

**Saw Mill River Audubon Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, May 4, 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; Anne Swaim, Executive Director, Joan Coffey, Sally Dow, Nick Fischer, Trish Foy, Arthur Green, Phil Heidelberger, Rik Kaufman, Bill Kellner, Donna Lassiter, Valerie Lyle, Michael Madias, Joanne McAuley, Tom McEnerney, Ken Novenster, Nina Romanoff, Richard Saravay, George Shakespear and Larry Trachtenberg.

**Minutes of the March 9, 2009 board meeting and the April 5, 2009 annual meeting were accepted as presented.**

**President's Report - Robert McCrillis**

**Correspondence** - New York Birders, Newsletter of the NYS Ornithological Association, Inc.

**New Board members were welcomed:** Arthur Green, Donna Lassiter, Valerie Lyle and Nina Romanoff.

**April 5 Annual Meeting / Pot Luck Supper** – was a success. Received telephone calls on how wonderful it was. Everyone in the committee (Cori, Erika, Joan, Joanne, Sophie, Michael) did a great job. Thought it was a terrific meeting and the speakers were terrific. It was a financial success since we made \$490 between door donations and 50/50 Raffle and our costs were \$213, resulting in a profit of \$277.

Open to suggestions for next year's annual meeting. Another pot luck at a more central location or a dinner at Travelers Rest?

**Pruyn Day** – Received a \$500 donation (to be matched) as support for Pruy Day. There is the need to think about having Pruy Day at another time than October. Last year it was held on the same day as the Teatown Annual Festival. A date in mid to late September or early October may be a better choice with a rain date. Further discussion is needed.

**Board and Volunteer Picnic** - To be held on June 1, 2009 at Senasqua Park in Croton-on-Hudson. Jean Sparacin has volunteered to coordinate the event. A sign-up sheet was passed around.

**Roster and Committee list** - new/updated lists have been printed. Please review for accuracy. New members should review and let office know if they would like to join any of the existing committees.

**Summer Executive Committee** - moved and passed to establish a Summer Executive Committee consisting of the President, Vice President, Chairman of the Board, Treasurer and Recording Secretary.

**Community Relations and Development – presented by Robert McCrillis**

Refer to attached development report by Barbara Campbell for May 2009 reporting on April activities and including preparation of Annual Appeal and Grants research.

YTD total of donations is \$7,000. Annual Appeal "PS party" will be held Monday, May 11 at 6 p.m. Robert asked for 100% participation of board members in Annual Fund Drive.

He also announced that Ellen Heidelberger voluntarily gave back her salary increase to SMRA and that the 50/50 raffle money the Heidelbergs won at the Annual Dinner was also donated back to SMRA. Both donations will be matched by IBM. Robert thanked Ellen and Phil for their generosity.

Robert announced a possible donation that would include the stipulation that a name be attached to the money given, like the Light Scholarship Fund. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Final Pruyn House vision material will be presented very soon. Additional fundraising activity will have to take place in order to achieve this. Development Committee will need to meet and discuss short term and long term goals and budget for this project.

Barbara Campbell and Anne Swaim are working on a new format for the next printing of a general brochure describing SMRA. It will be circulated for comments when ready.

We are still awaiting a response from Con Edison on our request for a grant of \$6,300 to implement a 3-pronged outreach to educate the public about local habitats/wildlife and the easy-to-implement techniques available to help preserve them. These funds would also support Pruyn Day.

It was noted that Audubon's Hog Island would not be operating this summer due to lack of funding. Phil Heidelberger asked if any youth scholarships were to be given out this year. Anne said we are hoping to partner with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to identify students attending the DEC Conservation Camps.

### **Finance Committee - Phil Heidelberger**

For our official quarterly report, as of April 1, 2009 the portfolio balance was \$581,487, a decline of \$50,172 (7.9%) for the year, including \$7,000 in withdrawals. The investment rate of return was -7.0% year-to-date and -29.9% for one year, compared to the Morningstar Allocation averages of -5.3% and -25.2% for the comparable periods.

As of May 1, 2009, the portfolio rebounded \$41,762 to \$623,249 and is now only down 1.3% for the year, including \$14,000 (2.2%) in withdrawals.

