



Minutes of
Zoom Committee Meeting
at 19.30 hrs on Wednesday
14th September 2022

Present

Barry Murphy (chair)
Graham Cawdell (joint secretary)
Ruth-Ann Leak (joint secretary)
George Keegan (PRO)
Pádraig Keogh (treasurer)
Colin Guilfoyle
Nathy Gilligan
Marie Comerford

Apologies

Colm Madden
Jon Freestone
Nuala O'Malley

Apologies as above.

Thanks to Helen Lawson. Since our last meeting Helen has confirmed her decision to resign from the committee. Ruth had run our branch with Helen's assistance for many years. She stated that Helen had become a true friend and praised her loyalty, diligence and enthusiasm. Without Helen's assistance, Ruth felt that the Mayo branch of BWI would have folded. Helen set up and maintained our Facebook account and from March 2020 took on the role of treasurer. *Go raibh mile maith agat, Helen.*

Minutes of last meeting on Wednesday 20th July presumed read. No amendments requested.

Matters Arising Graham said that he'd not had the opportunity to work with Ruth on the revised branch flyer. Ruth informed the committee that she has now settled in the UK. She continued to receive messages on our Facebook page and she enjoyed designing our flyers for events on Canva. We discussed how she could remain involved. It was decided that we would migrate our Yahoo contacts database to our Google account which Graham would run and Ruth would delete her administrator status from Facebook. She would continue to produce our flyers which would be emailed to Barry for inclusion on our social media.

Recent events No amendments to the reports sent with the agenda.

Events Calendar There was much discussion about the frequency and habitats for our outings. Barry had emailed his suggestions beforehand. It was felt that one outing per month was sufficient and opportunistic events could be organised through our branch WhatsAp group "BWMayo update group". Precise dates to be decided but here is the outline for the next year. Please note that there is no event in December and an additional one in May/June during the busy springtime.

Oct - Glenamaddy turlough

Nov - Sea-level lakes beyond Louisburgh for wintering fowl and Roonagh for seals (latter not wheelchair accessible).
Jan - Turloughs of Ballinrobe / Headford area.
Feb - Killala Bay & Palmerstown River estuary.
Mar - Mullet for lapwing, gooses, etc.
Apr - Lough O'Flynn and the Ballyhaunis reedbeds (BM would seek wheelchair access on latter)
May - Dawn Chorus at Enniscoe
May – River in Foxford for sand martins, swallows etc
June - Mullet for RNP, terns, corncrake, orchids, etc.
July - Cong Woods, including for red squirrel
Aug - Heritage Week event ?
Sept - Downpatrick Head, Kilcummin Head, Annagh Head or Benwee Head for migrants

Ruth commended Barry for emphasising accessibility in his recommendations.
The biodiversity weekend at Enniscoe was not going ahead.

Committee Membership We discussed whether committee members should be elected for a specified tenure with a re-election policy. Barry reminded us that when the new committee was established, we were not elected and roles were given to those who offered to do them. The committee agreed that membership of BWI was mandatory to be a committee member. It was agreed that all committee posts be put up for re-election annually at our AGM.

Committee Meetings Proposed dates for 2023 were circulated in the agenda. Meetings would continue to be on the third Wednesday of every alternate month at 7.30pm. Based on that guide, here are the dates for next year 15 Feb., 19 Apr., 21 June, 16 Aug., and AGM on 6th December 2023. Pádraig requested that we hold more face-to-face meetings particularly during the summer. Colm (in absentia) and Marie seconded this. Problems with participating in the Zoom format were apparent and the poor quality of internet signals meant some could not participate at all. The committee agreed that our next meeting, our AGM, plus our April, June and August meetings should be face-to-face but not necessarily in Castlebar. Pádraig offered to source a venue for our AGM preferably at no cost to the group. Ruth suggested that the AGM be preceded by an outside speaker as had happened in the past and Graham asked if we should incorporate a meal. It was agreed that we provide light refreshments before the meeting and not have a speaker. Graham should establish with Niall Hatch (BWI) whether it was mandatory to open our AGM to the public and also obtain copies of BWI insurance policy which may be requested when booking venues.

Public Relations Officer (PRO) role George had queried whether there was a need for this role with increasing use of social media. George had left the meeting due to Zoom connection problems. The committee briefly discussed this and felt that George had written some excellent articles in Wings and for our local press which had enticed non BWI guests to our events. This item will be included in our AGM agenda for further discussion.

Any Late Notices There were no events forthcoming. Nathy asked about involving Men's Sheds (MS) in building nest boxes for owls, kestrels and other birds. Padraig and Marie said that they had seen the quality of products produced by Castlebar and Ballina MS and felt that this was a good idea. Nathy said that he would approach Ballinrobe MS initially.

Date of Next Meeting Our AGM at 7.30pm on Wednesday 6th December, venue to be decided.

