

Saw Mill River Audubon Draft Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 3, 2010
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; Nick Fischer, Phil Heidelberger, Bill Kellner, Donna Lassiter, Valerie Lyle, Michael Madias Jr., Joanne McAuley, Tom McEnerney, Ken Novenster, Jeanne Romeu, George Shakespeare, Ponie Sheehan, Christine Smith, Jean Sparacin and Larry Trachtenberg. Anne Swaim, Executive Director, was also present.

Absent: Joan Coffey, Sally Dow, Rik Kaufman, Nina Romanoff, Richard Saravay

Minutes of the March 1, 2010 board meeting and the April 11, 2010 annual meeting were accepted as presented.

President's Report - Robert McCrillis

A "welcome" was extended to Christine Smith, our new board member. She was asked to tell us a little about herself. Arthur Green has resigned from the board effective immediately. His letter of resignation is available if anyone wants to read it.

Various correspondence from other organizations was circulated:

- Thank you letter from Audubon New York for our \$250 contribution.
- Notification of our needed vote for Audubon Council of NY State directors. Richard Saravay is on the slate as a nominated director. Motion to vote for all on slate was seconded and carried.

Annual Dinner (April 11, 2010) was a success with the best attendance in years. While not looked at as a fund raiser, a profit of \$700 was made after allocation of a portion of the Con Ed grant to cover certain expenses. Comments were solicited from the Board on the dinner and what to do next year. Comments were favorable and all enjoyed Larry's presentation on Nebraska trip. There was support for having a potluck dinner in 2011 as was done in 2009. This will be revisited in the 2010-2011 program year.

Election of Executive Committee for Summer 2010 – As stated in our by-laws, the executive committee is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the board in between our June and September meetings. Committee members would be: SMRA President, Vice President, Board Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. Approved.

Community Relations and Development - Robert McCrillis directed the Board's attention to the reports prepared by Barbara Campbell and Ellen Heidelberger and handed out earlier. The May report shows membership is up and donations are at \$9,203. The PS Party is scheduled for May 13, 2010, 6pm, at Community Bible Church.

Treasurer's Report - Tom McEnerney

A brief overview of income and expenses thru April 30, 2010 was given. Donations were higher than expected and seed sales less than expected. Everything else is as expected. Pruyn House expenses high due to need for 2 deliveries of oil this winter. See report for details.

Finance Committee - Phil Heidelberger

For our official quarterly report, as of April 1, 2010 the portfolio balance was \$794,494, an increase of \$50,770 (6.8%) for the year. The year-to-date and one year investment rates of return were 4.1% and 41.6%, respectively, compared to our Morningstar Allocation Fund Index benchmark returns 3.0% and 32.0% for the same period. There were no withdrawals from the endowment and \$20,000 in additions (the Turner garden gift) to the endowment during the first quarter.

As of May 1, 2010 the portfolio balance was \$790,441, a 6.3% increase for the year but a decrease of \$4,053 (-0.5%) for the month of April. There were \$18,000 in withdrawals from the endowment during April.

Executive Director's Report - Anne Swaim

Pinecliff storm damage repairs have been completed.

We have 4 high school interns currently working on various sanctuary projects this spring from April 1 to May 31 under Anne's supervision. From Greeley HS, Chappaqua: Nick Beach, Austin Gellis (Teacher: Bob Oddo) From Croton HS: Ian O'Mahony, David Pojman (Teacher: Dan Delaney).

New date for the **tree planting**/tree dedication at Pruyne for Stanley Wecker is Friday, May 7 at 3pm.

Cape May Weekend – Only 1 person signed up. Program canceled due to lack of registrations. Anne will call hotel and release the rooms being held for us. **Summer trip** – Discussing the possibility going to Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca and Montezuma.

Reminder – This Friday, May 7 – birding in Central Park at 7am with Charlie Roberto.

Deer Question - Members of the board and Anne have been researching this question for several months. A recent development is that the Village of Croton is now considering amending the Village law to allow bow hunting on some Village properties. Discussion followed centered on questions of visitor safety, insurance liability and effectiveness of bow hunting for habitat restoration. Tom offered to contact our insurance carrier to see whether allowing limited hunting would affect our premiums. A straw vote showed 14 in favor, 2 opposed and 1 abstaining. A suggestion was made that we invite the President of the Westchester Bowhunters group to speak with us. A subcommittee was formed (Anne, Donna, Mike and Ponie) to discuss. This group will prepare a suggested policy for the board and gather and summarize relevant reports for the board to consider in the fall. It was suggested that our first board meeting in September have a different format, perhaps on a Saturday morning, to allow time for a longer discussion on this issue. Since the hunting season in the fall continues to the end of December, we may have time to implement a policy during the Fall 2010 season if we choose to do so.

Sanctuary Committee - Michael Madias, Jr.

May 1 - was a workday at Choate Sanctuary – 2 people showed up. We did pre-work for Trees for Tribes.

May 15 – Trees for Tribes Planting date at Choate. Volunteer is needed to protect new plantings from deer in Choate. Nick Fischer reported that work was done on the two Pruyne deer enclosures on 4 different dates in April and also involved the high school interns. Invasive plants will be removed from the enclosures. Anne will explore having high school students conduct a baseline inventory of plants in the enclosures in the coming school year. We have a grant application pending with Norcross for signage. Tom reported on the Pruyne Garden: some weeding has been done and a planting day will be held on May 22nd.

Newsletter - Bill Kellner

The deadline for the Summer issue is May 3 - today. Bill will be meeting with Anne to review newsletter material.

Bird Seed Sales

Our April Saturday sale made \$500 - \$600. There was discussion about what to do with this year's remaining seed. It was agreed to discount seed by 20% between now and June 30 and hold our last Saturday sale on May 22 allowing some potential overlap between garden workers, seed sale volunteers and customers.

Programs and Field Trips Meeting to schedule/discuss future programs will be after this meeting.

Hospitality

Jean Sparacin is coordinating the Annual Picnic. A sign-up sheet was circulated for the picnic food contributions.

New Business

Suggestions on our 2010 birding trip are welcome. Tom inquired about status of the Pruyne House Vision work on behalf of auditors. Robert said we are considering a capital campaign feasibility study. Anne noted a new report on birds and climate change. Available online at: www.stateofthebirds.org

Meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Minutes were recorded by Joanne McAuley, Secretary.