by Dick Preston and how it was set-up and what to do with it. Decision on what to do with the 'fund' deferred to Fall meeting for more research.

Sales Tax – TOS is a non-profit and if you use a personal check TOS cannot reimburse. Contact Pam Lasley when making purchases.

- Migrant – Editor – Bob Ford - The Migrant remains close to our intended schedule of publication, mailed six months after the date on the cover. The September 2023 issue is at the printer to be mailed soon, so this one is two months behind schedule

but we plan to catch up with the next two issues. We could use content including articles and pictures about first state record birds, reports from the Tennessee Bird Records Committee, and book reviews. Other articles or Round Table Notes can include first county records, unusual behavior, nesting status, and more.

Many thanks to Graham Gerdeman, he done a tremendous job to continue the high-quality report established by Rick Knight and other previous editors.

- TN Warbler Newsletter – Theresa Graham – Deadline for August edition July 15th. Need Chapter notes from all Chapters.

Committee Reports

- TN Bird Record Committee – Graham Gerdeman – absent - Sent the following: Per Migrant Seasons report, proposed adding some images of rarities if it fits into the formatting.

No report to the board on the changes I would like to see enacted on the Bird Records Committee. I did have an hour-long interview recently with the Ontario Bird Records Committee and California BRC, regarding operating state and provincial BRCs in the US and Canada. They expect to have something published perhaps by Fall.

Current plan for Tennessee Bird Record Committee is to develop more concise policy/procedures on member term lengths and limits, definitions for officers, a written procedure for how review is conducted, and a better definition than what we have of what species/sightings require TBRC review (the "review list"). Overall, the organized committees (e.g., California, Colorado, Texas) are having the same struggles of perceived relevance in the age of eBird and social media.

- Conservation & Policy Committee – Dick Preston / Melinda Welton – see report Melinda reported House Bill 1867 - Justin Jones submitted to Tennessee House. Never made it out of committee.
- Conservation Research Funding – Dr. Michael Collins - Large increase in proposals and funding requests. In 2024 we had 11 proposals submitted and awarded 9. Discussion took place regarding procedures of awarding grants and all agreed it was working as it is for now.
- Website – Cyndi Routledge – Progress has taken place on the TOS website. Efforts to move the chapter sites to the TOS page are close to completion. Existing sites have been moved to one server, thus eliminating the separate costs per chapter. Domain names have been moved to one company for consistency. Updates are completed as needed.

Chapter sites complete include Main TOS, Kingsport, Buffalo River, Memphis, Nashville, Knoxville, Lebanon, Lee and Lois Herndon. Chattanooga is up next and Highland Rim has just now been contacted. Finally, the last tasks following completion of Chapter sites are to add a link to all Chapters on the main TOS site and then begin adding publications to our site. Many thanks to Amy Wilms for her work.

- Finance – Steve Routledge – Audit Committee met on April 26, 2024 to complete a limited review of the financials for 2023 and found all transactions to be in order.
- Curator – Stefan Woltmann – no report
- TNBird - Rob Biller – Listserv is in good shape and working well.

Old Business - none

New Business – Discussion of moving Migrant to digital was revisited and a detailed discussion took place which included cost analysis. Danny Gaddy made a motion to move the Migrant to a digital format only. Effective date to be determined upon consultation with Bob Ford and the editing team. Seconded by Melinda Welton. Passed with one no vote and one abstention.

Chris Welsh had a few questions regarding MailChimp. Pam Lasley told the BOD that TOS pays for a subscription so all Chapters can have access to it and should not have to pay for their own subscriptions. Pam Lasley is willing to send log -in access to any Chapter for use.

Future Annual Meeting schedule was discussed – Fall 2024 meeting will be held in Memphis; Annual Spring 2025 location is undetermined. Fall 2025 is also undetermined.

General Announcements:

Discover Bird Books – Cyndi Routledge - We have distributed 1335 books since the Fall meeting. Brings the total of books distributed overall 44,200 since 2011. With that in mind, Cyndi has spoken to David Hanni about continuing funding, and he assured her that he will include money in his 2025 budget for additional reprinting of books as needed. Amount to be determined but will be at least what it has been in the past. As always, anyone wanting books, please contact Cyndi Routledge for copies.

David Hanni and his intern Maddy are continuing with their Colonial Water Bird survey and ask that if anyone knows of a rookery or nesting birds to please contact him with the lat/long. He can be reached at David.Hanni@tn.gov

Inaugural Tipton County Museum Bird Festival, May 3-5, 2024. Tipton County Museum, Veterans Memorial, Nature Center in Covington, TN, Fort Pillow State Park, Reelfoot Lake State Park, Lower Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge, Turner Game Birds, Hatchie River Conservancy, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and local TWRA. Katherine Markley (Tipton County Museum)

Tennessee Dept of Tourist Development (Jenni Veal) aims to promote birding opportunities in TN. Birding hotspots guide, bird guide, economics, demographics, links to TN Birding Trail, TN Watchable Wildlife (slated to be revamped this year), eBird. David Hanni (TWRA), Bob Ford/Michael Collins/ Graham Gerdeman (TOS), Mike Butler/Tony Lance (TN Wildlife Federation), Ashley Stokes (UTK Extension). Examples from NC and MD.

Motion to Adjourn – Pam Lasley made a motion to adjourn. Laura Tappen seconded. Pass unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 3:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cyndi Routledge
Secretary

**TENNESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL SPRING MEETING
April 27, 2024**

The Annual Spring Meeting was hosted by the Knoxville Chapter and held at the Hampton Inn in Knoxville, TN. Field trips were to Seven Islands State Birding Park, Cove Lake and Sharp's Ridge. President Michael Collins called the meeting to order 6:38 pm eastern time with a hearty welcome and thanks to the Knoxville Chapter for their hard work in making this a most successful meeting.

Secretary Cyndi Routledge confirmed that a quorum had been met and was present.

President Michael Collins then briefed the membership on the following items:

Treasurer's Report – Audit was completed. Everything is in good order and we're doing fine. Our membership stands on 734. In conclusion our organization remains strong. Many thanks to Pam Lasley for continued hard work on our finances.

Conservation and Research Grants – Awarded a total of \$20,000 to 9 different proposed projects.

Discover Bird Activity Books – 44,200 books distributed to children and adults over the last 14 years. Contact Cyndi Routledge if you need or want any books.

Nomination – Board of Directors recommends and nominates Chris Welsh for the position of President of TOS to begin his term in Spring of 2025. Dr. Collins called for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, Michael Collins called for the vote. Passed unanimously.

Memphis will be hosting the Fall 2024 meeting. Dr. Collins is working on finding a host Chapter for Spring and Fall of 2025.

A motion was made by Steve Routledge to adjourn the business portion of the meeting for the program. Dick Preston seconded the motion. Pass unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:42 pm

Chris Welsh introduced the speaker – Tiffany Kerstin from Nature Ninja Birding Tours – "*Birdie Big Year: Year Elevating Woman Birders.*"

Respectfully submitted,
Cyndi Routledge, Secretary