

**New York State Ornithological Association, Inc.**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
February 4, 2017

The Board of Directors of the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc. (NYSOA) met by teleconference on February 4, 2017. The meeting was called to order by President **Joan Collins** at 9:31 AM. Present on the phone were **Joan Collins, Seth Ausubel, Greg Lawrence, Shirley Shaw, Bob Spahn, Kathy Schneider, Carena Pooth, Rich Guthrie, Doug Futuyma**, Andy Mason, Berna Lincoln, Mary Beth Warburton, John Kent, Tim Baird, and Michael DeSha.

**Summary of Action Items:**

- Approved amended minutes from November 5, 2016 Board meeting
- Approved proposed 2017 NYSOA budget with one amendment
- Approved appointment of Patricia Lindsay to NYSARC for the term 1/1/2017 – 12/31/2019
- Approved appointment of Willie D’Anna as NYSARC Chair for the remainder of his current term as a NYSARC member (through 12/31/17)

**Secretary’s Report** – John Kent

After discussion and minor revisions, Shirley Shaw made a motion to approve the November 5, 2016 minutes as amended. Carena Pooth seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**President’s Report** – Joan Collins

Joan reported on her recent NYSOA activities, which included working with the committees. The Audit Committee will need a new member, as John Cairns is planning to retire. Joan held a call with the Finance Committee to discuss the proposed 2017 budget. She has been in frequent contact with Bob Adamo regarding nominations. She has also been working with Dan Rosenblatt of DEC on the Breeding Bird Atlas (BBAIII) project. Joan provided information on the upcoming February NYSOA Oswego field trip to Carena and Greg for the NYSOA website and Facebook, and also publicized it on the listservs. Joan wrote two letters in December to accompany renewal notices — one for individual members, and one for member organizations.

**Treasurer’s Report** – Andy Mason

Andy provided written year-end reports, including a balance sheet, general operating fund activity summary, and fund balances. Last year’s budget included a projected deficit of almost \$15,000, but the actual amount of deficit spending was under \$2,000. The difference was due largely to the fact that fewer issues of *The Kingbird* were produced than had been budgeted for.

**Committee Reports:**

**Auditing Committee -**

Joan Collins reported for the committee. The only news to report is that John Cairns will be retiring and will need to be replaced on the committee.

**Annual Meeting** – Kathy Schneider

Kathy reports that preparations for the 2017 Annual Meeting in Niagara Falls are proceeding on schedule and going well. The hotel has a view of the Niagara River. The organizers are talking with the Buffalo Museum of Science to discuss ways to involve the museum with the meeting.

**Archive** – no report

**Awards** -

There was a discussion regarding candidates for this year's certificates of appreciation.

**Bylaws** – Berna Lincoln

Nothing to report.

**Conservation** – Andy Mason

NYSOA has recently commented to the US Coast Guard about the proposal for increased anchorage areas for petroleum-laden vessels in the Hudson River, and to the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) about the Boreas Ponds land classification issue. Joan reports that 90% of the comments that APA received regarding Boreas Ponds favored a wilderness designation, but that the governor and the local officials believe that access for motorized recreation is important for economic development in the Adirondacks. The Conservation Committee expects to set up a meeting soon with Tony Wilkinson, the new Director of Fish & Wildlife at DEC. Greg Lawrence reports that he is working with DEC on a new statewide grassland bird management program. Doug Futuyama and Seth Ausubel report that the breach of the West Pond at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge has been filled, and work is progressing to restore the pond. However, it is not clear whether there are plans to provide a supply of fresh water to the pond. There is also a need to restore vegetation around the pond that was killed by salt water during Sandy, otherwise phragmites and other invasives will prevail. Mary Beth Warburton reported on the proposed North Ridge Wind Farm in St. Lawrence County, in an area that is heavily used by migrating flocks of Snow Geese and Canada Geese, as well as Bald Eagles. Mary Beth will be working on her own to document bird life in the area. NYSOA will comment when the public comment period opens. Greg Lawrence reports that a large hotel has been proposed for Goat Island, within Niagara Falls State Park. This would have significant negative effects on the bird habitat at a world-class gull hotspot, and the committee should keep informed and comment as needed. Doug Futuyama suggested that NYSOA should oppose the nomination of Scott Pruitt as EPA Administrator, and the board agreed. The committee will write to New York's senators urging them to oppose Pruitt's confirmation.

**Field Trips** – Mary Beth Warburton

The Oswego field trip for February 25-26 has seven participants so far. Mary Beth has been in touch with the proprietor of a local website in Oswego (iheartoswego.com). They will be publicizing the event, and will send a photographer along on the trip. A Snowy Owl has been in the Oswego area recently. The committee is also planning an August shorebird trip to Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. The date will depend on Kevin McGowan's availability.

**County Listing** – Carena Pooth

45 reports have been received so far for 2016 county listing.

**Finance** – Mike DeSha

Some changes were made in the proposed 2017 budget based on actual 2016 costs. Mike pointed out that the budget is a spending guideline, and is not cast in concrete. The budget includes six issues of

*The Kingbird*, although only four were produced in 2016. Carena reported that the website line item needs to include web hosting, which will add \$160 to the \$60 that was in the budget. This change was made to the proposed budget. Rich Guthrie moved to accept the budget as amended. Doug Futuyma seconded it. There was a discussion about when the board needs to take measures to address the deficit in the annual budget. If we spend as much as budgeted this year, it will need to be addressed next year, as the general operating fund is dwindling. The largest expense is printing and distributing *The Kingbird*. After this brief discussion, the board voted unanimously to approve adoption of the budget.

