

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL
May 16, 2012**

Directors present: Jim Brownell, George Larson, Donovan Marley, Tim Postiff, Bill Goodger, Bette Bardeen, Brandt and Sandra Kehoe, Megg McNamee

Also present: Marcella Boteilho, Christine Heinrichs, Sharkey Warrick, Carolyn Skinder & Dawn Hayes and Lisa Remington

Minutes of the last meeting were unanimously approved.

MBNMS/NOAA: Carolyn Skinder and Dawn Hayes presented a slide show presentation “Overview of Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries”. There are 4 NMS on the California Coast, one of which is the MBNMS (which was designated as such in 1992). Briefly the MBNMS/NOAA Program Mandates are: Education, Research and Monitoring, Enforcement, Multiple Use/Resource Protection. Coastal Discovery Center offers exhibits, school programs, Jr. Ranger Program, Seasonal *Discovery Saturdays*, check-out field packs and Public Events. Their information services stress etiquette along with educational materials and wildlife viewing opportunities. Community Outreach – Sanctuary Advisory Council has 20 seats, regional agencies and stakeholders, community participation and 4 working groups: Conservation Working Group, Research Activity Panel, Business and Tourism Panel and Sanctuary Education Panel. Website: <http://montereybay.noaa.gov>. The Discovery Center has 15-16,000 visitors per year and is open Friday, Sat & Sundays.

President’s Report: Brandt reported that there are 4 buses in the new bus wrap program. Each participating organization (FES, Piedras Blancas Light Station, the Discovery Center and San Simeon Business Association) is expected to pay \$2500. Design fees and the balance will be paid by San Simeon Tourism Board.

Brandt also told us that the Webcam is currently up and running. There are still a few issues to be resolved pertaining to the current u-stream plan. The current u-stream website is using “similar” FES text but Brandt wants more actual input regarding what is written about the eSeals as things change so often. He would feel more comfortable if FES authored what is being written and/or said on the webcam site.

Brandt mentioned that we need to set a date for the next docent meeting. June is probable and Marcella will find out when the Vet’s Hall is available. Brandt will check in to potential speakers.

Financial Report Committee: Sharkey Warrick reported that the proposed budget pretty well finalized. The committee is projecting a net income of \$29,000. Sharkey pointed out that the committee is skeptical about actual bottom line of the next Soupabration but “wants to wait and see”.

The income from that event has a huge impact on the proposed budget. We all agreed that even if the Soupabration doesn't do as well as Charmaine thinks, FES is financially fit due to the tubes and table income. Sharkey (the committee) also mentioned that they are uncomfortable asking for money if it just goes into the bank. The committee again suggested perhaps CDs as a good way to keep our "reserve". We then discussed what to do with the surplus. We all agreed that our mission statement is all about education. Perhaps we could utilize some monies with Docent Training and Continuing Education with a trip to the Channel Islands or Ana Nuevo. We also discussed possible scholarships – Cal Poly if their biology department is interested.

Office Report: Marcella filed State reports yesterday. She also reiterated the need for the Chamber office to be manned and suggested it is time to INSIST that the Chamber either take down their sign or staff the office. The number of people that arrive looking for the Chamber and then come to the FES office is on the rise again. These interruptions have a huge impact on the office.

Marcella also pointed out that there is no www.SanSimeonChamber.org as seen on the current bus wrap design presented at the meeting. She also told us that BID has recently financed a new webcam at the Castle.

State Parks: Lisa Remington went over the relationship between FES and State Parks. She said that due to the current financial shortfalls, many Park partners are being further challenged and that several State Parks are closing on July 1st. There is a lot of uncertainty and stress among park employees as hours and wages are being cut. All Park Partners need to understand challenges ahead. FES is a unique partner as we are not just state park volunteers but an entity unto itself. Important that we all understand the different jurisdictions/layers of the Park and associated agencies (NOAA, COASTAL DISCOVERY CENTER, FISH & GAME, HIGHWAY PATROL, MMPA).

