

Saw Mill River Audubon Board Minutes
Monday, March 9, 2009
Held at the Community Bible Church of Northern Westchester

Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m. with a quorum present.

Board members present: Robert McCrillis, presiding; Michael Madias Jr., Cori Cumming, Trish Foy, Rik Kaufman, Jeanne Romeu, Phil Heidelberger, Larry Trachtenberg, Ponie Sheehan, George Shakespear, Sally Dow, Ken Novenster, Erika Miller, Richard Saravay, Nick Fischer, and Bill Kellner. Anne Swaim, Executive Director, was also present as well as prospective board members Valerie Lyle, Donna Lassiter, Nina Romanoff and Arthur Greene.

Minutes of the February 2, 2009 meeting were accepted as presented.

President's Report - Robert McCrillis

Correspondence was read, including an announcement on the Audubon watercolors exhibit at the NY Historical Society from 2/13- 4/5/09 and an announcement of the NY Audubon Council meeting in Saratoga Springs 3/27- 29.

Proxy votes are needed before the April 5 annual dinner. There will be a dinner planning meeting on Monday, March 16, 2pm.

Muscot Farmers' Market has space reserved for SMRA for a community booth on September 20. June 1 will be the board and volunteer picnic. There was discussion on location of the picnic. Since the fee is higher for Croton Point than for Senasqua, it was decided to hold it at Senasqua, unless a home could be found. Michael Madias and Erika Miller have graciously offered to underwrite the cost of the picnic.

Community Relations and Development

Refer to attached development report for March 2009 reporting on February activities and including membership and fund drive statistics. As of March 2009 there are 1006 total members: 585 joint NAS/SMRA and 421 SMRA chapter only members. To date \$2,161.50 donations have been received.

A lengthy discussion was held about the 2009 Budget Review. It is necessary to reduce the \$28,500 proposed transfer from the endowment fund for 2009. Proposed expense cuts (see attached Budget Review page) were discussed. (Note: a vote approving these cuts was taken at the end of the meeting.) Various ways to raise revenue were discussed, including potential new revenue. There is presently a budget gap of \$17,150 beyond the proposed cuts and possible new revenue.

Rik Kaufman proposed that we ask for a suggested donation of \$5.00 per adult for programs, including guided walks. Children would be free. It was suggested that this be put on a trial basis. The motion was seconded and passed.

Finance Committee - Phil Heidelberger

As of March 1, 2009 the portfolio balance was \$555,571, a 6.6% loss for the month of February and a 12% decline for the year. After the S&P 500 index's worst January ever, February was even more terrible with an 11% loss. The S&P 500 index is already down 18.6% in 2009.

Executive Director's Report - Anne Swaim

EagleFest was a tremendous success. Over 4,000 attendees at Croton Point walked through the tent and many more visited the four eagle viewing locations. Ponie was complimented for her excellent display boards for our publicity table in the tent.

Trees for Tribes, the planting of 100 shrubs and trees around streams in Brinton Brook, was discussed. Work is underway on this project.

The Lower Hudson Audubon Roundtable, held on March 7, yielded many good ideas for chapters. Mention was made of a possible trip to see the sand hill cranes of Nebraska in March 2010. This could be a possible fund-raiser, as were the past two trips to Trinidad and Arizona.

Sanctuaries Committee - Michael Madias

Report was given on recent work days and upcoming dates. On March 28 there will be a workday at Choate. Conversations are continuing with the Town of New Castle for assistance in installing the parking area at Haas Sanctuary. We will need to prepare a survey of the proposed work and submit that to the town to proceed with their assistance.

Newsletter - Bill Kellner

Date for next newsletter is NOW – already a week behind schedule due to postponement of board meeting one week because of snow.

Bird Seed - Ken Novenster

The January 2009 third Saturday seed sale was very successful, resulting in revenue of \$2,600. The February sale brought in \$1,580. The next sale dates are March 21 and April 18.

Programs and Field Trips - Cori Cumming

The Owl Prowl attracted 16 people and was a success. A Peeper Prowl will be held March 29 at 7 pm at Pinecliff. Registration is necessary. The Bluebird Box building workshop at Ossining Public Library was entirely successful - a full registration of children and some adults was attained early on. All were pleased with the results. The slide program following the workshop was delightful and enjoyed by all. John Rogers and Sue were excellent presenters – highly recommended for a return visit. There will be another program on April 25 at the Ossining Library – Basic Birding Workshop for families and children aged 10 and up at 2 p.m.

Publicity - George Shakespear

George was thanked for all the work he did in getting out PR on recent programs.

Pruyn House Vision - Bill Kellner

Rough lay-out drawings were displayed.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Minutes were recorded by Sally Dow, Secretary.