

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL
September 18, 2013**

Present: Christel Chesney, Bill Goodger, Kathy Hurrle, Brandt Kehoe, Donovan Marley, Tim Postiff.

Members Absent: Bette Bardeen, Dave Bauer, Sharkey Warrick.

Also Present: Marcella Boteilho, Ellen Stoner, Lisa Remington.

The meeting was called to order at 1 pm.

MINUTES: Minutes of the August 21st meeting were approved with corrections to the Training Committee report and to the date of the August meeting.

OFFICE REPORT: Marcella indicated that she and Ellen are learning Giftworks. Marcella looked into the total hours and what Diana was doing when in the office. Ellen can come in 2 days/week and Marcella 3 days/week. The office is busier than last year; for now we would like to stay with the two of us.

Discussion included the reasons why the three positions were created, and whether the increase in activities in the office can be covered without conflicting with Ellen's emphasis on the docents and their needs. Ellen could use more hours, and understands that she reports to Tim as the board's representative. Ellen will propose changes to her job description that would cover school groups and other office activities that have a logical connection to her role as docent coordinator. Marcella will review how the school group signup occurs and at what point a school visit would be turned over to Ellen. Marcella is taking over the membership part of the Outreach Director's job. Ellen needs to have her two days/week rotate through the days of the week for continuity and for talking to docents; Marcella likes that also. A trial period was proposed to go through the busy winter season and the school group visits. Ellen will cover Marcella's vacation in November; Joan Crowder and Ken Eberle are available also to help cover the office.

Chamber of Commerce: Ben has been covering for Michele. Most of the people coming in are asking about elephant seals and not Hearst Castle. There were 650,000 visitors at the castle last year; this could give a better idea of how many people we really get than we get from the clicker count. It is nice to have someone in the Chamber office 5 days a week.

Whale Tale grant: is anyone interested in checking it out? We once got one of these grants with an emphasis on education and getting kids here. Brandt will look at the grant application; Marcella is willing to be involved. This is the money that comes from the license plates with the whale tale on it. They give out several grants a year.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Go on the web to www.elephantseal.org/languages.html. This page will be available on the bluff. There are QR codes that can be scanned which will take the smart phone to a page that has a short text and verbal description of what is happening. Spoken is

about 3 minutes. It is a condensation of what is in the bluff news, but appropriate to what is happening at the moment at the rookery. The code to scan will be on a sign somewhere to be determined. Each docent could have a plastic card with the code for scanning. We need to find more translators. One suggestion was to contact the language departments at some of the local colleges. It is broadcast by cell phone signals and not wifi, so speed may be a factor.

Items suggested for the October board retreat, beginning with the suggestions from the Training committee and then continuing with other suggestions from the floor:

- Photo CD to sell at the table;
- Continuing education for docents;
- Field trips for docents;
- A management plan (long term planning; overall plan on what kinds of things would we be doing with increased money);
- Conference with e-seal people from other places;
- Extended office hours in the afternoons and on weekends;
- Signage on the bluff like the three non-English signs that we do not have anymore;
- Visitor survey: stamped postcard handed to driver of every xth car leaving the lot: number of people in the car, how you heard about the rookery, did you talk to a docent? Sample seasons, days of week, times of day.
 - Can we get a thing that is put in the street to count cars? State parks has a system of counting people by the count of types of cars.
 - Discuss what we want to find out.
- Discuss with Nick the effort going into our parking lot compared to the effort for Hearst Castle parking, considering the number of visitors we have.
- Different ways to do the acquisitions brochure.
- Redo the e-seal length sign; full-size e-seal statue.
- Include a knotted string with the CD.

Dave requested Christel tell the board that the planning is done for the retreat; come hungry. The board meeting will occur right after lunch, so Marcella and Ellen are invited to the lunch and the board meeting, and the retreat will continue after the board meeting.

It was suggested that Bill Johnson and Mary Lou Becwar be invited to the retreat.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bill reported that the budget income is increasing and expense is meeting budget. Total in the bank is a lot, even after the shark check is deducted.

