

Saw Mill River Audubon Society  
Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting  
May 4, 1995

President Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:45 at Bill Walker's home.

Directors Present - Anderson, Arnold, Keyes, Berna and Stan Lincoln, Joyce and Tom MacNair, Maram, Nina and John McCall, McKown, Smolin, Walker and Rita Wecker and Naturalist Anne Swaim. Also present were the following guests: Jill Jones, Jane Muir, Len Wolfson and Jim Koch, who is a Northeast Regional candidate for the National Audubon Board.

Minutes of the April 6, 1995 Board Meeting were reviewed and accepted without correction. Minutes of the April 22, 1995 Annual Meeting were also reviewed and accepted with the following clarification: Pam McKown was not on the slate of candidates but was nominated from the floor for the Class of 1996.

Treasurer's Report - New Treasurer, Berna Lincoln, thanked Bill Romaine, Stan Lincoln and Rita Wecker for easing the transition and for helping her understand the complexities of the treasurer's job. Berna presented the following resolution: that any one of the following four officers - President, Vice President, Treasurer, Chairman of the Board - be empowered to act on behalf of the corporation in effecting transactions in the Bank of New York Checking Account and in the Vanguard Money Market Reserve - Prime Portfolio account. All were in favor. For the record, \$12,000 will be transferred from the Endowment Fund to the Operating Fund, as needed during the next five months, by selling, first, shares in the Scudder Short Term Bond Fund equaling \$6,000 and, second, by selling shares in the Fidelity Asset Manager Fund equaling \$6,000. The Treasurer's Report a/o April 30, 1995 showed a balance in the checking account of \$4,492.61 and a balance in the Vanguard MM account of \$9,504.12. Total cash available - \$13,996.73, of which approximately \$5,704 is donor restricted for the Pinecliff Trail Project. \$4,662 is owed to the Environmental Education Fund, but, \$1,195 is owed from the Larry Light Memorial Fund, making a total balance in the Operating Fund of \$4,826. Significant transactions during April were: \$3,001 transferred to the Operating Fund from Larry Light Memorial Fund; paid Town of New Castle taxes (almost \$700 more than last year); \$6,837.50 transferred (on March 31st) from the Environmental Education Fund to the Endowment Fund. Berna asked the Board, by resolution, to recognize the establishment of the restricted Pinecliff Trail Fund for the purpose of accepting grants and contributions for and making payments for the work on the creation of the handicapped-accessible trail in Pinecliff Sanctuary. All were in favor. Berna advised the Board that SMRAS uses a "not-for-profit organization" accounting system that has strict rules governing "funds", which can be "restricted" or "unrestricted". Monies received from HUD and

Norcross for the Pinecliff Trail are put in the "restricted fund" category, and can't be used for anything else. In the past, the Treasurer kept the books on a monthly basis, closing the books at the end of every month. Berna proposes to keep the books on a cumulative year-to-date basis and will provide interim information as requested by the Board. There appears to be no accounting principle requirement for unique monthly financial statements. Rather than a monthly balance sheet, a condensed report can be prepared periodically to compare actual with the budget. For the September Board meeting, Berna and Bill Walker will come up with a document or system with sufficient information to satisfy the Board. Rita Wecker moved that the Treasurer not close the books every month, but keep the books on a year-to-date basis. Seconded and carried.

Membership Report - Lois Skelly reports 805 memberships.

Visitors - Jim welcomed guests Jill Jones, Jane Muir and Len Wolfson. Special visitor, Jim Koch, of Lyme Ct., is one of three Northeast Regional candidates for the National Audubon Board. He spoke about his background and qualifications for the job. If elected, he plans to advocate for the local chapters.

President's Report - Jim reported that the New Castle Planning Board met on April 18th and granted SMRAS a new permit to go ahead with the handicapped trail. At the Earth Day observance at Lasdon Arboretum, April 23rd, people showed a lot of interest in the sanctuaries. Jim, Martin Smolin, Anne Swaim and Nina and John McCall met with the Croton Village Manager, Richard Herbek, and village environmental consultant, Beth Evans on April 26th. Questions regarding repairs by Hudson National Golf Course for damage to Brinton Brook Sanctuary were raised. Ms. Evans was amenable to SMRAS' ideas. Meetings with the golf course people and a public meeting will be coming up. SMRAS was represented at the local Audubon chapters meeting in Greenwich on May 2nd. Jim wants to update committee assignment lists and would like any changes or additions reported to him. Jim announced that unsold birdseed was stacked in his car and offered it free of charge to any interested takers. Seed not taken will be donated to the Pace Environmental Center.

