

Audubon Club Name Change – My Take by Henry Feilen

Why can't we just shelve the decision for a while until later this Spring when the membership and Board can have a true dialogue about this?

The actions and inaction of this board are no less than arrogant and unethical. You have disenfranchised the membership and for all intents and purposes told us our opinion doesn't matter, that we're just too stupid to understand.

I have personally spoken to at least 7 of our closest neighboring Audubon clubs and reviewed the websites of 2 others. They have all said they are not planning to change their name. I for one could care less what San Francisco and Seattle do, they ARE NOT LOCAL! So why are we in such a hurry to do this expensive and time-consuming thing?

The Board should stand up at a general meeting and explain why they chose to **not** follow their promise in Nov. '23 to keep the membership informed and that the process would be "slow and thorough."

The Board conducted an 'informal pole' of the attendees at the Nov '23 mtg.

The 'informal pole' yielded 35 responses with 23 (66%) voting no, 6 voting (17%) yes and 6 (17%) voting undecided. There were more than 35 people in attendance so an unknown number did not vote. But the vote was nearly 4:1 against the name change. Yet you forged ahead completely disregarding the members' wishes.

This was followed up with an email survey sent to **only 376** members. But the article in this Nov's issue of the newsletter erroneously states that the 'email survey was sent to **ALL** members.

WHY DIDN'T YOU FIND A WAY TO SURVEY ALL MEMBERS??? You had addresses for all of them (In order to mail them the Newsletter in the first place) and could have sent out a postcard or could have included in a newsletter a way for those other members to participate on line if they wanted. **EASY!!**

The Board received the results of the email survey from the naming committee on or about Feb. 29, 2024 and then sat on it for the remaining 4 months of our operating year from Mar thru June.

You could have easily announced at a general meeting in Mar thru June that the report was available for the members to review and comment on. **WHY DIDN'T YOU?**

Thus, the membership, contrary to your promise, never heard another word about the results of the survey or activities of the committee relative to the name change until this Nov' 24. WHY NOT?? And then we were smacked in

the face with the announcement of the decision to change the name with no chance to question or comment much less vote.

In the final report to the board under **'METHODS'** , the last sentence states "If anyone would like the original raw data for analysis, please contact Seth at [polypsych@gmail.co](mailto:polypsych@gmail.com)".

This is ridiculous! How were any members supposed to do this if they were never told this report was available to start with?

You could have easily emailed the Final Report to the 376 members you originally sent the survey to for them to review and comment on. **WHY DIDN'T YOU?**

You could have also notified the other members in a newsletter for example that the results were available to them also. **WHY DIDN'T YOU?**

In the Board meeting on 10/24 that I was allowed to sit in on to discuss all this I was told by Seth that the bylaws state that the Board has complete control over all decisions and the members have no voting rights on anything. In that case why did the Board even bother to conduct this survey.

The Naming committee in their Feb.'24 report to the board under the heading 'Methods', said the report 'could not be used to draw any conclusions about what the members think'.

If that is true, then how can you justify the use in this Sep's newsletter of a 'cherry picked' stat from Q# 3 to say that it supports the name change? You also ignore the responses of Q#4 and #5. If you can justify using that stat from Q#3, then why can't I use others in the same report? In particular Q#5 asks plain and simple "should the Society change its name to eliminate "Audubon"? The plain and simple response was a clear majority of 52 % NO. Only 34 % responded yes. You intentionally omitted this in your article in the Sep-Nov '24 Newsletter. Thus intentionally misleading the membership.

Compare the totals of 'somewhat less + much less likely' for both Q3 and Q4 in the report. They both add up to the same 20% downside. If you add up the 56% + 16% + 8% for 'no effect' and 'somewhat likely' and 'much more likely' in Q#3 and 66% + 6% + 8% for Q#4 they both add up to 80% positive side. Thus no clear advantage either way. Another look shows that the 'much less likely' response to Q#3 is 14% downside but Q#4 has only a 4% downside when not changing the name. Which is better???

I recently spent a week in Cape May NJ for fall migration. At the hawk watch which I believe is operated by NJ Audubon I met a young African American man participating in the event and asked him if he had any thoughts about the controversy with Audubon's name, history. He said he was well aware of it and that yes JJ Audubon was a bad guy but that there were plenty of those back then and there are still plenty today and that he simply does not pay attention to it and goes about his birding life without worrying about it. He said the change would make no difference to him.

STOP THIS FOOLISH, WASTEFUL UNNEEDED EXERCISE NOW!!! Spend the time and club's resources ACTUALLY doing outreach.