Shark monitor: FES gave \$15,000 for the project and agreed to help with maintenance in future years. The boat needed to install the monitor was discussed; it needs to be a boat with a winch that can handle 600 pounds. The Bonnie Marietta will cost \$1,200 + 400 for fuel. Barbara Stock has all the permits; she contacted the owner. Maritime Logistics from Paso Robles has a boat that looks like a destroyer. There is a website to go to if these don't work. There was discussion of whether the buoy would or could be out there when the sharks are not migrating. The battery has a 5 year life. Barbara is still working on the buoy, and will be responsible for bringing it in and taking it back out in the future. We have agreed to help with future costs.

Internship: Bill showed the flyer that is now posted on campus, and he will be doing some presentations on campus.

TRAINING COMMITTEE REPORT: We have 19 people in training: 8 from spring, 9 new, and 1 returning docent from several years ago. Cavalier is charging for stuff that used to be free (coffee, food) which will increase costs by about \$1,000.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Year to date, 418 members have been acquired or renewed; these members' donations total \$36,345. The concern is not the total amount but the relation between acquisitions and renewals. Acquisitions to renewals should be at least 70/30 but is 73/27. This does not sound like that much of a difference, but two big acquisitions totaling \$3,425 skew the ratio. This is an item that will be on the retreat agenda. Right now 75% of the year is past and we have received 80% of the budgeted income; again the big donations contribute substantially. \$1,500 donations are at 165% of budget; \$250 donations are on track. The great friend donations are in good shape; the good friend and friend membership categories are running behind. We are at 25% income to expense; this is skewed by the 65% overage in Friend For Life donations. To get to the budget we need \$8,655 in the fourth quarter; there is a good chance that we will get there.

OLD BUSINESS:

Pinedorado Parade: those who came to the parade had a good time.

Table: August total was \$6,300 last year; this year \$11,000. September year-to-date is double what it was at this point last year. At the table meeting on Friday we will discuss training more docents so we can try to have two shifts each day. Contributions year-to-date is about the same as last year; it is sales that have increased. The CD idea would be a good seller. Christel bought two comfortable chairs.

Carol Stave received a \$100 bill from a visitor. Doris Somerville got one last year sometime.

NEW BUSINESS: Please review the draft of the October docent newsletter, which will go out next week. Several changes were requested.

Lisa Remington: The three cases of harassment were addressed by the agent in Santa Maria: one was a juvenile, so no charges were filed; one case charges filed; one case a citation because they had federal authority to levy fines. The cases were adjudicated and there will be some press release to spread the word.

There was discussion of what harassment is: if the seals react it is harassment. Since the drone resulted in the seals reacting, if it happens again we need to call NOAA who will dispatch the State Parks Rangers. We need better signs.

Lisa will provide a few paragraphs for the next docent newsletter about what to look for and report with respect to potential panga boat activity. If people are defacing posts or fences, getting out of their cars and walking around, panel vans that look out of place, anything suspicious.

Regulations for someone selling things: cannot sell on state property. Playing guitar with cup out is a business and not allowed.

The pup season and the weaner season lasted longer at Arroyo Laguna last year than in past years. Ideas:

- Closure order extended, but recreation will continue;
- Combination of us working together: try to have roving park aids during the weekends when weather is good;
- Can we assign docents to help and what would they do? Mike and Robyn tell visitors “you are in the wrong place, go up to VP3.”
- Last year Mike Connelly did not ask for our help at San Simeon Cove because he felt it was not needed.^{1:34-35}
- Area north of the lighthouse: access from the road via obvious trails; parking on the road.
- In the docent newsletter we can recruit for people to be there weekends and schedule them in. Lisa will send Ellen a letter for the end of October.

Webcam: There are still server problems that will be looked into.

Brandt sent Nick a letter proposing an addendum to the State Parks agreement and still has not received a reply. We need to clarify that endowment money that is earmarked to support FES will not be used by State Parks for other reasons. This is a reasonable interpretation of what is in the document now, but we want it to be clearly stated. Lisa R will try to facilitate a response.

NEXT MEETING: The board will meet for a retreat at 9:30 AM on October 16th at Dave Bauer's home, 6475 Mira Cielo, San Luis Obispo. The retreat will adjourn for lunch and a board meeting beginning at 12:30 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ellen Stoner.