

DRAFT
New York State Ornithological Association, Inc.
November 16, 2013
Hudson Valley Community College Science Center, Troy, NY

The Board of Directors of the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc. (NYSOA) met at the Hudson Valley Community College Science Center in Troy, NY, on November 16, 2013. The meeting was called to order by President Kathy Schneider at 9:30am.

Present were Janet Allison, Linda Benedict, **Jeff Bolsinger**, Barbara Butler, **Joan Collins**, **Bill Ostrander**, **Carena Pooth**, **Kathy Schneider**, and Bob Spahn. **Seth Ausubel**, **Tim Baird**, **Mike DeSha**, Berna Lincoln, Andy Mason (partial), **Shai Mitra**, Richard Tkachuck, Cyndy Tkachuck, and **Mary Beth Warburton** attended via teleconference.

Summary of Action Items:

Approved July 13, 2013, Board meeting minutes as presented. (Item 1)

Approved the appointment of the Executive Committee for 2013-2014, to include Kathy Schneider, Carena Pooth, and Mike DeSha. (Item 3)

1. Approval of Minutes: Joan Collins made a motion to accept the July 13, 2013, minutes as presented. Carena Pooth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
2. Treasurer's Report: Andy Mason's report (posted on the boardplus page of the website) includes the Balance Sheet, General Operating Fund Activity, and Fund Balances through September 30, 2013. Berna Lincoln noted that the expenses listed for *The Kingbird* and *New York Birders* were only for three issues, not four.
3. President's Report: Kathy Schneider gave the report. She noted that she appreciated being elected and hoped to use the boardplus page effectively for communication. She requested that all Board members keep her informed if they are away and unavailable to participate in meetings or discussions. She proposed the Executive Committee for the coming year would include Kathy Schneider, Carena Pooth, and Mike DeSha. Mary Beth Warburton made a motion to approve the slate; Joan Collins seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The Committee List was reviewed. The list will be updated and posted on the boardplus page. There was discussion about the need for more attention to Marketing and Publicity, including Field Trips, and Membership development. Issues discussed involved perceived competition with local clubs, the state-wide efforts that make NYSOA different, and relevance of our efforts as compared to larger organizations such as the Cornell Lab of Ornithology or New York Audubon. It was agreed that these were overlapping areas of concern but that Marketing/Publicity and Membership needed to remain separate committees as designated in the bylaws. Bill Ostrander suggested a strategic planning meeting was needed to assess the "changing landscape" of birding in the state. Mary Beth Warburton will chair the Marketing and Publicity Committee and asked individuals to compile their thoughts and send them to her as a basis for framing the discussion. Field trips under discussion for the coming year include Bashakill for ducks, Point Peninsula, a Long Island trip, a summer Loon trip, and Montezuma NWR.
4. DEC Report: Marcelo del Puerto of the Wildlife Diversity Section of the Habitat Conservation, Access, and Acquisition Unit of the DEC gave a report. The Landowner Incentive Program, now five years old, gives technical advice and financial assistance to private landowners to create and protect habitat for at-risk species, especially grassland birds. There are currently 6000 acres protected in 14 lots plus another 1500 acres through the Conservation Reserve Program (Farm Service). Landowners get \$110 per acre, assistance with site management, and receive yearly inspections. They were able to renew the first round of sites with State Wildlife Grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which has to be matched 50% by the state. A second cycle of

applications has just been completed and they expect up to 40 contracts could be signed, although this may be more than they can handle. Grassland focus areas are mostly in Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties, the Mohawk Valley, and the Southern Tier as these areas have large 200+ acre fields. However, they would also like to get some representation in Washington County and the Fort Edward area, buffers around Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and Nature Conservancy properties, some lands in the Shawangunk Grasslands area, and some on Long Island. They may reduce the minimum size of 25 acres in order to attract applications in these areas. The DEC is also involved in a project to create and protect habitat on private lands for Golden-winged Warblers (GWWA). Funding is available through the F&WS and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Working Lands for Wildlife program but is dependent on passage of the Farm Bill. The DEC is petitioning NRCS and F&WS to include the Great Lakes population cluster of GWWA (Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties) as a priority because it provides a connection between western New York and Vermont populations. Del Puerto noted that it is difficult to differentiate GWWA habitat from Blue-winged Warbler habitat but that we need to try, and asked that we support this effort.

5. Committee Reports:

Annual Meeting: Seth Ausubel gave a report on the November 2-4, 2013, Annual Meeting. He received much positive feedback from attendees and the Board. They had 165 registrants and had to turn away over 30 people. Final financials were not yet available but QCBC made approximately \$10,500, including \$7000 from donations. A check has been sent to NYSOA to cover the outstanding loan. The planning group is considering gathering Powerpoint presentations from the conference and putting them on the nybirdersconference.org website. There was discussion about continuing to use the Birders Conference graphics and branding developed for this meeting.

Archives: Linda Benedict gave the report. The documents for 2012 are ready to go to Cornell.

Awards: Kathy Schneider gave the report. She is looking for someone to chair this committee. She asked the Stoner committee that was formed at the September Board meeting, consisting of Kevin Griffith (chair), Shai Mitra, Richard Tkachuck, Mary Beth Warburton, Linda Clark Benedict, and Carena Pooth, to develop and document a recommendation to the Board for guidelines to select recipients of the Stoner Award by the April 2014 Board meeting. (Full charge to the committee available on the boardplus page.)

