

New York State Ornithological Association, Inc.
July 19, 2014
Beaver Lake Nature Center, Baldwinsville, NY

The Board of Directors of the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc. (NYSOA) met at the Beaver Lake Nature Center in Baldwinsville, NY, on July 19, 2014. The meeting was called to order by President Kathy Schneider at 9:30am.

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

Summary of Action Items:

- Approved the April 5, 2014, Board meeting minutes as amended. (Item 1)
 - Approved a motion that Kathy Schneider write a letter to initiate a conversation about the next Breeding Bird Atlas between the DEC, Cornell/eBird, and NYSOA. (Item 4)
 - Approved a motion to give a Stoner Award to a student to attend the September Annual Meeting. (Item 5 Awards)
 - Approved a motion to accept the Finance Committee's recommendation to raise dues effective for the 2015 membership year. (Item 5 Finance)
 - Approved a motion to spend \$200 maximum for a Facebook ad for the NYSOA Annual Meeting/Birders Conference. (Item 5 Marketing and Publicity)
 - Approved a motion to approve provisionally the reinstatement of the Audubon Society of the Capitol Region pending receipt of dues. (Item 5 Membership)
1. **Approval of Minutes:** Carena Pooth made a motion to approve the April 5, 2014, Board meeting minutes with the addition of the term ending date December 31, 2016, to the appointment of Angus Wilson and Jim Pawlicki to NYSARC. Bill Ostrander seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
 2. **Treasurer's Report:** Andy Mason submitted reports for March 31 and June 30, 2014 (posted on boardplus). He noted there was \$1458 in donations made in memory of Manny Levine. He will take \$5000 from a CD about to mature and put it into the checking account, then the balance will be put into another CD.
 3. **President's Report:** Kathy Schneider gave the report. Kathy responded to Bryan Swift of the DEC, declining NYSOA involvement in the Mute Swan task force and noted that they plan to rewrite their proposed management plan based on public comments. She had a discussion with Arie Gilbert of Queens County Bird Club about splitting profits from the 2013 Annual Meeting. She noted the importance of profit-sharing arrangements being spelled out in advance for future meetings. Kathy reported that Barbara Butler has submitted her resignation as circulation manager. A description of the position is posted on boardplus. She also noted the need for new editors for the newsletter after the fall issue. Mary Beth will speak to John Thaxton about becoming editor.

Kathy had correspondence with Chris Wood of the Lab of Ornithology regarding our need for data downloads from eBird divided by our historic regional boundaries instead of by counties. She reported that they do not want to do them because of higher priorities. In addition, they need to limit downloads due to concerns about potential system security and performance

impacts. Those present in the meeting discussed the importance of maintaining the regional boundaries and we now have a 60-year old data set using them. Shai suggested that, since the county data comes labeled with latitude and longitude, we could do a simple GIS code selection to extract what we need. Other concerns raised were (a) that the eBird system invalidates some reports and omits them from downloads while we need all records, not a selection of them; and (b) the unevenness of the screening process and screeners. Kathy will try to arrange a private meeting with Chris Wood at the upcoming Annual Meeting to include Seth Ausubel, Jeff Bolsinger, Shai Mitra, Bill Ostrander, Bob Spahn, Dave Wheeler, and Angus Wilson. Kathy and Bob Spahn, current eBird committee chair, will develop talking points for the meeting and Kathy will share the screeners list she received from Chris.

4. **DEC Report:** Kathy Schneider gave the report. She spoke to Gordon Batcheller of the DEC and learned that they have the needed money to do the next Breeding Bird Atlas. Some money requires a match but labor and documentation could be used as the match. There was discussion about getting NYSOA included in shaping the process and what our role should be. Bob Spahn noted our ability to mobilize volunteers. Kevin Griffith made a motion that Kathy write a letter to initiate a conversation about the Atlas among the DEC, Cornell/eBird, and NYSOA. Carena Pooth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
5. **Committee Reports:**

Annual Meetings: Tim Baird had nothing to report. Kathy Schneider reported that Cayuga Bird Club was doing well with 38 people already signed up for the September Annual Meeting in Ithaca. For 2015, Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club has a speaker, Jon Dunn, lined up, and that it would be the first weekend in October, but they had no venue yet.

