

Saw Mill River Audubon Society  
Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting  
February 2, 1995

President Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM at the Wecker home.

Directors Present - Anderson, Arnold, Keyes, Berna and Stan Lincoln, Joyce and Tom MacNair, Maram, Romaine, Smolin, Walker and Rita and Stan Wecker. Naturalist Anne Swaim was also present.

Minutes of the January 5, 1995 meeting were reviewed and accepted with the following corrections: Page 1, line 51, after "used in business", add "and our current budget"; Page 2, line 10, change "He advised them" to "They advised Jim"; Page 2, line 40, change "end of the fiscal year" to "next election"; Page 3, line 39, change "snowed out" to "successful".

Treasurer's Report - Bill Romaine presented his report for the month ending January 31, 1995. Expense exceeded revenue for the month of January by \$563.51. Cumulative excess of revenue over expense from April 1, 1994 was \$3,774.02. Operating Fund balance was \$29,807.00. Total Fund balance was \$617,252.88. Bill received a copy of a letter written by Jim Anderson to Wild Birds Unlimited of Bedford Hills, correcting a misunderstanding about purchasing credit for Anne Swaim. Jim assured Wild Birds Unlimited that Anne has SMRAS' credit authorization.

Membership Report - Lois Skelly reports present membership at 811. Stan Wecker distributed copies of a SMRAS membership report that was prepared with the help of Anne Swaim and Lois Skelly. The report breaks down membership by community and start year (1954-95). Chappaqua shows the largest membership, with Ossining second and Croton on-Hudson third. Rapid turnover is shown with 62% joining since 1990 and 50% since 1991. There was discussion about the need for a Membership Chairman. SMRAS gets monthly updates from National. Letters are sent to expired, renewals and new members. Stan suggested that Board members make personal calls to new members in their local area. He distributed lists, by community, and provided suggested dialogue.

President's Report - Jim Anderson received a report from Bruce Gilchist regarding the spring houses on the Crystal Springs property. The Historical Society finds them to be of no historical value and suggests <sup>demolish</sup> taking them down. SMRAS might want to keep one anyway. Regarding Pinecliff Boardwalk, there was a Westchester County Scope meeting on January 18th and a Planning Board meeting is scheduled for February 21st. The wetlands permit is held up because of residents' concerns about increased parking and traffic. Anne Swaim prepared a statement addressing these <sup>concerns</sup>. Jim received an urgent request from National for action to counter any aspects of the "Contract with America" that might be detrimental to environmental controls. The Board wants to proceed quickly, but cautiously, so that our tax advantage is

not jeopardized. The issue must be environmental not political. Anne has sent for more information on these issues. Anne will plan action and will write to our representatives in Congress. Jim contacted Pam McKown, and she wants to help. He would like her to <sup>chair</sup> ~~chair~~ the Environmental Committee. He was assured by the Board that it was his presidential privilege to appoint a committee chair even though that person is not a Board member. It was suggested that Pam work with Carol Coggeshall to draft a letter and plan appropriate action.

Sanctuary Report - Martin Smolin reported long range plans for better access to Cher<sup>nick</sup> Sanctuary. Louis Langdon is working on this. Alice Maram <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ blazing a trail through the new part of Choate Sanctuary. The committee will sponsor a walk for the Board to see Choate. The date to be announced. A walk is scheduled for Sunday, April 2nd at 1:00 PM at Pinecliff Sanctuary. Damage to the Brinton Brook Sanctuary was brought to the Board's attention. Hudson National Golf Course construction caused flooding and damage to the sanctuary trails and streams. SMRAS was notified by a private citizen on January 23rd that tree clearing was done over the weekend. Anne Swaim inspected the site with the Croton Village Manager and found that large trees had been carelessly cut down in the buffer zone and in violation of the site plan. Anne photographed the effects of the erosion control failure. The Village issued a stop work order. Jim Anderson showed the Board a draft of a letter addressed to Richard Herbek, Manager, Village of Croton-on-Hudson, expressing SMRAS' deep concerns about the current and future oversights of the construction and its potential for further damage to the sanctuary and neighboring properties. Questions about assistance and possible compensation to correct the damage were posed. Written response from the village and golf course was requested. The need for pond improvement at Brinton was recognized before the recent damage. Bill Arnold contacted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The agency offers free help for pond and wetland improvement. A representative will visit the site in the spring and offer suggestions.

