

Saw Mill River Audubon Draft Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 2, 2009
Held at the Community Bible Church of Northern Westchester

Board Members Present: Robert McCrillis, presiding; Sally Dow, Jeanne Romeu, Richard Saravay, George Shakespear, Michael Madias, Jr., Cori Cumming, Trish Foy, Rik Kaufman, Tom McEnerney, Phil Heidelberger, Larry Trachtenberg, Ponie Sheehan, Bill Kellner, and Nick Fischer. Anne Swaim, Executive Director, was also present.

Minutes from January 5, 2009 Minutes were accepted as presented.

President's Report:

Board Nominees: Valerie Lyle, Donna Lassiter, and Nina Romanoff were introduced.

Annual Dinner Committee: Cori reviewed the details for the annual dinner including the menu and need for board members to volunteer. The program will include the annual meeting, a review of the Arizona trip by Larry Trachtenberg, a presentation by Mary Charbonneau on the Audubon education camp, another by Dylan Hastings about the youth education camp, and a SMRA presentation to end the evening. It was suggested that we add an electronic option to respond to the dinner invitation.

Finance Committee: For our official quarterly report, as of January 1, 2009, the portfolio balance was \$631,659, a 1.4% increase for the month of December but a 38.7% decline for the year. This includes \$107,000 in withdrawals (10.4%). The investment rate of return for 2008 was -29.6% compared to our Morningstar Allocation Index benchmark of -23.4%. The S&P 500 index was down 37% in 2008, the index's worst performance since 1937. The bear market continued in January 2009. The fund balance as of February 1st was \$594,802, a loss of 5.8% for the month. The S&P 500 lost 8.6% in January.

Treasurer's Report: There was nothing significant to report for January. We did receive over \$4,000 in seed sales and \$1,000 in Annual Fund donations. The attached insurance report was presented. It was decided not to change coverage at this time since the minor cost savings did not seem justified. Tom also reviewed the question of full or partial audits to save costs. Nonprofits with \$250,000 or more in support are required by NY state law to have a full audit. Barbara Campbell had also previously noted by email that a full audit is helpful to submit with grant applications. Tom will contact Bedford Audubon and Richard will contact Audubon New York regarding their audit options.

Development Committee: The proposals from the committee were reviewed as listed in the bullet points for the January 2009 report. It was noted that the board approved the increase in chapter membership dues to \$25 via an email vote.

Budget Review: The question was raised about how we are reviewing the 2009 budget as we said we would do at this month's meeting. Phil noted that even a large market rise would not put us on long-term sustainable funding at our current rate of withdrawal. Extensive discussion followed about increasing revenue and cutting expenses. **An ad hoc committee** to be made up of members of both budget and development committees and interested board members will continue the review. Potential dates will be circulated to the entire board.

Executive Director's Report: Anne Swaim reviewed remaining needs for the Saturday, February 7, Eagle Fest and details of the Lower Hudson Roundtable.

Sanctuary Committee: Michael reviewed the upcoming sanctuary work days scheduled at various sanctuaries. We hope to partner with the Town of New Castle on the Haas parking lot installation to comply with town regulations and save money.

Newsletter: The deadline is March 1 to gather materials for the Apr/May newsletter. We have a member interested in contributing to newsletter content.

Bird Seed Sale: The January sale was very successful bringing in over \$2,600. This was double the past amounts sold on a Saturday morning sale. Ken noted that the seed sales are a great opportunity for board members to connect.

Programs and Field Trips: The Saturday, February 28, bluebird event is being promoted by the Ossining Library. The Croton Point walk drew about 30 people.

Audubon NY: Richard briefly reviewed the work of Audubon New York and the New York Audubon Council. The next meeting of the council will be the last weekend of March. Discussion was held about the Bedford Environmental Summit.

Publicity: George will be working on further publicity for February events.

Hospitality: Cori, George and others were thanked for refreshments.

Pruyn House Vision: Bill Kellner reported that we are still awaiting the final presentation products from Steven Winter Associates.

The next board meeting will be Monday, March 2, 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Minutes recorded by Anne Swaim, Executive Director.