

**Saw Mill River Audubon Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, January 8, 2013 (postponed from 1/6 due to weather)**  
**Held at Community Bible Church, Ossining, NY**

**Present (in bold):** Robert McCrillis, presiding, William Kellner, Richard Saravay, Brian Kluepfel, secretary, Tom McEnerney, Sally Dow, Nick Fischer, Philip Heidelberger, Shirl Kaplan, Rik Kaufman, Donna Lassiter, Valerie Lyle, Michael Madias, Jr., Joanne McAuley, Christine McCluskey, Ken Novenster, Joan Wyly, Nina Romanoff, Ponie Sheehan, Jean Sparacin, Larry Trachtenberg. Anne Swaim was present as Executive Director.

**A quorum was present and the meeting began at 7:32 pm.**

**Minutes from the December meeting were approved.**

**President's Report/Mail and Correspondence:**

Three guests—Jan Bass, Tom Ruth, and Karalyn Lamb were welcomed. They are considering the open board positions and introduced themselves.

A vote was taken and passed to hold the annual dinner on Sunday, April 6 at Table 9 Restaurant at 5 pm. It will be priced at \$65.00/person, with a few complimentary spaces for staff and other guests. Congratulations will be extended to Anne Swaim for 25 years of service to SMRA.

**Community Relations and Development:**

Report circulated. 2013 was the best year in SMRA history for donations.

**Finance Committee (Philip Heidelberger):**

The portfolio balance as of January 1, 2014 was \$948,376, a 1.1% increase for the month of December and a one year increase of 8.9% from the January 1, 2013 balance of \$870,932.

The one year investment rate of return for 2013 was 16.8%.

There were \$66,600 in withdrawals from and \$1,000 in additions to the portfolio during 2013, including \$4,400 in withdrawals during December. Of the \$66,600 in withdrawals, \$1,200 was from the Garden Endowment and \$400 was from the Light Endowment, leaving \$65,000 in General Fund withdrawals, compared to the 2013 budgeted figure of \$66,855.

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

Copies of the report showing actual results for 2013 as compared to the 2013 budget were distributed. Revenues were higher than budget primarily due to higher Donations. Expenses were lower than budget due primarily to lower Sanctuaries and Seed Sale expenses.

However, withdrawals from the endowment were very close to budget because off-budget expenses were significantly greater than off-budget revenues. It was also noted that both the Larry Light Scholarship and Pruyn Garden Endowment funds have balances that are comfortably in excess of their restricted principal amounts.

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

SMRA will participate in the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Eagle Fest on February 8, leading bird walks at 11, 1:00 and 2:00 pm, and offering a "Raptors for Rookies" ID program at 9:15 am. A signup sheet was circulated for our three different sites. Larry will be leading the 11am walk; Christine will co-lead the 1pm walk with Anne and Anne will lead the 2pm walk. Anne noted that eagle numbers are building in the Lower Hudson River area.

Discussion of the issues at Croton Point continued. Phasing of the work to replaced methane pipes on the main landfill is a concern; it is definite that digging needs to take place during 2014 to address methane leaks. Meadow expert Larry Weiner may be engaged by the county for a meadow restoration/maintenance plan. SMRA received a \$1,000 grant to create an interpretive sign for the park and the ad hoc "Croton Point Discussion Group" will work together on content and design.

SMRA signed on with 19 other NY chapters to protest the Department of Interior's recent ruling giving wind farms a 30 year exemption on the moratorium against killing Bald and Golden eagles near wind turbines.

**Advocacy (Richard Saravay):** Discussion of the relationship between wind farms, grassland habitat, and raptors. The March 21-22 Audubon Council of New York meeting will be in Saratoga. Richard Saravay will be attending and Christine McCluskey also expressed interest in going as the second SMRA representative.

**Sanctuaries Committee (Michael Madias):** No update on the Birchwood Swim Club issue. The club borders Pruyn Sanctuary and has un-buildable swampy land that could be donated to SMRA. They have removed the fencing that was placed on our property and, in the spring, will be restoring the parking area erroneously used on our land.

**Program and Field Trips (Christine McCluskey):** The upcoming owl program at Rockefeller Park was discussed and the capacity of the site (40) was brought up. In hindsight, we should have had a sign up to prevent people being turned away. The subsequent Owl Prowl on January 18 is also showing great public interest. The New Year's Day annual walk at Rockwood Park was the most successful ever, with 29 walkers. A brief discussion of the January 11 "soup social" following Charlie Roberto's Eagle Walk at Croton Point was held. Various members agreed to bring soups and bread. Jean Sparacin generously offered to be the "Soup Coordinator" and be at the center starting at 11am to organize the soup donations.

**Newsletter (Bill Kellner):** Next deadline is January 7.

**Bird Seed Sale (Ken Novenstern):** Sign-up sheet circulated for January 18 sale.

**Hospitality:** Thanks to Sally Dow and Jean Sparacin for coordinating.

**New Business:** SMRA was asked to participate in the NY State Winter Waterfowl Survey on Saturday, January 25, so we won't be doing the previously-scheduled Orange County birding trip that day. Once again we are partnering with Bedford Audubon in the winter bald eagle roost survey and SMRA will be at the Verplanck Dock every Thursday, 3:15-5:00pm, until the end of February.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 pm.

Minutes taken by Brian Kluepfel, Secretary