

Saw Mill River Audubon Board Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2007
Held at the Community Bible Church of Northern Westchester

Members present: Robert McCrillis, presiding; George Shakespear, Tom McEnerney, Trish Foy, Cori Cumming, Sally Dow, Philip Heidelberger, Sophie Keyes, Michael Madias, Erika Miller, Ken Novenstern, Jeanne Romeu, Richard Saravay, Ponie Sheehan, Larry Trachtenberg, Rik Kaufman, Jean Sparacin, Stan Rosenthal.

Staff: Anne Swaim, Executive Director

Meeting called to order at 7:30 with a quorum present. Minutes of March 5 and April 1, 2007 meeting were accepted with no corrections.

President's Report: Robert McCrillis opened the meeting with welcoming remarks. Mail included announcements for Adirondack Birding Festival, Bronx River Sound Shore annual meeting, a letter of thanks from the Arnolds about the Annual Dinner, Federated Conservationists meeting, NY State Audubon annual meeting, WCC Native Plant center, Annual Snapping Turtle Walk at Boscobel. Next year's calendar was reviewed briefly. New members were given director's handbooks.

Next meeting will be the picnic and meeting at Senasqua Park on June 4; Jean Sparacin will coordinate the potluck arrangements.

The trip to Trinidad was discussed. Any thoughts on possible locations for future trips would be welcome.

The Committee list and Board Roster were reviewed. The Summer Executive Committee was approved, consisting of all officers.

Treasurer's Report: Tom McEnerney reported that revenues are running ahead of budget so far this year. We made under \$1000 on the Trinidad trip mainly due to credit card charges. Expenses are over mainly due to Pruyn House costs. Annual dinner may show a loss, but this is expected to show a slight profit as costs are more evenly distributed with the costs for the proxy mailing. Barbara Campbell's salary costs have also been under budget for the year.

Finance Committee: Phil Heidelberger reported that the balance of the investment portfolio at the end of the first quarter was \$978,449, a 1.1% increase for the year. The investment rate of return was 2.3% for the first quarter. As the result of a strong stock market in April, the May 1st balance was \$1,038,291, a 7.2% increase for the year-to-date.

Executive Director's Report: Anne Swaim reported on the opportunity to vote for the State Audubon Board ballot, terms to expire 2009; the Board approved a vote for the slate presented. A vote to accept National Audubon Eastern region ballot candidate was also approved.

Our educators will be offering field trip programs during the next week should any Board members wish to attend. There is still a need to get our programs into more schools to expand our teaching outreach.

Scholarship opportunities are still open, potentially for two individuals, due to changes of plans by our agreed upon potential award candidate. Since this must be decided quickly, the Board approved a suggestion from the Executive Director that one remaining candidate be partially funded and the other remaining candidate fully funded.

Anne handed out a brochure from Westchester County on public gardens in which the Pruyn Garden is listed. Anne also shared information on the Citizens' Volunteer Monitoring Program for water quality.

Sanctuaries Committee: Michael Madias reported the need for various repairs to Brinton due to the early April storm, including the parking lot. A number of easement issues still exist. Encroachments to the Arrowcrest easement at Brinton now include a stone carport and a shed; we are still waiting for response from the village of Croton. Graff boundary issues include dumping. Documentation is being kept, including photos. These should be signed and dated by a third party per Larry Trachtenberg's suggestion; this is especially necessary when meeting with Town Boards. New signs will be put on the Highland trail. Martin Smolin is willing to make these signs. An informal walk along the entire length of the Highland Trail is being offered by Michael per a request from 2nd Saturday walkers at Brinton. [The date of this walk was changed after the board meeting and is now scheduled for Saturday, June 2nd, 8 am, meeting in main parking lot of Brinton Brook.] The CARE brochure has already generated positive comments and a new member.

Community Relations and Development: Robert McCrillis reminded the Board that Monday, May 14 will be the PSing party. All members should come unless they indicated that their packets would be picked up or mailed.

Pruyn House Vision: Richard Saravay reported that the next step is to identify architect candidates to develop a proposal, from which a budget can be made and presentations made to the Town of New Castle.

Seed Sale: Ken Novensterth thanked members who have helped at the weekend sales. He indicated that we may actually sell out all remaining seed. He asked for new committee members for the sale on October 13 and 14, 2007. A committee meeting will be scheduled for June or July. The Board thanked Ken for chairing the Bird Seed Committee.

Environmental Action: A chairperson is needed for this committee. Richard Saravay noted that Armchair Activist materials are available via the internet which then can be shared with the rest of the Board.

Field Trips: Anne Swaim indicated that a committee meeting is needed for June. Brinton, Rockefeller Preserve and Central Park trips are planned.

Programs: Anne Swaim and Cori Cumming reported that a weekend program for May 18 and 20 is scheduled on Geocaching. New programs for the fall need to be discussed and scheduled; various suggestions were put forth by Board members.

Publicity: George Shakespear reported that a press release will be done once program schedule is finalized. He also noted that Bedford Audubon is doing a "bio blitz."

Hospitality: Jean Sparacin will take over this committee.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM. The next Board meeting will be June 4, 2007. Minutes for May 7, 2007 were recorded by Trish Foy.