

**Saw Mill River Audubon Draft Board Meeting Minutes  
Monday February 7, 2005 Chappaqua Library**

**Present:** Tom McEnerney, George Shakespear, Sophie Keyes, Margo Peters, Karen Wells, Joan Coffey, Rita Wecker, Stan Wecker, Jim Anderson, Richard Saravay, Robert McCrillis, Judy Epstein, Anne Swaim, Education Director, and Barbara Campbell, Consultant.

**Guests:** Two Board candidates were present. Ponie Sheehan is currently involved in hiking, interested in birds, and concerned in preserving the environment. Meredith Smith is the immediate neighbor of Pruyn on Millwood Road who serves as a trail walker and helps our chapter when needed. It is possible to invite guests to the next meeting, March 7. The slate for the April 30 election will need to be set by the end of that meeting. We now have 18 members, including possible candidates, but can go up to 24. Ilse, Lurline, and Judy will all be moving in the coming months.

**Minutes of January 3, 2005:** Members in our chapter having a national membership should be 569, not 750 and the chapter-only membership number is 181 bringing the total membership to 750. Joan moved to accept the minutes as amended and Karen seconded.

**President's Report:** Richard will be going to the spring State Council meeting in Saratoga, N.Y. and others are encouraged to attend. Information on other local conservation events was distributed to the Board. Steve Kress will be speaking March 15 at the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Irvington Garden Club. The Lower Hudson Audubon Chapter Roundtable will be Saturday, March 19, 2005 from 10 am to 2 pm. at the Community Bible Church of Northern Westchester. Five Board members expressed an interest in attending. The committee assignments are continuing to be reviewed and mission statements are still being collected. The next newsletter deadline is March 7, 2005. Proxy ballots for the April 30 election will be enclosed in the newsletter.

**Community Development and Relations:** Barbara discussed a Development Plan draft. Priorities have been identified. Development must be looked at both from a people and resources point of view. In terms of developing people resources, a volunteer card has been prepared and a column begun for each newsletter with volunteer opportunities. Two volunteers have already come forward: one is a photographer, another one will work in the library. Barbara has drafted a brochure for people who want to include Audubon in their giving plans. Barbara has also drafted a redesign of our trail maps to include a membership/giving form. The draft map is in black and white but we are looking into having it printed in color. The draft Development Plan is short term for 2005. This will lay the foundation in corporate and other giving. The issue of the difference between members and donors was discussed. Are they both tax deductible? Is there a legal difference? Many organizations just say, "Please help us," rather than starting with a set membership fee. More discussion is needed on this subject. Barbara's job is to help carry out our mission. Mission priorities have to be set by the Board.

**Milne Bequest:** Richard received a letter saying that, as of Feb. 1, 2005, the filing of final paperwork on the Milne estate was expected in several weeks. There will be no further distribution now. William R. Lonergan, Jr. will make a distribution when the account for the previous executor, Mr Wolfsie, is settled. We have received our Estate Tax closing letter from the IRS issued on Jan. 26, 2005. Mr. Wolfsie's account has yet to be filed with the Surrogate Court.

**Membership:** Robert reported that there were some increases this month: National 595, Chapter Only 186, total 781. 49 members have lapsed memberships since last month.

**Bird Seed Sale:** Members were asked to sign up for Bird Seed Sale on Sat. Feb.12, 10:30 to 12 pm.

**Treasurer's Report:** Tom reported that final results for 2004 are about the same as reported in January. Final 2004 results are very close to the 2004 budget except that Barbara's fee hadn't been in the 2004 budget. The 2005 budget is generally on target.

**Sanctuaries:** We received a response from a neighbor of Graff who offered to volunteer in that sanctuary and who is aware of the ATVs used there. We have a new draft map of Pruyn.

**Naturalist's Report:** Anne reported that schools are fully booked in April, May, and June and that March is half open. February is not scheduled as usual because of standardized testing and the week-long school break. Anne has been working on the data base with Barbara and other Board support matters.

**Environmental Action:** NYS Dept. of Environmental Action is working on the deer issue. The date for the start of deer hunting is proposed to be moved up earlier in October. Karen has contacted Mr. Kerpez to discuss this date. Our Board should put a letter together giving the date we support and discussing the safety issue involved. Bedford Audubon is interested in working with us. There is no public hearing date scheduled in Westchester to discuss the change in hunting season but we can push for one. Anne passed out a handout of a list of Audubon-related web sites and email lists for our members to follow issues online. Richard would like to suggest a resolution to the State Council on raising the average gas mileage of New York State cars, SUVs etc. with the ultimate goals of reducing both global warming and the use of fossil fuels among other benefits. Bedford will probably second it.

**Finance:** Rita reported on the fourth quarter of 2004 as well as on the end of the fiscal year. In the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter there was an 8.6% return on all the investments. For the whole year the investments went from \$818,204 in January, 2004 to \$895,711 on Dec. 31, 2004. For the whole year the return was 11%; we did well this year. We have good reserves for 2 years but will need a little more. January, 2005 was not a strong month for the stock market but February looks encouraging.

**Changes in National Audubon Chapter Policy:** Anne reported that there is a significant increase in the number of chapter members and reduction of National Audubon memberships in our chapter since we began offering chapter memberships. She briefly reviewed the expected changes from Audubon National regarding the end of dues shares from national and other changes they have made in membership policies. Anne passed out a summary of recommendations released on Jan. 7, 2005 from the Ad Hoc Committee on Chapter-National Relations.

Richard moved that the meeting be adjourned, Joan seconded.

Next meeting will be March 7, 2005

Minutes taken by Judy Epstein