

Saw Mill River Audubon Society

DRAFT Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

January 4, 2001

Call to Order / Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by the president. Thirteen directors were present: J. Anderson, J. Epstein, S. Hartmann, S. Keyes, J. Lunetta, A. Maram, R. McCrillis, J. Pinerio, R. Saravay, H. Seduski, M. Smolin, R. Wecker, S. Wecker. Others present were Education Director, Anne Swaim, Community Relations and Development Director, Lynn Tchoblangolous and two guests - Rosalie Nathan and Joan Coffey.

Previous Minutes

The minutes of the December 7, 2000 meeting were unanimously accepted as presented.

Membership / Membership Initiative

Membership was reported by Chris Nykwist prior to the meeting at 745. It was noted that this was the same number given at the last meeting and would be reviewed and updated for the next meeting, given the ongoing response to the new member initiative underway.

Presidents Report

J. Pinerio reported on a range of letters and the following items:

- Westchester County has funded a certain number of assistant curators for County parks
- There is a meeting at Audubon of Connecticut at Greenwich on 1/27/01 with an agenda on membership issues.
- The SMRAS Environmental Quiz event will be held 1/27/01 at 2:00 p.m. at the Chappaqua Library. This promises to be a well-attended event with family participation, with strong potential for attracting new members. All were urged to attend.

Nominations Committee

Two vacancies exist on the Board of Directors, to raise the total to 18. The slate for officers lacks a candidate for Vice President. Svend Hartmann agreed to be placed on the ballot as Vice President. The proxy ballot will go out in the February-March, 2001 newsletter.

Pruyn House Repairs

S. Hartmann reported that a contractor had examined the house and provided a proposal for repairs. Discussion noted that other repairs might need to be included and various solutions ought to be explored. A full scope is to be developed after a meeting of the committee at Pruy House.

Budget Committee

Treasurer's Report: J. Anderson reported that, although cash flow was not always synchronized with income, overall spending based on the 2000 budget was approximately on target.

Bulletin

L. Tchoblangolous reported that new ideas for content were being explored. A naming contest is proposed for the bulletin. The ballot for officers and directors will be published in the next issue. Field trip ideas were discussed, including a canoe trip in the spring.

Membership Strategy

Lynn Tchoblangolous noted that 600 mailings were sent to prospective members from the teachers with whom SMRAS interacts. As of now, 65 new member candidates have responded. More responses are awaited. The membership form is on the SMRAS website for any interested prospective members. S. Wecker noted the special NAS "\$30 membership" initiative has been extended to 31 January. Also noted was the intent to raise the level of involvement of members, especially any new members. Two ideas were noted – 1. Hold events for new members only, perhaps on a quarterly basis and 2. Begin a program of having a board member call new members to welcome them and let them know of programs and how they could be an active part of SMRAS.

Naturalist's Report

A. Swaim reported on programs held and issued the calendar for programs planned. She noted that she was planning programs that would be geared to a larger audience, e.g. parents with their children, and programs that would develop more involvement of the participants in SMRAS. Also noted were the collection of a bobcat apparently killed by a car in Armonk, and reports of coyote presence at the Pruyn Sanctuary.

Finance Committee

R. Wecker noted the portfolio remained slightly above \$1,000,000 at present.

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

R. Saravay proposed and the board unanimously agreed to send a letter to President Clinton in support of his designation of the Arctic National refuge as a National Monument. A. Swaim and L. Tchoblangolous to draft the letter for Saravay to send.

Audit Committee

H. Seduski noted SMRAS had passed the revenue threshold mandating an audit. Seduski proposed a motion, which was seconded to approve Arnold Berman & Co. LLP as the auditor. Passed unanimously.

Sanctuaries Committee

M. Smolin noted the following:

Damaged signs have been repaired at Brinton Brook.

Pruyn is scheduled for maintenance work.

Re. Initiative to acquire Silverman property of about 20 acres adjacent to Brinton Brook:

M. Smolin noted the following: The property has been assessed at \$220,000. It requires easement under the Con Ed line for access. The Open Space Institute (OSI) has indicated an interest in providing additional funding toward the purchase and then seeking SMRAS management of the property.

The following questions were raised:

Since the easement affects the assessed value, is the easement real?

If OSI transfers the property to SMRAS, who will be the owner of record?

It was also noted that there is an open cistern on the property that is a hazard. This would have to be addressed as an immediate need for any owner.

Croton Arboretum requested a Memo of Understanding for the mutual sponsoring and publicizing of events. Discussion revealed that there was no consensus on the Board for such an arrangement and was not necessarily in the best interests of SMRAS.

Pruyn Arboretum Access

J. Pinerio noted that the contract with the contractor for rock removal and driveway improvements has been signed. The permit is being obtained by the contractor. The provision of labor by Con Ed to relocate the power pole has to be reconfirmed since the Con Ed official who provided the agreement is no longer on staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the Chappaqua Library on Thursday, February 1.

Directions to the Chappaqua Library- From the Saw Mill River Parkway take Route 120, Chappaqua Exit. Turn south on Route 120 into Chappaqua. After crossing over bridge, bear right at fork, onto South Greeley Avenue. The Chappaqua Library is located on South Greeley Avenue, 1/4 mile ahead on the left side, opposite the New Castle Town Hall. Additional parking is available on the street and at the Town Hall.