

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF
FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL
A California Non-Profit Corporation

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Elephant Seal, A California Non-Profit Corporation, was held on February 27, 2002 at 2:00 p.m. at the Cavalier Plaza meeting room located at 250 San Simeon, California.

The following Directors were present: Mike Levy, Barbara Hernandez, Jutta Jacobs, Kathryn Karako, and Steve Franz. Directors not present Bill Johnson. Also present was Judy Burley, recording secretary. Guest speakers were Barbara Butz and Ben Bouldin.

President Mike Levy called the meeting to order. Steve Franz requested a copy of the office lease to review as noted in the previous minutes. Kathryn Karako verified the gifts had been sent to the retiring Board Members. A motion by Steve Franz to pass the Consent Agenda was approved unanimously. A copy of the Consent Agenda is attached hereto and made a part thereof. The Minutes were approved as read, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part thereof.

Kathryn presented a staff report with the initial subject discussed being, the business cards for Directors. Kathryn will print these on the office computer after completion of the grant requests. She also asked the Board for approval to mail the thank-you cards for the donations received from the Christmas "kindness of the heart" letter. Each Director received a copy of the thank you letter. An okay to send them was given to Kathryn. Barbara Hernandez noted how glad to find out that FES was receiving the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary award. The third item in the staff report corrected the count of the number of active members. The number recently received by Pat Bouldin was 350. The membership goal set for 2002 was 1000. The Board agreed to use doubling the membership in 2002 as a realistic goal.

Steve reported a bank balance of \$ 20,827.00 with all bills paid to date. Future funds to be received are in the amount of \$ 20,000.00. Kathryn is working on future funding through grants.

Barbara Butz was asked by Steve Franz to attend the Board Meeting to suggest items for future fundraising. She has served on the Board of the **CHAS PADDOCK ZOO**. Barbara had no previous experience with animals. Her first contact by the Board was during a lunch when they approached her on becoming a Board Member. Even with no knowledge of animals they felt her past experience would add something to the Board. She felt an infusion of new blood for any organization was important. They also hired someone experienced in marketing to help with their fundraising. A transition to promoting the zoo was implemented by the new curator. The Board Members number up to 15 at the maximum. The current number is 12. Docents also hold positions as Directors. Barbara felt the Board needed Directors who had skills in marketing.

Barbara felt the Elephant Seals at the Vista Point were a treasure. She felt many individuals would like the opportunity to support FES. Steve asked that she share some of their most successful fundraising programs or events. One of the mailing campaigns used is a "sock it to them" request sent prior to the holiday season in November. A request letter is sent to contributors in a small infant sock. People are asked to return the sock after placing money inside. Barbara felt an emotional hook needs to be present when requesting donations. An example would be a magnet with a "cute elephant seal face" on it. The zoos first "sock it to them" mailing netted approximately \$ 3,000.00. Even though the number of mailings has not increased, the amount received on the last mailing was \$ 14,000.00. To hold down the cost of the mailing they send an inexpensive return envelope. Kathryn asked if the envelopes were pre-paid. Barbara was unsure if they were sent with postage paid.

The subject of Barbara's fundraising event was the Atascadero Wine Festival. The event has grown since its inception. The 3rd year Barbara was in charge of the marketing. Since FES has not done any marketing in the past, Barbara suggested a

different approach for the salary of a marketing position in the FES future plans. The cost of the salary could be included in grant requests. The "Kiss the Pig" event was an example of a gimmick. Barbara started that campaign with a mailing of 600 letters that generated \$ 4,000.00. Each candidate solicited voters at \$ 5.00 each. Barbara stressed the need to have a theme or gimmick to create interest.

Another plus to the fundraising could be its possible identifying of prospective new board members and major donors. The Chairperson of the event should break down each area of need in order to put the event on. A budget is needed. However it should not include donations "in kind" because it is unrealistic to expect them each year. She suggested looking for a benefactor to underwrite the expenses. Expanding solicitation to include Paso Robles, Morro Bay, Atascadero would allow the invitations to include names from the areas Chamber of Commerce "hot list".

Other fundraising discussed included:

1. Rack Cards: Kathryn described the brochure FES is currently developing. It would be utilized in the areas Barbara mentioned. The Rack Cards are easier to display than the newsletter. The card/brochure needs to be a size that will fit in the racks used at motels, chambers, wineries, etc.
2. Reverse Drawing: example 200 tickets sold at \$100.00 each. The tickets sold should state the purpose, i.e. administrative costs. 50/50 drawing could be a quick start for FES fundraiser.
3. Cookbooks: Barbara is now raising funds by the selling a cookbook with recipes from a variety of people such as: local artists, VIP's, politicians. The cost to produce was \$ 6.85. The book sells for \$ 20.00. The company to contact for fundraising materials is Fundcraft.
4. Increasing Memberships: This is difficult out of the area. FES could solicit new members when the organization speaks at local clubs and organizations. The speaker and presentation need to be good. She suggested giving out a brochure or folder with the history of FES. Currently FES is using our newsletter for this purpose. The folder may allow FES to change the statistics quickly.
5. FES needs to budget for more ambitious events at venues that would draw in crowds. Events such as "Festival of the Seals" or "King Neptune Contest" held at the Vista Point or possibly the Hearst Castle premises.
6. Display Board: This is a marketing tool to purchase ASAP. Barbara suggested beginning with a good board. The Directors thought it could be put to good use by our organization.

