

**October 15, 2018 Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting at the Croton Point County Park Nature Center, Croton-on-Hudson, NY**

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

ABSENT: Bill, Rik, Jean, Larry

Meeting started at 7:25 pm.

**President's Report—Valerie Lyle**

- Cary moved with Lynn seconding that minutes of the September 10 board meeting be approved. The motion was adopted with all present voting in favor.
- Ellen (and Phil) Heidelberg will be traveling during the month of November. The SMRA office will be closed on Mondays in November.
- Valerie noted that the end-of-year Fund Drive letters will be sent in December and all board members are encouraged to make an annual donation at any level of giving. There will be follow-up letters to large donors to PS at our December board meeting.
- Two new inserts from the Finance Committee were distributed for replacement of existing documents in board members' handbook.
- We are still gathering bids for repainting some areas of the residence at Pruyn House as well as portions of the outside front of the house. Two more bids are pending.
- The 2018-19 Nominating Committee chaired by Bill Kellner with two off-board members, Jim Gmelin and Ed Mertz, was affirmed by board vote.

**Finance Committee—Philip Heidelberg**

As of October 1, 2018, the portfolio balance was \$1,007,682, a \$40,250 (4.2%) increase above the January 1, 2018 balance of \$967,432. So far during 2018 there have been \$4,180 in withdrawals from and \$500 in additions to the endowment. The markets have experienced noticeable losses this month, and the portfolio balance on October 14, 2018 was \$969,269 a \$1,837 (0.3%) increase YTD. As of October 1st, we are \$37,732 (27.1%) above our guideline to maintain two years of budgeted expenses in highly liquid assets such as checking and money market funds.

**Weinstein Donation Committee—Philip Heidelberg**

Our pro bono attorney at the law firm of McCarter and English has succeeded in meeting with the Weinstein's attorney and Martin Weinstein. They discussed the financial information we requested and they are preparing a schedule of the expenses of maintaining the property. Our pending concern is that there not be an expectation of an expedited decision and legal process before the end of 2018 since more time would be needed by SMRA to consider tax implications and those financials, once received.

**Treasurer's Report—Tom McEnerney**

[Reference handout: *Operating Revenues and Expenses for the nine months ended September 30, 2018.*]

Total revenues have been above budget due to a generous gift from a client of Larry Trachtenberg and receipts for the California birding trip. Expenses remain close to budgeted amounts. However, with the expenses of the California trip and the second bird seed bill for delivery to Town Hall, we anticipate a significant withdrawal from the endowment fund during October.

**Bylaws Committee Report —Tom McEnerney**

The law firm working on the changes to the bylaws has not yet had time to review and respond to our pending work.

Tom also noted that our 2017 audit has been completed and copies are available in the SMRA office.

**Development Report—Valerie Lyle**

[Reference handout: *Membership and Donation Report as of Oct 13, 2018.*] As noted above, we will be PS'ing follow-up letters to larger donors in December.

**Seed Sale—Ken Novenstern**

Our one-day seed sale pickup at the Town Hall in Chappaqua on Saturday October 13 went well despite morning rain with all but one expected order picked up. Starbucks provided coffee and Pizza Station provided two orders of two pizzas each across the day. Our revenues to date are slightly less than expenses, which puts us on track for the coming year with additional sales going to profit. A sign-up sheet was circulated asking for board members to help at our 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday sale in November.

