

Saw Mill River Audubon—~~Draft~~ Board Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2007
At the Community Bible Church of Northern Westchester

Present: Robert McCrillis, presiding, Joan Coffey, Philip Heidelberger, Bill Kellner, Michael Madias, Tom McEnerney, Erika Miller, Ken Novenstern, Jeanne Romeu, Stanley Rosenthal, Richard Saravay, George Shakespear, Ponie Sheehan, Larry Trachtenberg. Staff: Anne Swaim, Executive Director

Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m. with a quorum present. Minutes of February 5, 2006 meeting were accepted with no corrections.

President's Report: Robert McCrillis opened the meeting *welcoming guests* Carmino Ravosa, Jean Sparacin and Rik Kaufman. *Mail and correspondence* included a letter from David Miller, Executive Director Audubon NY, announcing his resignation. There will be a dinner honoring him March 23 at the Audubon NY Council meeting. (Richard Saravay added that Miller was a good supporter of the local chapters). A replacement for him has not yet been announced. Other mail included the Ornithological Assn of Connecticut's annual meeting on Saturday, April 14 and an article from the New York Times on the Tappan Zee Bridge plan.

On the Wing deadline is March 5. Bill Kellner volunteered to help with the desktop publishing program.

Treasurer's Report: Tom McEnerney reported that we are on budget TYD, except a little behind in Education income. The Pruyn house's expenses are over budget due to a big fuel delivery and costs for dumpsters to empty the basement and garage. Audubon New York has given us a \$1,500 grant for a second laptop computer and projector for our educational programs.

Finance: Phil Heidelberger reported that, as of March 1, 2007, our Endowment Fund balance was \$964,000, down \$4,000 from Jan. 1, 2007. So far this year \$12,000 has been withdrawn.

Executive Director's Report: Anne Swaim reported on a discussion with Teatown's new Director of Conservation Mike Rubbo about management of sanctuary lands and a possible partnership with Westchester County Parks regarding Croton Point meadow management. There is a pending issue at Tarrytown Lakes in which SMRA could get involved. We need to reactivate our Environmental Action Committee and should include members who will track local environmental issues. Richard Saravay suggested putting an announcement in our newsletter for people to become involved in environmental issues/projects.

Anne also reported that the Federated Conservationists of Westchester County plans to set up an email notice list for local environmental issues. This idea came from the February 12 northern organization roundtable hosted by FCWC.

SMRA has been receiving positive comments on our two new educators, Laura Infield and Pat Mutolo

Anne Swaim suggested putting an announcement in the newsletter regarding people who are interested in getting emails from State and National Audubon on "issues alerts."

Nominating Committee: Anne Swaim reported Trish Foy was omitted from the ballot for nomination as a board member (but is listed as a nominee for Secretary). She will be nominated from the floor during the annual meeting in April along with new board nominees Jean Sparacin and Rik Kaufman.

Sanctuaries Committee: Jeanne Romeu reported the next *boundary survey* sanctuary project would be Choate. An email will go around with dates for that project. Michael Madias volunteered to mark the stakes at Graff and Brinton with spray paint.

Meredith Smith was absent, but Anne reported on the CARE Brochure format. It will be included in the next newsletter and also in sanctuary map boxes. The suggestion for a mug as a gift was not enthusiastically received. The idea of t-shirts may be preferable. Jeanne Romeu will look into vendors for that.

Community Relations and Development: Robert McCrillis reported donations YTD are \$4,617. The Board discussed the timing of the annual appeal and whether it should be moved from spring to fall. We would already be late if we wanted to do it in the spring—Barbara is writing a book, but will get involved if needed. Robert said we basically get the same donations from the same people and felt the timing didn't matter. Ken Novenster expressed the concern that if we do the fund drive at bird seed sale time, it might affect the bird seed sale fundraising. After much discussion, the Board voted to do a spring fundraiser.

Pruyn House Vision: “The Preliminary Vision Statement-Building Plan for Pruyn Sanctuary” report outlined by the Pruyn House committee was distributed for the Board's comments and input. Robert McCrillis spoke of the insightful trip to Black Rock, as well as to the Greenwich Audubon facility to view their “green” buildings. The next step will be to circulate this vision statement amongst possible architects and consultants for their input and suggestions.

Seed Sale: Ken Novenster reported light sale figures for February, and hopes March will be better. Volunteers were signed up for the March bird seed sale.

Environmental Action: No chair at the moment.

Field Trips: Joan Coffey reported the annual EagleFest had a good turnout. Upcoming trips scheduled are: the joint walk with Muscoot Farm on April 28--Beyond the Farm; and the second Saturday walk at Brinton Brook Sanctuary on Saturday, March 10.

Programs: As Cori Cumming was absent, Anne Swaim reported that Thursday, March 22 is the “Why Birds Sing” program at the Chappaqua Library. There will also be a birding hike *early* on Saturday, May 5 in Central Park with Jack Kelly. SMRA will be sponsoring a geocaching program at the Chappaqua Library on Friday, May 18, with a follow-up hike Sunday, May 20 to hunt geocaches at Pruyn.

Publicity: George Shakespear reported that Anne Swaim was quoted in an article in The Journal News on invasive plants. SMRA has been getting many calls from reporters and communities on wildlife and environmental issues.

Hospitality: Sally Dow was absent. Thanks to Anne Swaim, Ponie Sheehan and Erika Miller for coffee and refreshments for this meeting.

New Business: None

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. Due to the Annual Meeting and Dinner on Sunday, April 1, 2007 at Travelers Rest, we will not hold an April Board meeting.

Our next board meeting will be Monday, May 7, 7:00 pm at Community Bible Church.

The March 5, 2007 minutes were recorded by Jeanne Romeu.