

**Draft**  
**Minutes Board of Directors Meeting**  
**May 3, 2025**

President Michael Collins called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm. The meeting was held at the Courtyard Marriott Board Room in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Field trips were held to Cravens House, Stanifer Gap Marsh, Enterprise South Nature Park, Camp Jordon and Chesterfield Frost Park.

Secretary Cyndi Routledge determined there was a quorum.

**Approval of the Minutes** – Motion was made Pam Lasley to accept Fall 2024 Minutes as written. Chris Welsh seconded. Approved unanimously.

**Report of Officers and Directors-at-Large:**

**VPs:**

**East TN** – Chris Welsh – Five TOS Chapter in East TN have all been very active and are doing a great deal of outreach activities with local and regional communities. Chapters are also holding joint field trips. A few Chapters are working with local municipalities to get signage up at some birding hotspots with the idea that getting interest in birds, into the public eye, goes beyond just birding.

Birding Kingsport took advantage of the Christmas season to decorate a Christmas tree in Glen Bruce Park with a bird theme for a Downtown Kingsport Association fundraiser. Birding Kingsport also worked with Wild Birds Unlimited helping children make pinecone bird feeders at Exchange Place's annual "Christmas in the Country". Bill Grigsby with Birding Kingsport does a short bird-related segment on the "AM Tri-Cities with Dave Light" live radio show on WKPT.

Chattanooga continues to list and monitor area chimneys used by Chimney Swift for roosts, educating building owners about swifts and hosting Swift Roost watch events during migration throughout Hamilton County.

The region is searching for a new East TN Vice President since Chris Welsh is President Elect.

**Middle TN** – Steve Routledge – Spring Wednesday morning Radnor walks began in April and run through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday in May. They remain an excellent source of outreach with over 100 participants each migration period. The Nashville Chapter awarded a conservation grant to the Bird Alliance group of The

Clarksville Montgomery County School district's Middle College. Five pairs of binoculars were purchased and will be housed with Brandy Schnettler, biology teacher and group leader, to be used with spring, fall and Christmas bird counts the students participate in each year.

**West TN** – Dick Preston – absent - no report

**Directors-at-Large:**

East TN –Susan Hubley – Annual Spring Meeting will be in Kingsport May 1-3, 2026. Details will be forthcoming.

Middle TN – Mac McWhirter absent – no report

West TN – Allan Trently was absent but sent a reminder that Middle Fork Bottoms State Park in Madison County was officially opened on August 12. This 860-acre park contains grasslands, marshes, early successional and bottomland forests. A visitor's center is scheduled to be completed in the next few years.

**Secretary** – Cyndi Routledge – reminded everyone that all updates to State Directors lists for the webpage need to be send to her on an annual basis. Along with any additional prevalent changes.

**Treasurer** – Pam Lasley -**2024:** Assets for the Society at the end of 2023 were \$488,501 including cash of \$4,049 and fair market value of our Vanguard investments at \$483,557. Our investments gained \$47,512 in market value this year. We transferred \$26,000 to our operating checking account in 2024. We no longer carry a long-term reserve for The Migrant, since we have moved to digital format only. There was no change in the long-term conservation reserve.

Non-investment revenue for the year was \$13,739. All was member dues save \$318 for general contributions. Total expenses were \$43,555. Publications and communications at \$15,910 are our largest expense and includes 4 issues of the printed and mailed *The Migrant*, MailChimp fees to electronically send *The Tennessee Warbler*, and our website maintenance contract. We awarded \$20,000 in research and conservation grants. Overall, the net revenues over expenses were \$41,285, but Operating loss was \$29,816 which excludes the gain on our investments.

Dividends and interest for 2024 were slightly higher at \$23,589. Investment performance was roughly 16% for 1 year return, 3-year annualized is 5.7%, 5-year is 10.3% and 10-year annualized return on investments is 7.5%.

Total individual membership decreased overall 3 % to 697, and we lost two institutional subscriptions. I've included a new column for Student memberships. Sellers had a large drop for a small club. For the larger clubs, Chattanooga and Knoxville fell in membership. Memphis had a nice increase and Nashville remained essentially the same. At Large membership is up for 2024 by 12%. Total memberships stand at 710

As required by the Constitution, an examination of the 2024 financial records was performed. The Finance Committee (S Routledge, Pyles, Preston) has performed this exam and will give a report during the meeting.

#### **2025:**

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 \$10,612 in grants this year. *The Migrant* was published on-line only for the March 2024 edition. Cost of typesetting was \$260. All publications are available on the TOS website. During the first quarter, our Vanguard investment account decreased in value by \$15,314. Dividends and interest are comparable to 2024. The full results of 2025 will be presented at the Spring 2026 meeting.

**Migrant Editor** – Bob Ford absent – no report

**TN Warbler Newsletter** – Theresa Graham absent – no report – Note: The BOD expressed condolences on unexpected passing of Theresa's husband, Danny, recently. She remains in our thoughts.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**TN Bird Record Committee** – Graham Gerdeman absent – no report

**Conservation & Policy Committee** – Melinda Welton – Statewide the wetland bill did pass which means it's 'open season' on wetlands Tennessee.

Dr. Susan Blas is the newest member of the Committee.

The Chair continued to encourage members to sign-on to ABC's action alerts during this most important and fragile time for conservation and wildlife.

**Conservation Research Funding** – Dr. Michael Collins – Committee received 9 applications for grants. They awarded 5 projects state-wide for total of \$10,612.

