

# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL

**June 20, 2012**

Present: Brandt Kehoe, Tim Postiff, Donovan Marley, George Larson, Jim Brownell, Sandra Kehoe, Megg McNamee, Bill Goodger

Also present: Sharkey Warrick, Carolyn Skinder, Lisa Remington

**Minutes** of last meeting were read and approved

**OFFICE REPORT:** Marcella and Polly Tatton went through all of the docent packs and got them up to date with materials and removed things no longer needed. They also created a new list of what should be in the packs and posted it on the inside portion of the door to the bin. She also reported that FES would be participating in the Summer Solstice event put on by the MBMNH on Saturday, June 22 at the Morro Bay State Park from 11 am to 3 pm. Marcella is also working with Nancy McKarney to update our informational brochure that goes to hotels, motels and the various chambers. It should be finished soon. Marcella also said that we have "official" permission to possess molt! Carolyn Skinder delivered a large plastic bag of molt to the office today.

**NOAA/COASTAL DISCOVERY CENTER:** Carolyn Skinder suggested that The Discover San Simeon program needs to step up their advertising campaign. There should also be a phone number for contact. There is a lack of communication regarding State Parks Discovery Program and the San Simeon Discovery program. Carolyn also invited Bob Yerena to address the Board (September date to be announced) regarding the Marine Mammal Act and regulations/enforcement. The Board agreed to make this an open invitation event for the docents to attend. Carolyn also told us that the Coastal Discovery Center is getting calls for stranded/injured seals. Those calls get re-directed to the Marine Mammal Center in Morro Bay but that all takes additional time. The next docent newsletter will post the correct phone number for the MMC in Morro Bay and let our docents know that is where any calls for stranding/entanglements/injuries should go. Carolyn also asked that docents be asked to send visitors heading south to the Coastal Discovery Center. Their hours are 11-5 Friday, Sat and Sun.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Brandt presented the Board with photographs of the final wrap to be used for the wrap the bus plan. There are 4 buses involved, total cost will be \$16,400 which includes \$3,900 for design and \$12,500 bus fees. Silverado has indicated that there will be no more additional costs. FES will be responsible to pay \$2,500. Date of completion for the wraps is still not confirmed.

**Webcam:** Brandt said that the webcam is "generally working although there have been days when it doesn't start up in the morning" and is not necessarily a zero maintenance effort. Brandt has been taking care of cleaning the glass dome (weekly) and the solar panels (monthly). When a problem arises, Brandt calls Tom Edick. Brandt also said that when the security equipment is finished being installed, they will install a microphone (audio). They will also tilt the box slightly (camera is not as low as Tim originally wanted) to alleviate the dark band of the box that shows up at the bottom of the screen. The concerns we had about our band width being able to handle the traffic..."It has not gone viral

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Megg reported that the Savings Account balance is \$64,410.93 and the Checking Account balance is \$15,106.27. This is Megg's last meeting as Treasurer. Bill Goodger will replace her.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Donovan reported that he has started the business-partners campaign and has had 6 responses so far. He feels that responses will do really well because they are being offered better "perks" such as adding them to the website under the "friends" heading. From our website, if a visitor clicks on the sponsors they will be re-directed back to the sponsors own site. 50,000 brochures distributed so far. Last year's business-partners campaign netted 25 and he hopes to bring in 35-40 this year.

The current 2012 membership is 325; last year was 538 and Donovan has projected 650 by year's end. Current total donations are \$23,570; last year totaled \$49,830 and Donovan has projected a total of \$47,140. His report

also noted that the Cost of Acquisition is high at 24%. Cost of renewals is low with an unusually high net of 88%. Donovan is unable to determine the value of the Acquisition Campaign until he can determine the percentage of renewals next year. He also stated that not having the live-cam operational during most of the mating season severely impacted potential income for November and December, 2011 and January and February, 2012. Because the web cam is up and operational he is hopeful for a lift in income during the breeding season 2012-13.

**TRAINING:** Tim reports squirrel that new DO NOT FEED THE SQUIRREL signs are available. Does FES want to buy them? Tim couldn't remember the exact cost so will wait on decision until the next Board meeting. The training committee has created and sent out the new Docent Operation Guidelines via email to the Board. He noted that the new info is in red and that anything crossed out will be deleted. The Board moved to approve the changes.

Tim also discussed the current list of substitute. He has talked to 12 of the subs and found that between them, they receive approximately 18 calls per month. None of the subs he talked to felt they were over-burdened. We may need more volunteers to sub. We discussed the "no show" issue amongst the docents (there are 80+ active docents) and were not able to determine if there is a real problem with no shows? It does happen but is perhaps not a huge issue at this time.

