

**Saw Mill River Audubon Draft Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, December 6, 2010**  
**Held at the Community Bible Church of Northern Westchester**

**Present:** Robert McCrillis, presiding, Sally Dow, Nick Fischer, Bill Kellner, Valerie Lyle, Donna Lassiter, Michael Madias, Jr., Joanne McAuley, Tom McEnerney, Ken Novenster, Richard Saravay, Ponnie Sheehan, Christine Smith, George Shakespear, Larry Trachtenberg. Anne Swaim was also present.

**Absent:** Joan Coffey, Phil Heidelberger, Rik Kaufman, Nina Romanoff, Jean Sparacin.

Quorum present at 7:30 p.m. Minutes from the October 4 board meeting were accepted as presented.

**President's Report** (Robert McCrillis)

Mail/Correspondence from (1) NY Birders (2) Westchester Land Trust and (3) American Bird Conservancy was circulated around table.

A Pruy Garden work day needed to put garden to bed for winter. Robert suggested Friday, December 10 - affirmed by others of Garden Committee.

January 10, 2011 board meeting is being changed to January 3, 2011.

We have been notified that Rita Wecker left \$100,000 gift to SMRA in her will. The first distribution will likely be sometime in June 2011 with total gift amount to be determined after the estate is settled.

**Community Relations and Development** ( Robert McCrillis)

Membership and Fund Drive Report for December 1, 2010 and Development Report on November 2010 activities were handed out. Followup appeal letters are going out to both "big" and "small" givers during first week in December. Annual Fund contributions down from last year. The board assisted by PSing "big giver" letters at the start of this meeting.

Barbara prepared a "mini-grant" for Audubon NY requesting \$770 for signage at Pruy.

**Treasurer's Report** (Tom McEnerney)

The Budget Committee met on November 29 and have proposed the attached budget for 2011. Copies of budget were handed out and items reviewed.

Proposal to raise membership dues to \$30 from \$25 was voted on and approved.

Salaries of Executive Director, Office Manager and sanctuary worker will remain the same next year – all have offered to forgo increases. Decrease in money earned through Education Programs – little response after increased advertising and decreases in school spending. We expect to apply for a Con Edison grant next year. A proposal to use income from \$20,000 garden endowment to do capital improvements to Pruy garden in 2011 was approved. Use of income from this endowment will be reviewed year to year. At the point that income is sufficient or capital garden improvements completed, this interest income may be applied to annual maintenance costs of the garden with later board review and approval.

A proposal to accept the budget was moved, seconded and passed.

There is a broken water main at Pruyn. The pipe was first installed in 1947. Anne has received three quotes, two of which were presented to the board. Quotes discussed by Board. Proposal was put forward to accept \$9,800 quote from Leonardi and Sons with attempt made to do repairs only half-way to the road at \$5400. Passed.

### **Finance Committee** (Tom McEnerney for Phil Heidelberger)

For our official quarterly report, as of October 1, 2010 the portfolio balance was \$767,298, an increase of \$23,574 (+3.2%) for the year. The portfolio balance increased \$56,435 during the third quarter. The year-to-date and one year investment rates of return were 5.9% and 10.5%, respectively, compared to our Morningstar Allocation Fund Index benchmark returns of 4.7% and 8.0% for the same period. There were \$14,000 in withdrawals from the endowment and no additions to the endowment during the third quarter. As of December 1, 2010 the portfolio balance was \$779,034, a 4.7% increase for the year. There have been \$20,000 in additions to and \$50,000 in withdrawals from the endowment during the year.

### **Executive Director's Report** (Anne Swain)

- 1) Deer Hunting Update – Hunting is shelved for this year. More discussion scheduled for this winter both within SMRA Deer Subcommittee and with other organizations now doing bowhunting or proposing to bowhunt. The subcommittee had a helpful meeting with the Westchester Bowhunters Association. Several board members and Anne attended a program at Teatown last month. The speaker was Mark Weckel, researcher at Mianus River Gorge Preserve on the topic: “An insatiable appetite: white-tailed deer and the health of local forests”. It was suggested that we offer a public program with Mark Weckel this winter.
- 2) Pruyn Forest – Habitation evaluation. Ted Kozlowski is preparing a forest management plan for Pruyn to be completed by January. We will ask for a presentation by Ted to interested board members. This work is covered by \$1,200 grant from Metropolitan Watershed Agricultural Council applied for by Anne. Once we have a completed plan we will also be eligible to apply for habitat improvement grants from this same program.
- 3) Deer Enclosure – a) one enclosure was damaged by a fallen tree, since repaired by Nick and Michael. b) Bob Oddo, biology teacher at Greeley High School, will be meeting with Anne in January about having his students take on annual task of surveying plant growth within the enclosures.
- 4) Third Friday in Tarrytown had a sparse turnout for most of the evening but it was felt this would be worthwhile to try again during summer months.
- 5) Environmental Issues – Anne sought permission for the office to respond to environmental action alerts from Audubon NY or Audubon National on behalf of SMRA because of the short-term nature of these alerts. The board will be notified at subsequent board meetings about any such response. Approved.
- 6) ANWAR post cards – the board was encouraged to respond on the issue of further protection for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
- 7) January 27, 2011 – We will be co-sponsoring a global warming book event with Chappaqua Library. 7:30pm. (See newsletter for details.)

**Sanctuary Committee** (Michael Madias, Jr.)

Work day at Brinton - December 19, 2010.  
Can get mowing machine for free for Spring 2011.  
Nick is getting costs for signage and gate for enclosure.

**Newsletter** (Bill Kellner) – Deadline for next newsletter is January 4, 2011. Had been doing 6-8 page newsletters now down to 4 pages. Can do shorter articles and point to additional info on our web pages.

**Seed Sale** (Ken Novenster) – Thanked the volunteers who worked at the October Annual Sale. Passed around sheet asking for volunteers for Saturday, December 18, 2010.

Ken asked SMRA to support Westchester Cornell Cooperative which is on verge of extinction because of proposed cut of \$1.3 million from County which would impact on matching grants. We agreed to write a letter of support to the County Executive.

**Programs & Field Trips** (Christine Smith) – Jones Beach Winter Ducks program held November 7. Trip to Montezuma was great. Turkey Mountain walk on November 26 only had 3 people attending. Would like to co-sponsor more events with other local Audubon groups, i.e., Bedford. Next Second Saturday Walk is December 11. Christmas Bird Counts are scheduled: Peekskill – December 18; Lower Hudson and/or Connecticut – December 26; Putnam – January 6.

**Publicity** (George Shakespear) – George reported that press releases for October/November had been picked up by local media. Thanked Ellen for her help.

**Audubon Council** (Richard Saravay) – A summary of the Fall 2010 council meeting was prepared by Richard. (See handout from Richard on key points.)

**Hospitality** Thanks were offered to those who brought refreshments for the meeting.

**New Business:** There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:00 p.m.

Minutes were recorded by Joanne McAuley, Secretary.