

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL  
FEBRUARY 16, 2011

Directors present: Jim Brownell, Donovan Marley, George Larson, Sandra Kehoe, Ken Dunn, Brandt Kehoe, Megg McNamee and Tim Postiff

Also present: Marcella Boteilho

Guest: Mary Golden, Executive Director of the Central Coast Natural History Association.

A motion was made, seconded and passed that: The minutes from the January 19, 2010 FES Board meeting are approved.

**Topic: Whether FES should become a “Cooperative Association” with State Parks**

**Discussion:** Mary Golden addressed the Board in order to explain what Cooperative Association with State Parks has meant to her organization.

When asked about any financial obligations that may be incurred by FES if they were to become a cooperative association she explained that the State does not have any right to any finances generated by the cooperative association (FES) UNLESS that money is generated for the express purpose of paying for specific State Park project. In other words, if we (FES) wanted to initiate a new project on State Park property (example: the new boardwalk at north end of bluff) and we raised money for that project, the State would have the authority to use that money for THAT PROJECT. Any donations for THAT PROJECT would come under the tax category of “donor restricted gifts.”

Mary also explained that cooperative associations are required to supply a very simple and standard 3 page Financial Report to the State. That report would include income, expenses, listed assets, etc. All of that information is already available to the public.

Cooperative Associations are authorized to sell “interpretive items” to the public on State Park Property. That would include any item that depicted anything to do with eSeals. The interpretation of said items is a bit loose, but encompasses anything that “creates an emotional bond”. Everything we currently sell at our gift shop or out on the bluff is already well within those limitations.

Mary also brought up code #PRC513 which would allow the sale of “non-interpretive” items (bottled water, candy bars, etc) IF NO OTHER CONCESSIONARE WERE AVAILABLE. She suggested that if we were to become a full-fledged gift store, we might consider applying for that but that is a long way down the road!

Mary suggested that we attend a California League of Park Associations (CALPA) conference/meeting to further investigate the viability of FES becoming a cooperating association. She said that it is a great organization with tons of knowledge and experience with State Parks. The next CALPA conference is in Mendocino on May 12-15. The annual dues to join to CALPA is based on annual income but is a minimal amount.

If we were to sign a contract, the standard term of that contract would be approx. 6 years.

In summation we asked Mary if there were any downsides that she was aware of. She said no, not in her experience.

She again pointed out that we would be allowed to FUND RAISE ON STATE PARK PROPERTY, BE ALLOWED TO SELL MERCHANDISE ON STATE PARK PROPERTY, BE COVERED UNDER THE STATE PARK RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, HAVE WORKMAN’S COMP FOR OUR PAID EMPLOYEES AND LIABILITY COVERAGE FOR

OUR DOCENTS. WE WOULD ALSO HAVE MORE COOPERATION WITH STATE PARKS AND THEIR EMPLOYEES.

Regarding Risk Management, because of our close contact with the public (children in particular) FES docents would be required to supply fingerprints and be subject background checks.

**Action:** It was agreed that the Board will bring all of this information to the current docents and members in the form of a **special open meeting**. The Board will be responsible for making the final decision on this matter, but only after it has heard from the attendees at that meeting. The date and time of that meeting is yet to be determined.

**Discussion:** President Brandt Kehoe addressed the web cam and said that there is nothing really new. He revisited the cost of this equipment and has determined that the cost of a web cam and all of the affiliated equipment will cost approximately \$12,000. It has always been assumed that the web cam would be run via solar panels. Because solar panels have a high retail value and are probably more susceptible to theft, Brandt is currently researching the option of battery packs instead of or in conjunction with solar panels. Battery packs can be heavy and may or may not work. They would require consistent replacement and recharging. It would also fall on the shoulders of FES docents to bring recharged batteries to the bluff and bring spent batteries back for recharging.

**Action:** Brandt will continue the investigation and research.

**Discussion:** It was brought to the attention of the Board that docents are very interested in knowing what “goes on” inside FES monthly Board meetings. Even though Board meetings ARE OPEN to the docents we have probably been remiss in notifying them when meetings occur via a published Agenda. There was also a question regarding “who gets on the Board”?

**Action:** Using the next Docent Letter, we will clearly state that anyone interested in becoming a member of the Board should express that interest to a current Board member or to Marcella. Any nominations will be seriously considered the next time there is an available position on the Board.

A motion was made to make Agendas and Minutes of FES Board Meetings available on our website in the *Docent Only* section. This information will also become available to all members as soon as that *Members Only* site is developed. It was also suggested that there will be a written copy of all Agendas and Minutes (in a clearly marked notebook) in the office for anyone who does not have internet access.

That motion was approved unanimously

**Discussion:** Including our docents and members in the decision-making process regarding FES becoming a Cooperative Association with State Parks.

**Action:** A motion was made to hold a “special open meeting” for FES docents and members to attend in order that they may express any concerns regarding our possible affiliation with State Parks. The date, time and location of that meeting is yet to be determined. The Board will be responsible to make that final decision AFTER hearing from docents/members. That motion was approved unanimously.

**Discussion:** Tim Postiff reported on the current docent applicants for the Spring Training Session. He reported that there are 3-5 applicants and that the Training will take place at the Cavalier on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

Peer Reviews of the last graduating class are almost complete.

There will also be a Training Wrap-Up meeting with the newly graduated class of docents and members of the Training Committee on March 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. also at the Cavalier. That meeting is a great opportunity for the Training Committee to find out what works with our training system and what does not. It has proved to be a very valuable tool in the past.

**Discussion:** Megg McNamee and Marcella Boteilho presented a very short Financial Report for the TABLES AND TUBES. The report states that from late 2009 (when we first started with the Tubes and Table idea) to the present date, FES has netted \$41,144.00. The gross figure for that same time period is \$48,980 with a COGS (Cost of Goods) deduction of \$7,836. Figures for the last 4 months are: Gross @ \$16,361.00, COGS @ \$3,041.00 and a NET of \$13,320.00 These figures are included in the above and are not in addition to. All of the above numbers do not include what we have paid in sales tax but will be adjusted for the next meeting.  
Current Savings Account Balance is \$34,962.37  
Current Checking Account Balance is \$20,111.15

**Action:** A nomination was made and carried that FES will continue its goal to establish a monetary reserve at least equal to the prior year's operating expenses. That figure is roughly \$60,000. Megg will create and present a new Budget for 2011 by the next meeting.

**Discussion:** Donovan Marley presented an updated report on the new Membership Campaign. He is pleased with the results of the recent mailings and optimistic about achieving his pre-stated goal of \$28,500 from this drive.

**Discussion:** Our next Docent meeting/dinner will be held on April 16<sup>th</sup> at the Vet's Hall. Our guest speaker will be Dan Costa. He is an acclaimed biologist, coauthor on many elephant seal papers, whose main study has been with central coast sea otters. This information will be part of the next docent newsletter.

**Meeting adjourned!**