

Saw Mill River Audubon
June 6, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes
Held at Senasqua Park, Croton-on-Hudson, NY

Present: Jan Bass, Phil Heidelberger, Rik Kaufman, Bill Kellner, Brian Kluepfel, Karalyn Lamb, Donna Lassiter, Valerie Lyle, Michael Madias, Christine McCluskey, Robert McCrillis, Tom McEnerney, Ken Novenster, John Phillips, Nina Romanoff, Tom Ruth, Richard Saravay, Ponie Sheehan, Jean Sparacin and Larry Trachtenberg. SMRA Executive Director Anne Swaim was also present along with friends and family guests who were at the preceding picnic.

Meeting started at 7:30 pm. Minutes of May 2, 2016 meeting were approved.

President's Report – Valerie Lyle

Valerie noted the distribution of the updated board rosters and called attention to the current committee list distributed at the last meeting. We have several openings on committees and the list will also be distributed by email along with a description of the various key SMRA committees.

Valerie Lyle also noted the resignation of Valerie Heemstra as Recording Secretary because of a work schedule conflict. Valerie Heemstra will remain as a board member. William Kellner has agreed to serve as Secretary until the April 2017 Annual Meeting. Rik Kaufman moved that William Kellner be appointed as Board Recording Secretary, seconded by Ken Novenster and affirmed unanimously.

Valerie reviewed our annual practice of appointing a summer executive committee to handle any board business that might arise between the June and September board meetings to consist of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Board Chairman. Jean Sparacin moved that the board approve this summer executive committee, seconded by Michael Madias, Jr. and affirmed unanimously.

Our scheduled Board Retreat on Saturday, September 17 was also noted and will be a morning gathering ending with lunch, with location to be determined.

Community Relations and Development – Robert McCrillis

Robert reviewed highlights from the June Membership and Donation and the June Development Reports, handed out.

Finance Committee – Philip Heidelberger

As of June 1, 2016 the portfolio balance was \$932,973 a year-to-date increase of 2.6% (\$23,815) above the January 1, 2016 balance of \$909,158. There have been \$8,000 in withdrawals from the portfolio and \$5,000 in additions to the portfolio during 2016.

Treasurer's Report – Tom McEnerney

Tom distributed his financial report showing operating revenues and expenses for the first five months of 2016. He said results were good so far this year with overall results about \$7,500 better than budget expectations. This was primarily due to higher donations, which were about \$6,000 better than budget expectations at May 31st.

Executive Director's Report – Anne Swaim

A total of \$1,748 was raised by the First Annual Westchester Birdathon done in partnership between Saw Mill River Audubon and Rockefeller State Park Preserve. As agreed, half of these funds were shared with RSPP, which will use these to purchase field cameras for the wood thrush nesting survey. The other four Westchester County Audubon chapters are enthusiastic about the idea of a county-wide Birding Big Day, with chapters raising their own funds with Birdathons and a joint gathering at the end for list comparing.

Executive Director's Report cont'd– Anne Swaim

The SMRA Personnel Committee reviewed the resume of Meiko Lunetta and affirmed Anne's proposal to engage Meiko as an additional per diem environmental educator. Meiko will be available to us beginning in mid-June. Meanwhile, Anne has covered the scheduled school programs in May (15 programs) and will cover the June ones (14). We also had 12 public field trips in May and have six others scheduled in June. Anne noted that we have a need for additional public field trip leaders and there may be candidates among the regular Monday bird walk participants.

The 2nd Croton Point sign is now due to be installed this week and Anne will send around an email when completed so we can schedule a photo op at the new sign.

Advocacy

On behalf of Tom Ruth, who had to leave early, Anne Swaim gave a brief report on the *Hudson to Housatonic Conservation Initiative*. We completed two property surveys and plan to do a third next week. A gathering of representatives of all focal areas, from the Hudson to the Housatonic, will be held at Greenwich Audubon Center Tuesday, June 7. It is hoped that the information sharing and networking will continue between the various H2H participants past the end of the federally-funded project.

Richard Saravay noted the Black Rock and Schunnemunk Forests have been designated Important Bird Areas (IBA) by Audubon New York. Bill Kellner attended a press event Saturday, June 4 at Black Forest that announced this news and offered a guided walk through the Black Forest. Bill noted that Black Forest has been successful in reducing their deer population and has seen a regrowth of the understory and increase in forest bird populations.

Karalyn Lamb thanked Rik Kaufman for distributing information packets about *Hydrilla* to 11 marinas along the Hudson River. Information pending on how and when a herbicide may be used in the Croton River.

Sanctuaries Committee – Michael Madias

Michael reported that native planting work may be finished until cooler weather and that he has a surplus of wildflower seedlings so more may be added later. Karalyn Lamb met with Lauren Coats, Choate Sanctuary neighbor and sanctuary keeper, to walk through Choate ID'ing invasive species. She reported that Lauren, who owns Terrapin Tree Service, has offered a half-day of crew work to do some underbrush and vine clearing at the trail entrance of Choate Sanctuary.

Programs and Field Trips – Christine McCluskey

Christine reviewed the upcoming field trips on the SMRA calendar highlighting the full-day birding trip in Dutchess County on Saturday, June 25 that will be led by John Askildsen. We will have a meeting later in June to begin planning events for September 2016 into 2017.

Newsletter

Brian announced that the Spanish translation of the summer newsletter has been completed and introduced Paula Zorrilla who completed the translation. The next deadline is August 1.

Bird Seed Sale - Ken Novenster

Our seed is now discounted 25% off until our final clearance sale on Saturday, June 18. Ken thanked the volunteers who signed up for this sale. Planning will begin for the 2016-2017 sale, with the sale weekend scheduled for Saturday & Sunday, October 1 & 2.

Hospitality

Valerie thanked Jean Sparacin for coordinating the picnic food and Rudy Fasciani for manning the grill.

New Business: None.

Meeting adjourned at: 8:30pm

Minutes taken by Anne Swaim