Nominating Committee - Tom MacNair nominated Jill Jones to fill a vacancy on the Board until elections at the next Annual Meeting. Seconded and carried.

Audit Committee - According to the By Laws, the committee should consist of two members elected by the Board annually, at least one of whom is not a Director. The committee recommends to the Board an independent public auditor to audit the Society's accounts and reviews the audit when completed. The committee also does internal audits as directed by the Board. Jim said Neal Arena agreed to work on the committee. No one else volunteered. Stan Lincoln made a motion for the Board to elect Neal Arena and Jim Anderson to the Audit Committee. Seconded and carried. Jim and Neal will recommend an independent auditor for the Board to hire by the August 15th date required by N.Y. State and the Control of Funds Policy.

Naturalist's Report - Anne Swaim reported reaching over 500 students, some non-English speaking, through SMRAS school programs. Twenty-four adults and four youths attended the basic birding workshop on April 29th (\$20 each). Scholarship applications were reviewed and organized. Photographs were taken of the damage at Brinton Brook Sanctuary. 179 "crazy bird" phone calls were answered. Continental Cable Co. will make a video of a walk through Pruyn Sanctuary. Anne commented on the publication called "The Green Drummer", published in Pleasantville - interesting articles but sometimes inaccurate.

Director's Handbook and By Laws - Stan Lincoln reported By Laws in good shape, but some modifications are needed. Work will continue over the summer and a report will be made in the fall. Stan handed out the SMRAS Director Handbooks to Board members. The first copy went to Jill Jones. The cost of producing the book was \$9.50 each. Rita Wecker moved that the Board formally thank Stan Lincoln for his tremendous effort. Seconded and carried.

Environmental Action Report - Pam McKown reported on a panel she attended sponsored by Audubon and League of Women Voters about lawn, tree and plant care. Pesticides should be discouraged and the use of organic fertilizers encouraged. A report will appear in the Bulletin. A coordinated effort was made in April, beginning with a letter from Jim Anderson to selected active member and friends of SMRAS, to place as many phone calls as possible to Senators D'Amato and Moynihan. Callers were asked to express their opposition to the "takings" bill #S605 and two regulatory reform bills #S345 and #S291. Possibly as many as 200 calls were made. An alert also appeared in the Bulletin. Martin Smolin talked about a program called "Audubon Armchair Activist". Pam McKown is the coordinator. Members can take action on environmental protection issues by making phone calls or writing letters. Pam will have the information. Members can't always attend meetings and this would be one way of reaching out to them. SMRAS would pay \$25 for Pam to join and pay for her postage and phone calls. Also there is a charge for a monthly coordinator conference call for the updating of issues. Jim Koch said that his chapter has volunteers concentrating on state and local issues.

National Audubon Board member voting - Jim Anderson said that a blurb was placed in the Bulletin about the election. Board members will vote on a candidate at the next meeting June 8th. Informational material is available in the Pruyn office. The nominees are Abbott T. Fenn (Vt.), James F. Koch (Ct.) and Norman Shapiro (NY).

Second-class postage and Bulletin - Sophie Keyes applied at the Chappaqua Post Office for a second-class postage permit with first-class routing. The application and check were okayed and can be used in two or three weeks. The trial run is the next Bulletin (deadline tonight). The Bulletin should be delivered by June 1st and covers June, July and August. July 1st is the deadline for the September issue. Sophie will supply schedules

and deadlines bimonthly in the future.

Third class mail - Nina McCall will look into this possibility for some mailing in the future.