Tim asked for a \$200 expenditure reimbursement to pay Dale Moody for aerial photographs of our coastline for the Know Your Coast project. All 6 areas included in our seal census will be included in the photographs. The Board approved a \$200 reimbursement. All photographs are the property of FES.

**TMMC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:** Bill Goodger, Lisa, Bill, John and Nikki toured the Marine Mammal Center in Morro Bay On June 19<sup>th</sup> to further discuss an internship program for Cal Poly students funded by FES. Bill reported that Cal Poly is currently developing a marine science degree which has an internship component. Together they developed some parameters for the program.

1. Begin next January 2013 and cover winter and spring quarters through early June 2013.
2. Expectation is a minimum of 20 hours per week depending on students' course load.
3. A stipend of approximately \$1,000-1,500 per quarter.
4. The student would be required to give a presentation to FES docents at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester regarding the rescues done on elephant seal weaners
5. The summer semester could be another option for the student either as a continuation of the FES internship (salary or not) or could be supported potentially by other funding. This would be a time when the student could be assigned a research project utilizing the database at the Marine Mammal Center and mentored by Cal Poly faculty. The research project could be focused on questions generated from FES docents.
6. The student would be required to attend the open house on the Avila pier for the Center for Coastal Marine Science in April 2013.
7. The student would be required to attend the mandatory Marine Mammal Center training classes held in January in Morro Bay.
8. The student would have the opportunity for training at the Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito.
9. The student, after adequate training, would be able to participate in rescues and be involved in follow up treatments before animals are transported to the hospital in Sausalito.
10. The student would be involved in NES rescues in the late breeding and post breeding season. However, the student would also be available for other marine mammal rescues especially during the NES molting period.

Cal Poly can handle the student by one of the following 3 programs: The Directed student program, the Senior project program, the coop extension paid only program. The Cal Poly faculty would provide a student advisor to assist in directing the student in one of those programs. The key to this relationship is the availability of credits in all of these programs. Cal Poly would handle the recruitment this fall in the Biological Science Department and the Agriculture College (pre-veterinary). Qualified students would apply using the MMC application and be interviewed and assessed by Lisa Henderson, Manager of the MMC. Lisa would make the final decision on the student intern which would include 2-3 alternates to make sure the position is filled.

Even though Cal Poly is under pressure to develop a marine mammal department with hands-on training, Bill has pushed hard to make sure Cal Poly is really interested in this program and feels that it is a good idea and that Cal Poly will pursue the offer. Bill further stated that this fits well with the pre-vet students/studies as approximately 1/3 of those students are interested in wildlife and/or marine mammals. Participant students would benefit from hands-on experience along with field research and clinical study. He also said that 5-6 months is good in terms of the amount of training a student needs before becoming "useful" as an intern.

The Board will make a final decision regarding funding of this program during their August Board meeting as Cal Poly starts recruiting in September.

**OLD BUSINESS/ NEW BUSINESS:**

\*Jim Brownell reported that according to a visiting shark expert, there are no receivers in this area to count the tagged sharks that travel through. Therefore, counting sharks in the area is impossible. He also suggested that receivers are not that expensive and could perhaps be put on already existing buoys. They can broadcast for 250'. The idea is definitely worth exploring. There are currently 170 great white sharks tagged and experts think the population is just over 200. All of the 170 tagged sharks were tagged in the Farallon Islands and Ana Nuevo area. Jim also said that Mike Harris (the otter expert with Marine Mammal Center) has reported 60 otters killed by sharks this year.

\*Most of the seals are currently at the North Bluff. Donovan will bring in the parking lot sign directing visitors to the north.

\*Brian Hatfield and/or Ron Eby (from the Elkhorn Slough) will be invited to speak about otters during the next Docent potluck. August date (?) TBA.

\*The August Board meeting will be at 10:00 am. On Wednesday August 15<sup>th</sup>. That meeting will be a combined Board meeting and Retreat. The purpose of the retreat will primarily focus on supporting our mission statement. The location for retreat/meeting TBA. Brandt will check out the availability of Camp Ocean Pines.

\*The Board unanimously approved the nomination of Kathy Hurrle as new Board member. Sharkey Warrick will join the Board at the next meeting.

\*Megg McNamee and Sandra Kehoe have successfully completed their terms and will no longer be Board members.

**NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON JULY 18TH 2012 AT 1:00 PM**

Respectfully submitted by Megg McNamee, secretary