Bylaws: Bob Spahn had nothing to report. Berna Lincoln asked that all Board members read and understand the Bylaws.

Conservation: Kathy Schneider reported on a conference call between the DEC and Andy Mason, Gerry Smith, and herself that included discussion on cormorant management and changes to the upland game bird hunting season. Seth Ausubel reported on efforts of a coalition led by NYC Audubon to get the Park Service to restore the West Pond at Jamaica Bay NWR. He requested a letter of support from NYSOA to present at a meeting with the superintendent of Gateway National Recreation Area on November 26. Kathy agreed to try to find someone to attend the meeting and represent NYSOA. Joan Collins reported that the referendum on the mine land swap in the Adirondack Forest Preserve barely passed and has created much negative fallout among environmental organizations that were for or against its passage.

County Lists: Carena Pooth gave the report (details posted on boardplus). The listing form was published in the October newsletter. There is now a complete archive of all compilations on the website.

Finance: Berna Lincoln gave the report. She received a notice from the IRS about an incorrect Federal 990 form we submitted. Andy Mason sent them a corrected form and received assurances that this will be remedied. The membership form in the October newsletter incorrectly listed the cost of an individual membership at \$15. As the form is only used about a dozen times a year for renewals, she recommended that we accept the loss of dues unless it becomes a problem. She will be preparing the General Operating Fund budget and requested anyone who had new requests to get them to her soon.

Marketing and Publicity: See discussion under President's Report.

Membership: Barbara Butler reported three new members since the Annual Meeting, plus three new complimentary members. Berna Lincoln reported that renewal notices will go out in mid-December. Email notices will be used for about 50 people who renewed online last year and paper notices will include information on how to renew online.

NY eBird: Bob Spahn gave the report. (Summary history of NYSOA-eBird relationship posted on boardplus.) We do not need a separate New York portal, but we do need access to all of our unfiltered data in a timely manner to meet our publication deadlines, divided out by our traditional regions rather than counties. Kathy Schneider will approach John Fitzpatrick of the Cornell Lab about who to talk to about getting the access we need. There was discussion of the impact of eBird data collection on the nature of the regional reports for *The Kingbird*. Massive amounts of data are being collected, which is time-consuming to process; this is making it harder to find new regional editors. All would like to see more commentary and context in reports; there was a suggestion to create guidelines to help editors know what to think about and pay attention to in their reports.

NYSARC: No report.

NYSYBC: Carena Pooth gave the report (details posted on boardplus). We have 40 youth memberships, 37 supporting adult memberships, and 20 partner clubs. Ten of the youth members attended the Annual Meeting and two gave papers. Scholarships of \$100 each were given to the attendees. Fundraising was way down this year but \$3472 in scholarships was awarded.

Organizational Handbook: Mike DeSha gave the report. He needs the Finance Committee description for this important committee. Kathy Schneider submitted a description of the president's responsibilities.

Publications:

The Kingbird: Shai Mitra reported that the December issue was waiting on a regional report. The minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting will go in the March 2014 issue since the meeting was late in the year.

New York Birders: Richard Tkachuck gave the report. He will fix the error listing the renewal fee at \$15. Berna noted that there are three things that need to be in every issue, both print and electronic: the names and contact information of the Nominating Committee; the box about the availability of the checklist; and the renewal form. He and Cyndy will be away from mid-December to mid-January but will be editing articles while away if submitted. Manuscripts should be to them no later than January 15. Andy Mason will submit an article on conservation. Donna Schulman will submit a wrap-up article on the Annual Meeting. Kathy Schneider will submit an article as new president of NYSOA and will send Richard Tkachuck Marcelo del Puerto's contact information at the DEC for another article. Kathy reported that we will be offering members the option to take the e-version of the newsletter as they renew their memberships this year.

NYS Checklist: Carena Pooth reported that the new 2014 Checklist is available for sale (details on changes posted on boardplus).

Research: Bill Ostrander gave a report on the Waterfowl Count. He has gotten two years of missing data from Brian Swift, but needs two more. He has lost a compiler for Region 2 and needs suggestions on a replacement. Bob Spahn will try to find someone or will do it himself.

Website and Information Services: Carena Pooth gave the report (details posted on boardplus). Regarding the boardplus email list, she noted that there are limits to how many emails providers allow to be sent per hour. She has increased our limit to 750 per hour but asked that we not reply to all when not necessary. She has tightened up the list to only include Board members, club officers, the nominating committee, and committee chairs. With the Young Birders Club she has gone to a paid service because of the length of the list.

6. Old Business: Carena Pooth noted that she needed awards information for posting to the website. She has Stoner Award information but needs the Elliot Award information and any certificates of appreciation.

7. New Business:

Kathy will send a certificate of appreciation to the Queens County Bird Club for their sponsorship of the Annual Meeting.

Berna Lincoln raised the issue of the need for a dues increase. She noted that we have been using reserves to cover deficits for several years. Kathy will get an analysis of this by February Board meeting.

Dates and Locations of 2014 Board Meetings:

February 8 Southeast NY location TBD

April 5 Location TBD

July 19 Beaver Lake Nature Center (NW of Syracuse)

Sept. 19-21 Annual Meeting: Ithaca, NY

Nov. 15 Albany area location TBD

8. Adjournment: Carena Pooth made a motion to adjourn. Bill Ostrander seconded, and it passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Allison