

Saw Mill River Audubon
June 4, 2018 Board Meeting Minutes
Meeting at Senasqua Park, Croton-on-Hudson, NY

Present (in bold type): Cary Andrews, Ginger Bernardin, Earl DePass, Roger Garrison, Phil Heidelberger, Rik Kaufman, William Kellner, Brian Kluepfel, Donna Lassiter, Valerie Lyle, Michael Madias, Jr., Joanne McAuley, Tom McEnerney, Ken Novenstern, Nina Romanoff, Tom Ruth, Lynn Salmon, Richard Saravay, Jean Sparacin, Larry Trachtenberg, Debbie van Zyl, Kathleen Williamson. Anne Swaim was also present.

ABSENT: Roger, Brian

Meeting started at 7:26 pm.

President's Report—Valerie Lyle

Ken moved with Debbie seconding that minutes of the May 7 board meeting be approved. The motion was adopted with all present voting in favor.

Valerie reviewed the need to appoint a Summer Executive Committee to take care of business as needed during the period when board meetings are not scheduled. She asked the board to approve appointment of Valerie Lyle, Tom Ruth, Richard Saravay, Bill Kellner and Tom McEnerney as members of the committee. Ken moved with Joanne seconding that the board appoint the committee as described by Valerie. The motion was adopted with all present voting in favor.

Valerie read a letter from Marcy Boyle of the Audubon Council of New York asking chapters to approve the election of the nominated officers and directors to the council's board. Rik moved that the SMRA board vote to approve these nominees. Kathleen seconded this motion. The motion was adopted with all present voting in favor.

Finance Committee—Philip Heidelberger

As of June 1, 2018 the portfolio balance was \$974,462, a \$7,030 (0.7%) increase above the January 1, 2018 balance of \$967,432. There have been \$2,885 in withdrawals from and \$500 in additions to the endowment during 2018. As of June 1st, we are \$52,097 (37.5%) above our guideline to maintain two years of budgeted expenses in highly liquid assets such as checking and money market funds. This guideline was put in place to help ensure that we don't have to sell stock funds during market downturns in order to meet current expenses.

Treasurer's Report—Tom McEnerney

[Reference handout: *Operating Revenues and Expenses for the five months ended May 31, 2018.*]

Total revenues are approximately \$17,500 above budget due primarily to a generous donation from a client of Larry. Expenses year-to-date are approximately \$1,500 under budget. The net is that, so far, SMRA is having a good year—we are roughly \$19,000 better than budget.

Development Report—Valerie Lyle

[Reference handout: *Membership and Fund Drive Report as of June 4, 2018.*] The number of SMRA chapter members is 502 and there are 503 joint NAS/SMRA members. Total membership is up by 47 over December, 2017.

A letter received from a fund drive donor was read to the board. The letter expressed thanks to SMRA for its positive impacts on the local environment and praised the donation appeal letter and personal PS (from Tom Ruth) for effectively communicating how SMRA is making a difference. Larry moved that the board require all future donation appeals to be PS'd by Tom. This motion was not brought to the floor as there was no second.

Overall, the annual appeal is a little behind where we were at this point in 2017. The quilt raffle and showing of the film "Albatross" have brought in significant donations.

Seed Sale—Ken Novenstern

Remaining seed and suet is available for sale at a 25% discount. The October seed sale date will be October 13, 2018. Hours will be 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The location will be behind the Town of New Castle Town Hall.

Executive Director's Report—Anne Swaim

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been signed with the Rewilding School for the use of Brinton Brook Sanctuary for the Forest Preschool, which will take place three days per week from September through June. As part of the agreement, SMRA will receive a \$1,000 donation. Brinton sessions will be limited to 10 preschool students with a maximum of two vehicles to be parked in the Brinton parking lot. Families of Rewilding School students are encouraged to become SMRA sanctuary trail walkers and to participate in sanctuary workdays. The Rewilding School has provided SMRA with an insurance liability certificate. A separate MOU will be developed for the Chappaqua Preschool for their use of the Pruyn Sanctuary.

On May 24, Anne and Charlie Roberto met with Director of Westchester County Parks Mark Tabor and Director of Conservation Jason Klein at Croton Point Park to review areas of concern. Parks management will meet regularly (probably bi-monthly) with SMRA. On May 30, Anne and Karalyn Lamb met with several County staff about the Croton Point Park grassland restoration project. Meadow specialist Larry Weaner designed the plan; a RFP is being prepared for its implementation. The Westchester County Soil and Water Conservation District—not the Parks Department—is overseeing this project with Robert Doscher, District Manager/Principal Environmental Planner for the Westchester County Soil and Water Conservation District/Westchester Planning Department is the project coordinator.

The Lunetta Explorer Bags program is moving forward with an anticipated launch date of June 22. So far, six public libraries have signed up to participate: Chappaqua, Ossining, Croton, Mount Kisco, Peekskill and Montrose. We are planning to deliver the backpacks to the libraries on June 15. An additional \$500 for this project was donated by Pam Thornton, Chappaqua Library Director.

The Federated Conservationists of Westchester County meeting on June 7 will honor all five Westchester County Audubon chapters to commemorate this year's 100th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Anne and Tom R. are planning to attend as is County Executive George Latimer. The County Executive will read a proclamation—written by county Audubon representatives including Anne Swaim—recognizing 2018 as "Year of the Bird." These municipal proclamations are part of a National Audubon effort to focus attention on the MBTA.

Sanctuaries—Michael Madias

Tree plantings have recently taken place at Brinton Brook and Graff Sanctuaries. In each case, 75 white spruces were planted. Upcoming work will include adding gravel to the parking lot at Haas Sanctuary and reblazing the trails at Choate Sanctuary.

Pruyn Garden and Arboretum—Donna Lassiter

The demonstration native grass and perennial meadow that was recently planted on what had been a lawn at Pruyn Sanctuary is doing well so far. Anti-deer spray is being applied to the new plantings.

Programs and Field Trips—Debbie van Zyl

Please see the SMRA website for upcoming summer events.

Nature Book Club—Kathleen Williamson

We will discuss *Birding without Borders* on Tuesday, June 19; *What the Robin Knows* will be discussed on September 25. The Book Club meets alternate months at the Mount Pleasant Public Library in Pleasantville at 7:00 pm.

Hospitality—Jean Sparacin and Joanne McAuley

The board expressed thanks to Jean Sparacin for coordinating the food for another fabulous SMRA picnic; the weather gods were also thanked for defying the forecast and providing a lovely evening. Grill masters Rudy, Greg and Michael received a round of applause for their excellent work over the hot fire. Ed Mertz was thanked for sharing his outstanding nature photographs.

Adjournment—Valerie Lyle

Ken, with Kathleen seconding, moved that the meeting be adjourned. The board, with all present voting affirmatively, approved adjourning the meeting at 7:55 pm.