Finance Committee - Rita Wecker's committee met on April 24th. As a result of the work done at the meeting, two handouts were prepared. The first, an Endowment Fund Performance Report for Period Ending March 31, 1995. The approximate portfolio return for the quarter was 3.95% and for the year was 3.92%. The full year balance was \$600,941. The second handout was prepared for publication in the September Bulletin, as requested by the Board. It shows two pie charts for the year ending March 31, 1995 and a Condensed Balance Sheet. One pie chart shows percents of Public Support and Revenue and the other chart shows Expenses. Included is a Condensed Balance Sheet. Rita moved, on behalf of the Finance Committee, that the pie chart exhibit, showing financial information for Year Ending March 31, 1995, be approved for enclosure in the September Bulletin along with the Auditor's Report and a brief statement from the President. This motion is contingent upon receipt of the Auditor's report by August 15th, confirming the figures in the Treasurer's statements of revenue and expenses and the balance sheet. Seconded and carried.

Sanctuary Report - Martin Smolin's committee met on April 26th. SMRAS has received permission from the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Conservation in Wch. to install bluebird boxes at the borders of the new meadow on the cap of the dump at Croton Point Park. Eagle Scout candidate, Matt Carney, will remove obstructions and clear the path around the pond at Pruyn Sanctuary. Anne Swaim and Jordan Ellsworth will coordinate the project. A new trail map will be made after the Aggarwal land donation. Martin will rename the main trail and its extension to Seven Bridges Road, "Kaye Anderson Trail". Jordan continues to replace old broken boards at Pruy. A meeting with Croton Village Manager regarding Brinton Sanctuary damage is reported under "President's Report". The Croton Trails Committee is interested in joining our trail to their trail system. The trail starts at Croton Arboretum and goes through Arrowcrest and a branch connects to the Laurel Rock (red) trail. Martin made a motion for the Board to empower the Sanctuary Committee to negotiate with the Croton Trails Committee to connect their trail to SMRAS' Laurel Rock Trail. Seconded and carried with one abstention. Louis Langdon prepared a map of Chernick Sanctuary and the surrounding properties. Entry is possible from north of the Pocantico River via Village of Briarcliff Manor property. David DeLucia (Cty. Parks, Recreation and Conservation) indicates that County money may be available to build a trail connecting Pocantico Lakes Park to Chernick. The County could build and finance the bridge across the river. This will be discussed with County officials. The new trail is marked at Choate Sanctuary. \$25 was authorized for a topological map of the sanctuary. The Town of New Castle will be asked to intervene regarding junk collecting on town property near Choate. The Corry lawsuit is awaiting a motion by Jim Miller to dismiss Mrs. Corry's claim of ownership, since she has

not responded. At Graff Sanctuary, the committee would like to officially open the Jack-in-the-Pulpit Trail by publishing a new map. A new "SMRAS" sign will be placed at the trailhead. Pruyn Arboretum now has four new trees donated by Carl Specht of Lasdon. They are Box Elder, Black Walnut, Persimmon and Paulonia. Midge and Bill Arnold, Anne Swaim, Dean DiMauro and Myles Cunningham all worked hard at digging up the trees at Lasdon and planting and caring for them at Pruyn.

Audubon Conference - The Smolins attended the Audubon meeting in Middlebury, Vt. April 28th to 30th. Martin heard a lot of good ideas and also met the Northeast Region's candidates for the National Board. Candidates were aware that some members feel National is not attentive enough to the needs of the local chapters.

Pinecliff Boardwalk - John McCall reported that funding from HUD for the handicapped-accessible walk should be received by August 1st and the OK to go ahead by September 1st. Material will be ordered and the project ready to go by October 1st. Estimated cost for the walk is \$60,000. We have grants totaling \$26,000, leaving a balance of \$34,000 still to be raised.

Development Committee - Nina McCall reported the Phone-a-thon raised over \$5,700 this year. She said pamphlets were available for the December Kenya trip. A committee is formed and met to begin a campaign to raise money for the handicapped walk. All help is welcome. Help is needed to do pamphlets and publicity. The committee will ask for funds from 300 people who bought birdseed but who have not been solicited before.

Next Meeting and Picnic - The next Board meeting is June 8th at Midge and Bill Arnold's home. A picnic precedes the business meeting. Spouses and significant others are invited. Bring your own hamburgers or main dish. Dessert and beverage will be provided.

Other - Bill Walker arranged for the donation of a Kodak office copier from Chemical Bank. The copier will be very helpful in the office since it reduces, enlarges and collates. Bill has to pick it up in New York City.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 PM.

*Joyce MacLain*  
Recording Secretary