### **Treasurer's Report – Tom McEnerney**

Tom reviewed the following reports: Operating Revenues and Expenses for the four-month period ending April 30, 2009 and Explanation of Unbudgeted Revenues and Expenses (attached).

Revenues and budgeting are on track. School revenues are expected to increase by the end of this school year based on pending payments and scheduled programs.

### **Executive Director's Report - Anne Swaim**

**Saw Mill River Bioblitz** – We are partnering with the Saw Mill River Coalition on their planned survey of the Saw Mill River Watershed in September. In advance of that, we are planning to do a breeding bird survey of selected sites in the Saw Mill River Watershed.

**Clearwater Festival** – Received positive email response concerning our participation in the Festival, which is on June 20-21, 2009. Application form submitted and waiting to hear back from Festival staff. If accepted, we would only have 4 passes to cover our table and will need volunteers.

**Constitution Marsh Canoe trip** – Rescheduled for July 16 at 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. Cost \$20 each. Money goes to CM center. Maximum 17 people.

**March 2010 – Nebraska Sandhill Cranes Trip** – flyer handed out. Anne is working with Nebraska Audubon. Trip to be scheduled in connection with their "2010 Rivers and Wildlife Festival". Asked for show of hands of those interested. There were more than a dozen board members interested in this trip. We could accommodate multiples of 7 persons per van. Deposit would be needed by September 1, 2009.

**Update of Job Description of Office Manager** position handed out for inclusion in SMRA board handbooks.

**Letter to Governor Patterson** – Have been asked to co-sign a letter to NYS Governor Patterson against downsizing/layoffs at NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. NYS Audubon is supporting this effort and they reviewed the letter contents. We will be one of 30 chapters signing. Copy of letter will be emailed to board after meeting. Signature to letter unanimously approved.

**Sanctuaries Committee - Michael Madias**

Report was given on recent work and upcoming dates: have replaced old border signs at Chernick; worked at Choate on 03/28/09.

“**Trees for Tribs**” - Through a grant from NYS we will be planting 100 trees and shrubs at Brinton on 05/31/09. Need volunteers – bring shovels.

Conversations are continuing with the Town of New Castle for assistance in installing the parking area at **Haas Sanctuary**. Campbell Engineering has offered low or no cost work on site survey which is needed before the Town can begin work. The Town has sent Campbell Engineering the site data and we are awaiting the survey completion.

**Newsletter - Bill Kellner**

Deadline for summer newsletter that comes out in June is now. Anne and Bill will work on it next week. Bios of new Board members are needed. Topics will include our citizen science projects.

**Bird Seed - Ken Novenster**

The last spring bird seed sale will be May 16. Volunteer sign-up sheet passed around. Repairs to shed are needed. Discussions will be held mid-June concerning October sale.

**Programs and Field Trips – Joan Coffey**

Upcoming programs are: **May 13** early A.M. Bird Walk at Rockefeller State Park and **May 16** Doodletown and Iona Island (Rik Kaufman to lead). The April 27 and May 2 Hawk Migration programs (led by Arthur Green) were successful (saw 25 broadwings) and well attended.

We were approached by the Chappaqua Library to help find a raven-related program in conjunction with the 160th anniversary of Edgar Allen Poe’s death this October (10/29/09).

We need to set calendar and location for our part of the “Hawk Watch Tour”. We will be one of several different Audubon chapters participating in this around NYS. Participants will get a passport and will be stamped-in at the various locations/days. More information to follow.

**Publicity - George Shakespear**

George will prepare a separate press release on the “Trees for Tribs” work day at Brinton Brook.

**Pruyn House Vision - Bill Kellner**

Committee met to discuss proposals. Steven Winter Associates will deliver final package for the Board’s consideration and approval soon. If approved, the committee and then the board will need to discuss fundraising strategies.

**New Business**

Richard Saravay brought to our attention a possible revenue source – shade grown coffee sold under the label of “Birds & Beans”. The coffee could be used as a fund raising item. SMRA would get \$1 back for each 2 lb. bag of coffee ordered by SMRA members. Cost is \$26 per 2 lb. bag delivered. This idea was brought up at NYS Audubon meeting. Further discussion is needed on this matter.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Minutes were recorded by Joanne McAuley, Secretary.