**Executive Director's Report—Anne Swaim**

- Anne, along with Karalyn Lamb and Charlie Roberto are continuing to review plans for the Croton Point landfill restoration project. We have concerns with the lack of staging for the project with the entire landfill currently slated for herbicide treatment in one year. A “60%” meeting is scheduled for Wed October 24 with all involved agencies at which Karalyn Lamb will present our concerns. However, Anne Swaim and Tom Ruth have a conflict that morning with a special H2H event (see below). Val Lyle may be able to attend with Karalyn. Karalyn, Charlie, Anne and John Phillips will be meeting in the coming week to plan our written response to the current plans.
- We have submitted a grant application to ConEdison to fund follow-up classroom visits for all eighteen sixth grade classes from the Ossining School District participating in the Connect Kids to Parks field trips this month to Rockefeller State Park Preserve.
- Kyle Bardwell has suggested that SMRA recognize Mariandale's efforts to establish a conservation easement on the river frontage of their property with a framed photograph of one of the waterfowl that are seen in this area of the Hudson with an attached plaque thanking Mariandale for protecting bird habitat. This idea was well received by the board and Anne will follow up on it.
- We have been asked to once again host the January 2019 New York Young Birders Club kickoff event to be held at Mariandale. Anne asked if the board would support this event again up to \$400. Approved.
- A new event idea is a fall soup potluck on Saturday, November 10 to coincide with the kickoff of the Project FeederWatch season led weekly on Saturdays and Sundays at Croton Point Nature Center through April. Debbie, Ginger and Joanne will assist.

**Advocacy—Tom Ruth**

- Tom reported on his attendance at the FCWC gathering in early October where National Audubon President David Yarnold was given an award. One other Westchester Audubon chapter was represented.
- The Hudson to Housatonic Regional Conservation Partnership's next training will be “Using eBird to Monitor, Inform, and Engage,” on October 24th, at Greenwich Audubon. Anne Swaim is the speaker. Two identical sessions will be offered from 9:00-11:00am and 4:00-6:00pm including both a classroom and field component. All SMRA board members are welcome to attend. See email to come for registration information.
- The Audubon New York fall council meeting will take place in Lake Placid. Anne and Valerie are planning to attend.
- SMRA was a signatory on a letter from Save our Sound commenting on concerns with the US Army Corps of Engineers preliminary planning for storm barriers in the NYC harbor. See email sent following our September board meeting for more details.

**Sanctuaries—Michael Madias**

- On Saturday, October 27, 9:00am, there will be a Trees-for-Tribs planting of native trees and shrubs at Brinton Brook Sanctuary.
- Anne and Michael will be working together to put up deer management program signs at Brinton Brook, Pruyn and Choate prior to the start of our November 1 to December 31 program dates.
- Michael will be following up on the Brinton Brook spring crossing rock work in the coming months.
- Ken noted the popularity of the event offered by the Westchester Orienteering Club at Westmoreland Sanctuary and suggested this might be an audience to engage with our sanctuaries. One limitation at Brinton Brook is parking; another is someone with time and interest to champion this idea for SMRA.

**Pruyn Garden and Arboretum—Donna Lassiter**

Donna noted that she gave a tour of our gardens to a professor at SUNY Purchase who plans to establish a native plant area on that campus. She will also be offering a tour next summer for the Yorktown Garden Club. Many of the visitors at our two open garden days are homeowners planning to add native plants to their property. Donna and Anne will be jointly presenting our November public program with the topic focused on “Plants for Birds.”

**Programs and Field Trips—Anne Swaim for Debbie van Zyl**

- Debbie thanked Brian for presenting Wildlife of Ecuador on September 25. (Brian also presented this program afterwards for Rockland Audubon.) Our next public program will feature an author talk and book signing for the new book *Birding the Hudson Valley* on October 21 at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center.
- The Nature Book Club, hosted by board member Kathleen Williamson, will discuss *Genius of Place: The Life of Frederick Law Olmstead* on Tuesday, November 6. The following date will be Tuesday, January 15, for a discussion of *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert.
- Our upcoming field trip on Saturday October 20 will be shifted to a joint field trip with Jack Rothman at Pelham Bay given the forecast for Saturday.

**Newsletter—Brian Kluepfel**

Brian thanked board members for their newsletter contributions and will be seeking contributions for the winter newsletter which has a deadline of November 1.

**Adjournment—Valerie Lyle**

Thanks were given to all who brought refreshments to tonight’s meeting. It was suggested that the signup sheet be circulated in email to remind people of their chosen dates.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 am.