### **Marketing/Publicity -**

Joan Collins reported that we are still without a Marketing/Publicity chair and we are seeking a volunteer. Ideally it would be someone with some background in this area.

### **Facebook – Greg Lawrence**

Greg advises that he is always looking for submissions of material for the NYSOA Facebook page. Greg will post reminders about the upcoming NYSOA field trip, and about the county listing project.

### **Membership/Circulation – Berna Lincoln**

We currently have 498 annual memberships, about the same as a year ago. 429 of those are due for renewal now. The renewal notices are at the printer and should go out by around February 11. Forty-eight members have already renewed on their own, some of them because they were reminded when they went to submit their county listing data online. The form requires you to state that you are a paid 2017 member of NYSOA. A volunteer is needed to take over as Circulation Manager, which involves management of the membership database. The database is currently in the form of a spreadsheet, but will likely be moved to an online membership database management program in the near future. Anyone interested in this position should contact Berna.

### **Nominating -**

Joan Collins reported for Bob Adamo. She reports that the committee is looking for a nominee for the next President. Any suggestions should be sent to the committee.

### **Young Birders Club – Carena Pooth**

Carena submitted a written report, which includes a list of awards that were presented at the meeting. Forty-four young birders have renewed or joined so far in 2017, and membership is expected to remain in the range of 50 to 60. The club had their annual kickoff meeting in January, hosted by Saw Mill River Audubon at Mariandale Conference Center. The meeting was very successful, and included presentations by four of the young birders. One popular feature of the meeting was the book swap, where birding-related books are made available to the participants. If people have books to donate for next year's meeting, they should contact Carena. Greg Lawrence offered to lead a Young Birders Club walk in April at Montezuma. Carena is always open to suggestions for field trips.

### **NYSARC -**

Joan Collins reports that she has appointed Patricia Lindsay to a term on NYSARC, replacing Angus Wilson, whose term expired at the end of 2016. Patricia's term will be 1/1/17 to 12/31/19. Doug Futuyma made a motion to approve the appointment, and it was seconded by Bob Spahn. The motion passed unanimously. Joan also appointed Willie D'Anna as Chair of NYSARC for the remainder of his current term as a NYSARC member, which is through 12/31/17. Shirley Shaw moved to approve Willie's appointment. Rich Guthrie seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Berna pointed out

that there is one NYSARC member who has not paid his NYSOA dues in two years and does not respond to repeated reminders, which makes him ineligible for the committee. Joan will make another attempt to contact him about it.

### **Organizational Handbook** – Mike DeSha

Mike reminds officers and committee members that he welcomes new material for the handbook. He suggests that if you have encountered problems or issues as part of your committee work, think about writing a summary of the issues and how they were addressed. It would be useful for others in the future.

### **Publications** – Seth Ausubel

*The Kingbird* continues to be behind schedule. The June 2016 issue went out recently. Seth once again brought up the need for the board to consider making electronic delivery of *The Kingbird* available as an option, since the printing and mailing are a major expense. Some discussion was held about the content and format of the regional reports, and whether changes are warranted in the age of widespread electronic reporting in real time. Bob Spahn explained the reasoning behind the current format, and the board did not feel the need to make changes. Joan is working on the January issue of *New York Birders*. Carena reported on changes in the 2017 issue of *Checklist of the Birds of New York State*. The changes are mostly due to American Ornithologists' Union taxonomy changes, and are detailed in Carena's written report to the board. The new checklists have been printed and are being distributed.

### **Research** – Greg Lawrence

Greg has nothing new to report. Joan Collins provided an update on the third Breeding Bird Atlas project (BBAIII). There is a lot of planning work to be done in the three years remaining, especially since we will be using eBird as a data portal for the first time. Joan heard from Dan Rosenblatt. Dan says that he is waiting for a grant to be approved to fund BBAIII, and that he is optimistic that it will be approved soon. Bob Spahn reports that he has made repeated attempts to engage Dan in planning discussions over the past year but with limited success. Bob is concerned that the planning process is behind where it should be. Joan is hopeful that recent organizational changes at DEC will enable Dan to devote some time to BBAIII soon.

### **Website** – Carena Pooth

Carena's written submission includes a detailed report on changes and updates to the website. Carena reports that she received a request to publicize an Ithaca meeting of the Eastern Bird Banding Association on the NYSOA website. She sought the board's opinion on how to handle requests to publicize events sponsored by organizations that are not affiliated with NYSOA. After some discussion, the board recommended that she decline the request. Agreeing to publicize other group's events would create a lot of extra website work, and would lead to many difficult decisions about which requests to reject. The board decided not to create a specific policy about this, since at some point there may be an event that we deem appropriate to post on our website.

### **DEC** – No report.

A representative of DEC is expected to attend our April board meeting.

### **New Business**

No update on the Wild Apricot membership management program at this time. The Membership/Circulation Committee is working on figuring out the roles of each of the people involved. The next step will be to put up a demonstration system on Wild Apricot's site so that the board can see it in action.

Joan mentioned the NYSOA speaker's bureau update. The listing now specifies that all of the speakers are NYSOA members. Rich Guthrie suggested that NYSOA consider requesting a fee each time a speaker is engaged through the bureau. The fee could be collected from the sponsoring organization by the speaker, and passed on to NYSOA. This will be discussed at a future date.

Rich Guthrie moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Bob Spahn, and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Kent  
Recording Secretary