The virtual meeting was called to order by president, Ron Mills at 4:00 pm. The following board members were present on Zoom: Mike Krzyzkowski, Vikki Carpenter, Sandy Artman, Rob Mills, Brenda Curtis, Phyllis Cady, and Pete Quasius. Also present was member Ron Robinson. Roll call indicated a quorum was present.

There were no additions or changes to the meeting agenda. Minutes from the September 24, 2020 meeting, the Treasurer’s and Membership’s reports have been received and were approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ron M. reminded everyone to please send Board ID pictures for the website to Phyllis so Kalindi can update board members. It was announced that Sandra K. has volunteered to take over publicity from Sue Galvin. Larry Behrens has also volunteered to assist with Facebook and the website.

Audubon Assembly Report- Ron M. asked who participated in the recent virtual Audubon Assembly. Several PRAS Board members indicated their participation. Members indicated there were some technical glitches but the Key Speaker was good.

Programs/Field Trips - Rob Mills reported that there were 14 people who participated in the October 25-28 self-guided walk at Prairie Creek Preserve. 79 species were identified.

Phyllis C. gave a shout out to Brenda Curtis for her field work with her three mentees including Edwin who is a talented photographer.

The Programs/Field Trips Committee is looking for future suggestions. Some ideas from board members included Kiwanis Park, Pennington Park, Ollie’s Pond in Charlotte County and possibly some beaches in Sarasota and Sanibel. Mike K. reminded everyone that tides change daily when setting times. Another observation made was that a 3 weeks’ notice of the event would assist people in setting their calendars to participate.

Ron Robinson said a survey was sent to 24 people asking for their favorite places. Responses are expected by next weekend and a report will be sent out.

It was mentioned that on November 24, 2020 the Venice Audubon Society will be conducting a live webinar via Zoom. The general meeting is at 6:30 and the guest speaker is Dr. Terry Root. Topic will be Climate Change, Birds and Us. Zoom meeting is for Venice members but PRAS members can sign up to be on the email list. It was also mentioned that CHEC was doing some walks.

Ron Mills suggested that some PRAS members may be willing to conduct guided tours for a donated fee and the tours would be limited to a specific number of participants. Phyllis C. can write up for mail chip. Rob Mills will work up email blast solicitation for volunteers.

Yard Certification Program- Rob Mills reported that 10 properties were certified before Covid 19 shut down increased activity. Future potential sites include Edison Gardens, Sweet Bay nursery and Native Plant nursery.
**FPL Grant** – Brenda C. stated that PRAS was awarded $2,000 to develop a booklet on (Native) Plants for Birds for young children. Brenda would like to tie in the photo contest with the booklet. Ron M. also suggested working with Anne Bouhebent with the Early Learning Coalition to enhance diversity outreach opportunities.

**Photo Contest/Banquet** - Brenda suggested that members could vote online through the website for the photo contest. She reiterated that photos with the theme Plants for Birds would be a good tie in to the FPL grant. It was also suggested that local restaurants might participate by having copies of photos available on site for customers to place a vote.

Ron M. asked board members to think of other fund-raising ideas since it does not look like PRAS will be able to have the annual banquet due to the Corona Virus and restrictions. Perhaps an online bidding auction was suggested. Phyllis mentioned that the Birdathon could also raise funds. Continued fund raising ideas will be discussed at the next PRAS Board meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Conservation Priorities 2020-2021** – Brenda C. stated that a priorities’ report with goals and successes was sent to PRAS Board members. Pete Q. offered as priorities: Everglades Restoration; Florida Forever funds; new oil royalty monies for local projects; and increased septic to sewer initiatives for coastal, water sheds and advanced treatment plants.

President Ron Mills asked the conservation committee members (Brenda, Pete and Sandra) to draw up a document with recommendations for PRAS to endorse.

**Possible Sta. 5/6 Field Trip** - Trip to be scheduled for November 20 (21). Brenda will send info to Phyllis and Sandra to publicize for PRAS.

**Mary Lundeberg Tern Book** - Brenda requested the PRAS Board consider putting this book on the PRAS website. It fits with PRAS’ commitment to Birding, Conservation and Education. The book is to assist teachers. Ms. Lundeberg has provided authorization. Motion was called for approval and was passed.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Membership** - Phyllis Cady reported there are 421 members. Paid dues are at 50%.

**Bird Blind** - Mike K. stated the bird blind reopened 2 weeks ago. 2 seed cans disappeared and new ones were purchased. The bird houses need some minor repairs and Mike offered to make the repairs. Mike reported 2 new volunteers were recruited from the email blast solicitation.

**Scholarship** - Vikki C. provided the recommendation from Gregg Klowden and the scholarship committee to authorize one scholarship of $1,000 for 2021 with the application submission deadline of 12/31/2020. Confirmation from Sandy Artman, Treasurer, indicated that there was $26,000 plus in funds in the designated account. $1,000 authorization would keep the principal at $25,000 to continue to earn interest.
The PRAS Board then discussed if the qualified applicant could include a rising high school senior who would have completed an AA degree upon high school graduation. Ron Mills asked the Scholarship committee (Gregg, Vikki, Michelle, Cindy and Pete) to further discuss. Sandy also volunteered that there might be additional monies available to move to the scholarship fund.

**Pennington Park** - Rob M. said that they have been doing some cutting down of invasives. Park is looking pretty and growing. It has gotten some good Google reviews. A bird bath was knocked over but Rob has replaced it. He also suggested a future self-guided trip in the park between Dec – Feb when more birds are around. He is pleased that people are taking the informative brochures at the park. He is already restocking the supply.

**Christmas Bird Count** - Ron M. reported the Christmas bird count is scheduled for December 19, 2020. There is a presidents’ call on November 24 to discuss. Volunteers will reply to Tony Licata.

**OPEN FORUM:**

Pete Q. stated there is potential for a future field trip at Babcock Ranch.

Brenda C. reported there are four Assembly recorded links in the Conservation report.

With no further comments, President Ron Mills indicated he would send out notification for the November PRAS Board meeting. Meeting will be conducted via Zoom. Date and time to be determined. Ron then adjourned the meeting at 5:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Vikki Carpenter, Secretary