Awards: Kevin Griffith reported that there was one nomination for the Stoner Award from the Linnaean Society and the New York State Young Birders Club. Kathy Schneider made a motion to award \$300 to the student to attend the Annual Meeting; Kevin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Kevin will notify the Society and the student; Carena will do the certificate; Andy will get frames and checks to be given at the meeting; and Kevin will do the presentation at the meeting.

Bill Ostrander will work with Carena on Certificates of Appreciation for the Annual Meeting. Included are the Town of Lansing for their work on Salt Point, the Tkachucks for their two years of work as editors of *NYBirders*, and Cayuga Bird Club for hosting the Annual Meeting. Jeff Bolsinger is getting the name of the people who hosted the Willow Ptarmigan on Point Peninsula. Bill will present the certificates to those present at the annual meeting. Shai Mitra has a list of candidates for the Elliott Award and will send them to the committee (Bob Spahn and Angus Wilson). Shai will present at the Annual Meeting; he needs a check for \$100.

Bylaws: Berna Lincoln had nothing to report.

Conservation: Andy Mason gave the report. He wrote a letter to NYS DEC regarding beach stabilization on the south shore of Long Island and its impact on shorebirds, encouraging less reliance on berms and dunes and more on natural slopes, and another letter to the USFWS in support of designating the Red Knot as a threatened species. Seth Ausubel wrote an article for the newsletter on the review process for the desired West Pond restoration in Jamaica Bay. The Park Service is taking comments through July 30. Seth and Shai will draft comments for NYSOA and give to Andy for him to submit. Andy also reported that the DEC has released a Black Skimmer management plan. He will work with Seth and Shai to submit comments from NYSOA.

There was discussion as to whether NYSOA should get involved in a controversy over legal crow hunts in Greene County. Concerns included whether there is an effect on crow populations, getting NYSOA involved in an emotional controversy over a legal action, and the unnecessary killing of birds for entertainment. Kathy will approach Kevin McGowan to find out if there is any evidence that it impacts crow populations and Andy will investigate past legislative attempts to stop it.

Finance: Berna Lincoln gave the report. The committee made a recommendation to raise dues effective for the 2015 membership year as the \$28 individual rate does not cover the cost of publications and services provided to members. In order to increase income by \$1000-\$1500 per year, the committee requested that dues be adjusted as follows:

Individual	\$30 (formerly \$28)
Family	\$35 (formerly \$30)
Contributing	\$50 (unchanged)
Kingbird Club	\$100 (unchanged)
Student	\$17 (formerly \$15)
Postage surcharge	\$10 Canada and Mexico; \$20 all other non-U.S. addresses (unchanged)

Mike DeSha made the motion to accept the Committee's recommendation to raise dues; Bill Ostrander seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Also discussed was creating an option to renew for two years; a decision was deferred until next year. The possibility of raising member club and organization dues was referred to the Finance Committee to make a recommendation. Berna noted that the \$1458 donated in memory of Manny Levine, shown in the treasurer's report in the General Operating Fund, has traditionally been placed in the General Memorial Fund. Other possibilities were considered including, because of Manny's commitment to *The Kingbird*, establishing a fund to offset the gap in income due to the cost of publishing the journal. The Committee will discuss and make a recommendation at the November Board meeting.

Marketing and Publicity: This Committee needs a chairperson. Online advertising was discussed. Carena suggested Facebook ads, which she could set up, where you pay depending on the number of displays, specifying a maximum daily budget. Kathy Schneider made a motion to spend \$200 maximum on a Facebook ad for the NYSOA Annual Meeting/Birders Conference. Carena seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Seth Ausubel will look into ads that can generate income for NYSOA.

Promoting membership in NYSOA at the Annual Meeting was discussed, and overcoming the divided loyalty between local bird clubs and the state organization. We need to get the message out as to why NYSOA is important and why it is an advantage to join. Andy and Mary Beth will help at the Annual Meeting registration to promote membership; Kathy will contact Donna Scott of Cayuga Bird Club to set this up and ask that individual members of NYSOA be identified as such on their name tags. We discussed developing materials to pass out at the meeting and at nature centers or places birders congregate (brochure/postcard/business cards are possibilities). Carena will develop a business card for people to give other birders they meet in the field. We also discussed holding a gathering for life members and other friends of NYSOA or a special reception for NYSOA members at a future Annual Meeting. We should request the host club give us the registration list with emails and addresses after an Annual Meeting.

