

Saw Mill River Audubon - Board Meeting Minutes
December 2, 2002, 7:30 p.m. – Held at Chappaqua Library

Directors present: Jim Anderson, Joan Coffey Judy Epstein, Ilse Jorgensen, Mark Magel, Robert McCrillis, Jeanne Romeu, Jeff Pinerio, Richard Saravay, Henry Seduski, Martin Smolin, and Stan & Rita Wecker. Sophie Keyes, Society Historian, and Anne Swaim, Education Director, were also present. Absent: Alice Maram.

Guests (all potential board nominees): Mattie Varvaro, chair, Pruyn Garden; Tom McEnerney, co-chair Pruyn Arboretum and garden volunteer; Lurline Arco, seed sale volunteer; and Karen Wells, local activist and Teatown Lake Reservation board member.

Minutes: November minutes were approved without changes.

President's Report and Notes on Agenda Richard Saravay noted that this meeting's agenda would be focused on discussion and approval of the 2003 budget. **Membership** is reported by the office at 890. The **Environmental Action Committee** is still lacking a chair. Michael Diederich has been unable to attend board meetings and has not agreed to chair this committee. Both Joan Coffey and Karen Wells (board nominee) expressed an interest in chairing this committee. Their offers were accepted by Richard Saravay and Joan and Karen will meet to discuss this further. A **Planning Committee** is needed to set annual goals for the chapter. An annual plan with goals is necessary for our annual report to National Audubon. Stan Wecker, Richard Saravay, and Mattie Varvaro agreed to be part of this committee. It was also suggested that the head of Sanctuaries and of Education be involved. A **Membership Committee** is more important than ever now as we move toward chapter only memberships. Stan Wecker and Tom McEnerney agreed to serve on this committee; other members will be recruited by Stan.

50th Anniversary Committee. Sophie Keyes gave an overview of planned activities for the 50th anniversary year of the chapter, 2003. She stressed that she is not the chair of this committee. Henry Seduski noted that the budget for all anniversary activities, expenses and income, will be in a separate budget from the 2003 operating budget. Some discussion was held about the "Jubilee Journal" publication. It was agreed to forego advertisements since this is intended to be a publication for chapter promotion long after the anniversary year. Sophie reported that Stan Wecker and Robert McCrillis joined her in meeting with a graphic designer used by Teatown. A budget for the "Jubilee Journal" will be presented at the January board meeting along with a budget for other anniversary costs. Stan said that Lynn Tchobanoglous would be able to help with copy editing. Sophie said that Lynn will be attending the next anniversary committee meeting on Friday, December 13th.

Bird Seed Sale: Jim Anderson reminded the board that a new chair for the bird seed sale will need to be in place by the end of Spring, 2003.

Personnel Committee: (Anne Swaim was not present for this part of the meeting.) Jo Lunetta presented a revised job description for the half-time Director of Education position. She noted that the position will be reviewed in 6 months and again one year following. Anne's change to half-time status will begin January 1. She will be working an average of 20 hours a week but some weeks much less than this to compensate for weeks that are more than 20 hours. As is the case now, the position requires residency at Pruyn House. Henry moved for acceptance of the new position, seconded by Stan and carried.

Sanctuaries: Ilse reported on an idea from Mark Magel to adjust the Furnace Dock Road entrance path at Graff Sanctuary to make this the main entrance. She distributed maps showing the proposed change. Martin noted that the Town of Cortlandt will be installing new parking at Oscawana across from Graff. Mark Magel will follow up on this. Robert McCrillis noted that there is much work ongoing at Pruyn Arboretum with wood chips and new fencing around trees and new signage to be added in the spring.

New Business:

Chapter-only Memberships. Stan proposed that we set the price of chapter-only membership to \$15 as an introductory rate (with higher rates encouraged on the membership form for those who might wish to pay them.). The first year of renewal would be \$20 with higher suggested renewal rates in subsequent years. Motion seconded by Mattie Varvaro and passed. It was noted that the dues share we received from National Audubon in the past was more than \$5000 annually but is expected to decline to less than \$2000 annually. The focus in promoting chapter-only memberships will be that all of the membership money will stay locally to be used for local conservation efforts.

By-Laws Change Re: Budget Committee: Ilse noted that she will be asking the board to consider a by-law change at its next meeting to change the composition of the budget committee to include the Sanctuary Committee Chair.

Finance Committee: Rita Wecker reported that since the financial markets are showing improvement, the SMRA portfolio is also improving. The endowment fund value is \$739,340 as of November 30th.

Treasurer's Report and 2003 Proposed Budget: To focus on the proposed budget, there was no treasurer's report offered for the month of November. Henry Seduski presented the attached proposed 2003 budget which also showed the budget for 2002 and the estimated total expenses for 2002. He noted:

- All 50th Anniversary expenses are excluded from the 2003 budget and will be in a separate budget presented at the January board meeting
- The Capital Fund was not funded in 2002 by action of the board to put those monies into the operating fund to support Lynn's position. It will be funded in the 2003 fiscal year. It is intended to cover unusually large, one-time expenses.
- There is no news from the Hembdt estate. Barring the discovery of other heirs, we may receive a bequest of as much as \$100,000 sometime in 2003 but this is not a certainty.

Comments from the budget were limited to brief discussion on the sanctuary budget. Martin asked whether this was an adequate budget. Ilse noted that this was intended to be an austerity budget but does cover adequate hours for Danny Ferguson based on past years' experience. She said that should there be unexpected large storm damage, she will return to the board to ask for emergency expenditures.

It was noted that we do want to be able to accept credit cards for the seed sale and possibly for the spring fund drive but that Henry will ask the bank for a way to avoid year-round monthly charges for this service.

The 2003 budget was put forward for a vote by the board and passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9: 10 p.m.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 6, 2003, beginning at 7 p.m. at the Chappaqua Library.

Minutes: Judy Epstein.

Final formatting: Anne Swaim