Barbara felt the FES organization and site lends itself to fundraising. However it was concluded the first attempt should not be too overwhelming. A strategic plan needs to be implemented for more enthusiastic projects.

As Barbara was leaving the meeting she supplied samples of brochures, cheat sheets to carry with our mission statement. She also offered to help dispense future FES brochures. She also let the name of Chuck Holdridge of Carter TV as a future contact. The Directors thanked her for taking the time to attend the Board Meeting.

Ben Bouldin handed information to each Director regarding the FES website. The website is maintained on Microsoft Publisher 97. The Microsoft program has limitations on enhancing the current website. The FES newsletter has been added to the website. Ben felt the site is in need of a facelift. He would like to add a photo gallery and possibly sound bites. The membership page on the site needs to be updated also. The membership application should be easier to print out. Additional software would allow these formats to be used. Steve offered to donate Microsoft FrontPage 98. Ben would be glad to install and use it. The pricing stated is with Earthlink and Ben thought we should continue to use their services. The information Ben supplied included the number of hits to each page on the FES website. The graphs also noted the most active months. The Board discussed this information relative to providing online shopping on the FES web site.

Kathryn spoke with Brian Caserio of Sideoff Video. Brian stressed the need for the website to attract customers if the online shopping is to be successful. The site also

needs to be stable; with ease of access. He felt this would be a positive addition for FES if it were done correctly. The approach can be done in stages.

Ben informed the Directors that he would not be available to assist with the necessary changes to administer the online shopping on the web site. He would be available to do future maintenance after the Web Store is established. Jutta Jacobs stated her son is also available to help with the web site.

Kathryn informed the Board Members a written policy for FES hiring needs to be in place for future grant requests. Kathryn will research a simple policy and get back to the Board at a future meeting.

Jutta suggested setting a date for a special board meeting to continue new board member selection. The Directors may Email the office with possible candidates to facilitate the next meeting. The Transition Committee meeting was set for Wednesday March 13, 2002 at 2:00 p.m. at the Cavalier meeting room in the Cavalier Plaza.

Jutta motioned the Board join the Pelican Network. The Directors will view the Pelican Network web site and continue further discussion at the next general meeting.

The article in the Tribune recently regarding the Bureau of Land Management tours of the Piedras Blancas Lighthouse was the next item discussed. Jutta was concerned the program will use Hearst Castle docents and bus the visitors to the Lighthouse bypassing the elephant seal vista point. Kathryn has recently spoken with John Bogacki from the BLM who stated they are still interested in using FES docents. Steve suggested working with BLM to ensure the bus tours would stop at VP3. Kathryn will move this issue to the top of the agenda.

Kathryn will contact Steve ?????? From Chevron to discuss the recent funding which was received by the Cambria Historical Society. This information will enhance our chances next year.

Jutta was concerned with the Highway One realignment. Kathryn informed the Directors the project would not affect VP3. Kathryn will attend any future meetings. Michelle Roest of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is involved in this proposal. Michelle will contact FES if our support is needed.

Jutta proposed that a letter be sent to all the Real Estate Offices in Cambria regarding purchasing a business membership. Prior to any mailing Jutta will check the mailing list used in previous requests for donations or memberships. Steve will be sending a request for business memberships to San Luis Obispo Chamber members. The Board Members will continue annual donation letters each year.

Kathryn and Steve will need more information regarding the events planned for fundraising in the future. A master plan needs to be implemented in order to budget for the mailings or events.

Jutta will present the Board with a proposal to set up a table at the Farmers Markets in Cambria. Selling of items is not permitted. Small items given for "donations" May be the solution. The items could include key chains, etc. These items could have multiple uses. Mike and Jutta volunteered to staff the tables.

Steve will contact Ester Bay Graphics regarding selling T-shirts with Elephant Seal graphics at the Vista Point. Mike stated this is illegal. Steve will ask that they discontinue this activity.

Steve explained the penalty notice received by FES from the IRS. Karen Tipple of Accurate Accounts installed new software, which did not include the newest IRS forms. Steve felt she should pay the fine if she is unable to have it reversed.

A notice of an increase in the cost of the FES Directors & Officers Liability and the General Liability has been received. The cost may increase from \$ 1,000.00 to \$ 2,000.00. The renewal is due in May. Kathryn will investigate this issue.

Kathryn advised to Board about the time frame for receiving the grant to build the Boardwalk at VP3. It will take awhile, probably sometime in 2003 to 2004. The Directors need to be aware of the time frame because some information has stated the project will be done in 2002.

Kathryn suggested moving the docent training to spring instead of fall this year. Barbara felt the fall training was a better time because the birthing and breeding season takes place very soon after. The spring training would follow with no seals on the beach. The Directors discussed alternating the times of training between January and February and fall training. If two trainings were to be done each year these would be the preferred times.

The next Board meeting will be at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20th at the Cavalier Plaza meeting room in San Simeon.

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

JUDY BURLEY, Recording Secretary

Attest:

MIKE LEVY, President