Field trips: Tim Baird cancelled a proposed trip to the Roger Tory Peterson Institute in Jamestown because of low response; he may try again at a better time of year. Seth will lead a trip on Long Island on the last weekend in September (noted on the website). Mary Beth would like to develop a trip on Adirondack loons, although too late for this year.

Membership: Barbara Butler reported that total membership had gone under the 500 mark, with a 13% loss from July 2013. With 38 new members, there's a net loss of 5% of members. The emailed version of *New York Birders* is now going to 170 members. All 41 member organizations have renewed but we are waiting for a check from the Audubon Society of the Capitol Region. Berna Lincoln requested a motion "to approve provisionally the reinstatement of the ASCR pending receipt of dues." Mike DeSha made the motion; Kathy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Full membership must be voted on at the Annual Meeting business meeting.

Berna Lincoln noted a need to send an acknowledgment to Micky Levine of everything Life Member Manny Levine had done for NYSOA. Kathy will do this. Berna also noted that member clubs that receive e-NYB may be forwarding it to all of their own members and this may have an impact on NYSOA getting new members. She specified that the newsletter should always include a membership form. Carena will add a request to the eNYB cover email that it not be forwarded.

NYSARC: Angus Wilson's report is posted on boardplus.

NYSYBC: Carena Pooth's report is posted on boardplus. She made a new chart to show the gender division of the youth membership (heavily male); the locations the membership comes from is unchanged, centered in the NYC metro area; the age demographic has changed with more younger members. There are now 42 paid up youth memberships and all partner organizations are paid up. Fundraising has been better than last year with monies from the World Series of Birding and large donations from Sullivan County Audubon and Praxair. Over \$4000 was raised for the scholarship fund this year. Shai Mitra did a great trip for them at Sterling Forest. She developed a half-hour presentation on the YBC, shown to the Waterman Bird Club and available to others to show.

Nominating Committee: Mike DeSha gave the report on the slate of officers and directors to be presented for approval at the Annual Meeting for the 2014-15 year. Joan Collins will be leaving the Board as will Shai Mitra. The slate of officers and directors will be:

President	Kathy Schneider
Vice-President	Carena Pooth
Recording Secretary	Celeste Morien
Treasurer	Andy Mason
Director	Derek Rogers
Director	Greg Lawrence
Director	Mike DeSha
Director	Kevin Griffith
Director	Bill Ostrander

Organizational Handbook: Mike DeSha gave the report. Barbara Butler gave him a description of responsibilities for Membership/Circulation Manager. He still needs a Finance Committee description from Berna.

Publications:

New York Birders: October 1 is the deadline for submissions for the next issue. This will be the last issue for Richard and Cyndy; new editors are needed.

The Kingbird: Bob Spahn noted that new *Kingbird* regional editors are needed for Regions 4 and 7.

Research: Bill Ostrander reported that results of the winter Waterfowl Count will appear in the June issue of *The Kingbird*. He received two years of missing data from the DEC.

Website and Information Services: Carena Pooth gave the report, posted on boardplus. She added an announcement about the Annual Meeting on the Home page. She purchased Spider-Oak, a file-storage and -sharing service for club documents on the personal computers of Andy Mason, Barbara Butler, and herself at a cost of \$90 per year for 100GB of storage. She also found there was a non-profit rate of 3.9 cents for Accu-Conference calls, better than the 4.9 cents we've been paying, and made the switch. She purchased and tested a digital line adaptor for the conference phone; it was used for the first time during today's meeting.

6. **Old Business:** None.
7. **New Business:** Kathy will identify Auditing and Nominating Committee candidates for 2014-15 with the Executive Committee. These slates need to be voted on at the Annual Meeting.
8. **Adjournment:** Carena Pooth made a motion to adjourn; Kevin Griffith seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:29pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Allison
11/11/14