

Saw Mill River Audubon - Board Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2002, 7:30 p.m. – Held at Chappaqua Library
D R A F T

Present: Jim Anderson, Judy Epstein, Ilse Jorgensen, Alice Maram, Jeanne Romeu, Jeff Pinerio, Richard Saravay, Henry Seduski, Martin Smolin, and Stan & Rita Wecker. Absent: Joan Coffey, Mark Magel and Bob McCrillis. Anne Swaim was also present, after the Personnel Committee portion of the meeting.

Guests: Ken Novenstern, Co-chair New Castle Land Trust, past New Castle town board member; Mattie Varvaro, chair, Pruyun Garden; Midge Arnold, past SMRA board member.

Minutes: October minutes were approved with following change made by Rita. The endowment fund balance should be listed at \$808,098 instead of \$800,800. Martin moved to accept minutes as amended, seconded & passed.

Personnel Committee: Anne Swaim will be working half time as of January 1, 2003. Jo, Stan, and Henry are working on final details of her half-time job description. She will continue to live at Pruyun as a requirement of the job. In June 2003, the Board will look at how it is working. All staff salaries were discussed and motions to accept the changes were passed.

Guest Presentation: Ken Novenstern noted that he began work in 1991 on open space conservation on the New Castle Conservation Board with Anne Swaim. Since then, the Town of New Castle has acquired around 250 protected acres. The newly formed New Castle Community Land Trust currently has 175 members. Novenstern said the Land Trust would welcome opportunities to partner with Saw Mill River Audubon on land conservation, easements, and other projects. It was noted that four of our current sanctuaries (Pinecliff, Cameron Murtfeldt, Choate and Haas) came to us through the former New Castle Land Trust in the 70s when it merged with Saw Mill River Audubon.

Sanctuaries: As the new sanctuary committee chair, Ilse passed out a comprehensive "Sanctuaries Management Plan" including long term and short term plans for each sanctuary. Individual sanctuary chairs are: Alice Maram: Choate; Jo Lunetta: Pinecliff; Jeanne Romeu: Brinton; Jeff Pinerio: Pruyun. Martin reported that he is having difficulty obtaining additional MOUs for Brinton. Richard noted that this idea would be good to apply to our other sanctuaries. Jeff reported that Danny is wrapping up the boardwalk work at Pruyun

Bylaw Changes: Stan Wecker discussed the optional new "Chapter-only" membership now permitted by National Audubon. Chapter-only members will not receive Audubon Magazine and both their initial dues and subsequent renewals will accrue entirely to the Chapter. This was originally presented at the October board meeting. Stan moved that we amend our bylaws to allow us to recruit Chapter-only members. Seconded by Martin Smolin and passed. National's required Chapter policy bylaw changes were discussed next. These primarily affect two of our current bylaws **Article IX: COMMITMENTS** and **ARTICLE XI: DISCONTINUANCE**. Stan recommended that the Board consider each of these separately, rather than adopt a general statement to cover both. The Board agreed and **the following actions were taken: (1) The current wording of Article IX was replaced by a more concise statement: "Neither Chapters nor National shall enter into any commitments binding on the other without written authorization to do so."** Approved with numerous seconds without discussion **(2) Stan then moved that we replace the current wording of Article XI: Discontinuance with the following: "This society may terminate its status as a Chapter of the National Society, and the National Society may terminate the status of this Society as a Chapter of the National Society, pursuant to procedures set forth in Section V-D of the Audubon Chapter Policy 2001 adopted by the National Society's Board of Directors on December 9, 2001."** Seconded by Jo Lunetta and passed. **Note:** to provide an in-depth account of what we did and why we did it and to document our actions for the Society's archives, a more detailed version is appended to these minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Henry presented the ten month report of spending to date which will be helpful in preparing the 2003 budget. We expect approximately \$3500 in dues share from National Audubon which is 50% of the dues share we received in 2001. We still continue to get donations from friends of Martha Gerosa and have received over \$1100 to date. From the endowment fund, \$55,780 was transferred for operating expenses. A budget committee meeting will be held in November. Various committee chairs are asked to offer input to Henry as far as expected expenses and income. For 2003, we will need to stay close to the budgeted amounts because the endowment is down due to the market conditions. There was an additional discussion about funding and budgeting capital expenses.

Finance Committee: Rita gave a third quarter report. The endowment fund has been going down steadily but did have an upturn between September 30 (\$697,147) and October 31 (\$727, 945). However, to date, we have had a 17.8% loss this year. (See attached Finance Committee report for details.)

Hembdt estate: Richard reported that he received a letter from the lawyer who is the executor of the Hembdt estate. Because of a search for any living heirs, the disbursement of the estate to various beneficiaries, including SMRA, has been delayed.

Arboretum Committee: As chair of the Arboretum Committee, Robert McCrillis sent a report (via Anne Swaim) that the Committee has walked the entire sanctuary with Svend Hartmann and prepared a list of work to be done both short-term this fall and long term over the next year or two. They expect to have some expenditures in November (within the budget) to add better tree enclosures as well as utilize Danny Ferguson's time to trim back vines and brush.

Registration of DBA Name - Saw Mill River Audubon: Stan Wecker reported that the application for SMRAS to use the shortened form of our name, Saw Mill River Audubon, has been filed and we expect to get our official certificate shortly from the NY Department of State.

Membership: We now have 872 members.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Monday, December 2, 2002, beginning at 7 p.m. at the Chappaqua Library.

Minutes: Judy Epstein.

Final formatting: Anne Swaim