Naturalist's Report - Anne Swaim reported school projects doing well. She hopes to reach over 8,000 students this year. Promotional flyers for SMRAS Summer Camp Scholarships were distributed in the schools. Anne is helping and advising a junior student at Horace Greeley H.S. on his bird feeding research project. A lot of preparation work was done with Stan Wecker for the 5th Biennial Environmental Quiz held on January 28th at the Chappaqua Library. Jim Anderson and John McCall <sup>+ Stan Wecker</sup> were judges, Anne was quiz master, and Stan Wecker was master of ceremonies. Teams from four junior high schools competed and prizes were awarded. Anne requested permission and funding to attend two all-day workshops offered by the Institute for Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, N.Y. Permission was also requested for Midge Arnold to attend one workshop. Creating Native Wildflower Meadows is March 4th and will be attended by both Anne and Midge. Planting Designs for Pond and Other Wetlands is March 11th and will be attended by Anne. Stan Wecker made a motion for the Board to permit Anne Swaim to attend two workshops and Midge Arnold one workshop, at \$65 each, for a total expenditure of \$195. This amount to be drawn from the 1994-95 conventions budget line of \$600 from which \$267.30

have been spent to date. Seconded and carried.

By-Laws Proposed Revision - Stan Lincoln reviewed the proposed changes to the By-Laws. A complete set of revisions was previously mailed to Board members. The new document is a major rewrite to reorganize material and to add consistency and clarity to certain sections. There are new definitions and Articles and Sections which are consistent with SMRAS' current activities and also meet the requirements of the NY State Not-for-Profit Corporation Law. Board members were asked to forward any other changes or corrections to the committee in advance of the March meeting. Formal adoption of the revised By-Laws will take place at the March 2nd meeting.

Finance Committee - Rita Wecker reported that her committee recommends changes to Items #6 and #7 in the Control of Funds procedures and placed the following amended motion before the Board: #6: The Audit Committee shall examine the aforementioned file, or delegate someone to do so, once a month to verify that there have been proper disbursements. When such an examination is done, the monthly bank statement shall be signed and dated. #7: Duplicate bank statements shall go to the Audit Committee. They shall be kept confidential but may be destroyed at the discretion of the Committee. Seconded and carried. At its meeting on January 24th, the Committee discussed the question of what financial information should be presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting. The final decision was that the Treasurer should present his usual report but round out the figures (omitting cents). Concerning the question of what figures to print in the SMRAS Newsletter, a subcommittee was formed to study the matter and report its finding to the Committee and the Board. There was some discussion about the final depository for the ~~\$800 donation from the Kenya trip~~. The Finance Committee felt the Board should make the decision. Stan Wecker made the following motion: The \$800 donation to SMRAS generated by the Kenya trip should be applied to the Pinecliff Boardwalk project. Seconded and carried. Rita reported that her committee looked at the SMRAS December 31, 1994 investment portfolio in detail and agreed that it was a bad year for everyone, but decided that the current holdings and asset allocation mix should not be changed. We are invested for the long term and the holdings had good years prior to 1994. The December 31, 1994 Endowment Fund Performance Report showed a balance of \$578,997. Approximate Portfolio Total Return (1/1/94 to 12/31/94) is -3.42%.

Annual Meeting - Stan Wecker made a motion: The SMRAS Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 22, 1995, in the Ossining Community Center. The meeting will begin at 1:00 PM and the program to begin at 1:30 PM. Seconded and carried.

Budget Committee Report - Bill Walker reported that the proposed budget will be ready for the next meeting.

Present Educational Budget - Stan Wecker explained that in order to resolve a problem on the Budget and Treasurer's Report, a Budget amendment was necessary. Income from the Mt. Kisco Summer Camp and the Birding Workshop were not ~~anticipated~~ in the Budget. Stan passed around a Summary of Education Supplies Spending 1994-95. Stan moved that the Board approve the

expenditure of \$1,340 <sup>^</sup> by the Education Committee, in excess of its 1994-95 budget of \$1,850. Seconded and carried.

Mary Kilroe Jim Anderson reported that Mary Kilroe has requested a leave of absence, until June, from her publicity duties due to special school work. She can do some publicity and Lois Skelly will help too. The Board agreed to the request.

Meeting Night - Jim Anderson made a motion to move the SMRAS Board meeting night to Wednesday, beginning in September. Seconded and carried.

Nominating Committee - Tom MacNair reported that Berna Lincoln had offered to serve as Treasurer on an interim basis. However, she would need to have a backup for the times that she is on extended trips. Also, Alice Avouris developed a list of potential candidates for the Board. An attempt will be made to have several of these people sit in as guest observers at the next meeting. Berna is in charge of the proxy work for the annual meeting as per the current changes being made to the By-Laws. There was a discussion about return postage. Stan Wecker moved that SMRAS not provide return postage for the proxy mailing. Seconded and carried.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 2nd at the Chappaqua Library - Don Lunetta hosting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 PM.

*Tom MacNair*  
Recording Secretary