**Website** – Cyndi Routledge – Webmaster Amy Wilms reports that efforts to move the chapter sites to the TOS page are close to completion. The following work has taken place -

- 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
- Chattanooga Chapter is now complete and training will be scheduled
- Directions to add events to the community calendar is complete
- Updates are completed as needed
- A new header has been added to the website for chapters. This will allow users to find chapter sites much more efficiently. (Nashville will be added very soon).
- A new forms plugin has been added to the site for state meeting registrations.
- I will add here that I – as secretary - get between 5-10 emails a month via the webpage from readers. They range from bird ID's to field trip information and sometime DBAB requests – most of those come directly from the 'education' page on the webpage, membership questions...etc...
- As always, Amy thanks us for the opportunity to help and promote birding in Tennessee.

**Finance** – Steve Routledge reported that on May 2<sup>nd</sup> Barbara Pyles and Steve Routledge did an audit and found all finances to be in excellent order. Kudos to Pam Lasley, Treasurer for all her efforts.

**Curator** – Stefan Woltmann absent - no report

**TN-Bird** - Rob Biller absent – Rob sent the following report - Since May 2024 thru April 2025, 27 additional birders have subscribed to the listserv and 5 have unsubscribed for various reason. Total overall list participation is - 905

## **Old Business - None**

## **New Business**

Jeremy Teague emailed about holding a Joint meeting with Kentucky Ornithological Society tentatively in Fall 2026. The idea was received with much favor and Michael Collins and incoming President Chris Welsh will follow up with KOS.

Ron Hoff reported that additional field cards are needed. Susan McWhirter made a motion to print 2000 yellow field cards. Seconded by Ron Hoff. Passed unanimously.

After 20 years of service Ron Hoff has submitted his retired as the TOS State Bird Count Compiler. A candidate to replace Ron needs to be identified and appointed. Ron is willing to help during the transition.

President Elect Chris Welsh is searching for replacement for East TN Vice President among eastern chapters.

Bob Ford has indicated his desire to retire as Migrant Editor in the coming months. A discussion took place naming a few possibilities. Additionally, Martha Waldron and Susan McWhirter are stepping down after the December 2024 issue of the Migrant is published. President Elect Chris Welsh will contact those members that were suggested as possibly being interested.

Following up on a discussion regarding archiving the Migrant on the TOS site that took place at the Fall 2024 meeting, Cyndi Routledge presented the proposal for that work that was submitted by Amy Wilms, webmaster of the TOS. After information was provided about current status of SORA and the pros and cons of Amy's proposal, Pam Lasley made a motion to table the discussion until the Fall 2025 meeting regarding the moving the Migrant to the TOS webpage pending

completion of the migration of SORA to the 'new' USF site. Chris Welsh seconded. Passed unanimously.

Pam Lasley made a motion to eliminate offering Institution subscriptions of the Migrant now that the publication has gone digital. Seconded by Ron Hoff. A discussion of the pros and cons took place. The vote passed unanimously

**General Announcements:**

- Spring 2026 meeting will be in Kingsport, per our recently approved rotation. Specifically, May 1-3, 2026. Memphis will hold the Spring 2027 meeting. Knoxville will hold the Spring 2028 meeting and Nashville will hold the 2029 Annual meeting.
- Fall 2025 meeting will be held in Elizabethton: tentative dates, Sept. 26-28, 2025.
- Discover Birds book – In November 2024 2000, books were printed for \$5000 with grants money from TOS and TWRA. To date 47,298 books have been distributed!
- Pam Lasley thanked the Chattanooga Chapter for hosting the meeting.

Steve Routledge made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Pam Lasley. Pass unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned by President Collins at 3:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cyndi Routledge  
Secretary

**DRAFT**

Minutes of the Annual Meeting  
May 3, 2025

President Dr. Michael Collins welcomed everyone to the Annual Spring meeting which WAS held at Puckett's Restaurant in downtown Chattanooga. The meeting was called to order at 6:45 pm.

Dr. Collins thanked the Chattanooga Chapter for hosting the meeting and providing a lovely weekend to spite the rain showers.

President Collins then provided a brief summary of the afternoon Board of Director's meeting including but not limited to:

- Finances – all in good order
- Bird Conservation and Policy – important time to stay on top of all conservation bills
- Grants – 5 research projects were funded. Total funding was \$10,612.
- Discover Bird Books – to date 47, 298 books have been distributed.
- Call for volunteers for BOD positions that are open or will be coming open in the next few months.

President Collins presented the Slate of Candidates for 2025-2027 term:

President – Chris Welsh

VP East TN – vacant

VP Middle TN – Steve Routledge

VP West TN – Dick Preston

Secretary – Cyndi Routledge

Treasurer – Pam Lasley

Directors-at-large:

East – Susan Hubley

Middle – Mac McWhirter

West – Allan Trently

President Collins asked for any nominations from the floor. Having heard none, he called for a motion to accept the slate as nominated. OJ Morgan made a motion to accept the slate as presented. Ron Hoff seconded. Passed unanimously.

At this time Dr. Michael Collins introduced the new TOS President, Chris Welsh and turned the meeting over to the newly elected President. Newly elected President Chris Welsh thanked Michael for his service and expressed his thanks to all TOS volunteers for the work they do each year.

Newly elected President Welsh asked for motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was made by OJ Morgan and seconded by Ron Hoff. Vote passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:58 pm for introduction of Keynote Speaker – Dr. David Aborn