Bette asked about the ground squirrels at the bluff. Cal Trans is responsible for that area. Nick Franco may be the person to contact as he "has the ear" of Cal Trans. Bette will contact him to see if anything can be done about the abundant numbers. Bette also suggested that new signs for NOT FEEDING the squirrels may be a good idea.

Treasurers Report: Megg and Marcella reported that the total amount of money brought in by the table from January 1, 2011 to May 16th 2011 was \$15,033 and that in during that same time period in 2012 the total amount from the table is \$25,730 (an increase of \$10,697). A discussion was started regarding the pros and cons of FES acquiring a vehicle suited for the strict purpose of transporting and selling items at the bluff (rather than the table). It was generally agreed that 1) a purchase of such a vehicle should be totally funded by bluff sales and 2) we are not yet in a position to move forward with that idea. Much of the potential resistance would probably come from Cal Trans and coastal conservancy agencies.

Exploring America's Underwater Treasures/Ocean Futures event: Christine Heinrichs reported that the event netted \$650 from ticket sales. The Theater manager was happy with the event

and would be very supportive of more community type projects. Christine was disappointed that the theater was not full and surprised that more docents didn't attend. The theater capacity is 400 and there were only 150 attendees. It was agreed that it was a nice event and could be improved on if a committee handled the details rather than a single individual. Christine heartily agreed.

Training Committee: Bette reported that she had recently traveled to Anno Nuevo. While there she met with Mike Merritt. They discussed the importance of a continuing relationship and the sharing of information with each other and with Pt. Reyes. She also reported that at Pt. Reyes they do weekly counts and that there were 625 births this year (Ano Nuevo had 2,200 births). The people she spoke with at Ano Nuevo were interested in our training program and the fact that we have a training committee. They use the Adams book for educational/training purposes. They also enjoy a great relationship with researchers in that area. There may be opportunities for Continuing Education for our docents such as "field trips" and hikes to that rookery.

It was noted that no one is currently counting our population numbers. In the past, Katherine counted all of the seals in VP3 throughout the year. She no longer does. Brian still counts the females late in December and the pups in early March. We discussed if FES could do it. Megg volunteered to photograph sections from the boardwalk as a means of counting the number of eSeals at our rookery. Apparently VP 3 represents 40% of the rookery population.

Membership Report: Donovan reported that the total YTD donations are \$20,095. YTD expenses are \$5,804 which is an expense ratio of 29%. Net income YTD is \$14,291. The year-end goal for the expense ratio is 25% and there is no reason to suggest that we will not meet that goal. Memberships YTD are 260 which is 48% of last year's total of 546. Average donations are down from \$84.38 last year to \$77.29 this year which he attributes to strong 2011 donation support for the web-cam. YTD renewals are 192. YTD acquisitions are 68. YTD acquisitions are 35% of 2012 members. YTD renewal income is \$15,590. YTD acquisition income is \$4,505 with acquisition income 29% of the total. Current acquisition expenses are too high at 71%. Donovan hopes to get that ratio down to about 50% by the end of this year. We have just paid for 10,000 acquisition brochures that will be placed on the bluff over the next few months.

Donovan feels that he underestimated what we are likely to bring in this year. \$20,000 for the first half and expects 3rd qtr to be light, 4th qtr will be heavy again. He also reported that the three seminars (birthing, breeding and molt) very well attended and is considering doing 2 or 3 of each (except molt) next year.

Cal Poly Faculty meeting: Bill Goodger reported that he met with two professors at CalPoly regarding potential internship programs sponsored by FES. If the idea comes to pass, students would be given a stipend and class credit for their participation. It would be hoped that they would provide Fes with reports of their research findings. CalPoly could recruit through their pre-vet program and are sure students would be interested if such an opportunity existed. They are currently looking for a marine

mammal professor for the marine biology center. Follow-up meeting will be set up at marine mammal center to discuss details. A motion was made and approved that Bill should proceed with the

expectation that the Board will move forward with financial approval once monetary details have been determined.

NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON JUNE 20, 2012 AT 1:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Megg McNamee, secretary