

**FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL
BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETING
DECEMBER 18, 2013**

PRESENT: Brandt Kehoe, Tim Postiff, Bill Goodger, Kathy Hurrle, Christel Chesney, Dave Bauer, Donovan Marley and Bette Bardeen

ALSO PRESENT: Marcella Boteilho, Megg McNamee and Michele Roust.

Motion was made and carried to approve the minutes of the November 20th Board meeting.

OFFICE REPORT: Marcella reported that she recently had a meeting with Terry from Gaia Graphics and will report back to the Board as soon as potential designs for a new logo have been presented. She also mentioned the next docent appreciation dinner (February 1st) and suggested JBJ's Pizza and salad this time. She said that Big Sky Restaurant had offered gift baskets and thought it might be a good idea to solicit other gifts as door prizes. Docent of the year was also discussed and it was decided to give Jim Brownell (posthumously) the award, along with a couple that have been with Fes for several years.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Brandt reported that WiFi "hot spot" device has been purchased and will be stationed at the bluff. He has designed a new tube that will incorporate the donation tube and the hot spot device all in one. Docents will need to bring the tube back to the office as usual, but will also have to plug in the device to be re-charged. FES is paying \$30/month for the current 4 GB data limit plus \$20 per unit (\$70/month for 2 units and will go up to \$110/month when we get 2 additional units). FES own the units and would have to replace in case of loss. Insurance is available at approximately \$5/unit.

Regarding the webcam, the video is working but there is no audio. Brandt heard from Nick who suggested we get an outside organization to handle the stream from the camera and do all of the re-processing that needs doing. Brandt then contacted UStream who said they would be happy to consider it but they were unable to get any response from the state park people. The video signal from the camera is mp4 format and the signal coming from UStream is a flash video. The castle's computer program converted one to the other but cannot handle the audio at the same time. Last word that Brandt received from Nick was that they would work on it themselves.

TRAINING COMMITTEE: Tim said that the Spring Docent Pot Luck dinner is scheduled from April 12th. There are 3 possible speakers. August 16th and November 15th will be the next dates for docent pot luck dinners. He also presented information that Ellen had gathered regarding a docent field trip to the Channel Islands. Cost to charter a boat would be approximately \$1,100/hour or a minimum of \$4,500 - 50 people @\$90 each for a 4 hour excursion which would probably not be enough time. There was also a camper trip option that would drop people off at different islands but did not go to San Miguel (\$80/person). Brandt suggested getting in touch with Sierra Club to see who handles their fund raiser trips to the Channel Island.

Bette reported that the new docents are doing fine and there will be a "feedback" lunch session on January 25th. Tim asked about whether or not Brandt had found any information about traffic counters through State Parks. Perhaps CalTrans might have something we could borrow for a while.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Donovan reported that there is a chance of getting last year's income (not counting the endowment). Last year there were 594 people who donated \$53,873. This year we are 33 people away from that but are only \$3,831 away reaching that same amount as last year. He has lowered expectations for 2014 campaign by \$5,000 until we see what the new brochure will do. He and Brandt are hopeful that it will do better as it now includes more information about the seals and they are more likely to be kept. The Year End campaign to date is at \$4,152 is expected to reach \$7,000. Percentage of membership goal for 2013 is at 111%. The majority of support is from people who give \$100-\$1,500 per year. Docent support is up again (64) with an

average donation of \$104.22. Ratio of expense to income for 2013 is 22%. All printing for this year is finished and brochures for next year are currently being printed. (150,000 pieces @ \$7,000).

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bill said we continue to have \$66,000 balance in accounts. Merchandise sold (shop and table) is "astounding" with a 60% profit.

ENDOWMENT REPORT: Sharkey reported that the performance of the endowment fund through the end of September went from donated capital of \$35,000 to \$36,445 which is a 4% increase for the quarter and can be annualized to %16. Performance this quarter should be even better. End of December will not be available until the end of January/early February.

BETTE BARDEEN reported that the 6th annual Underwater Parks day is on January 18th, 2014 and the 2nd year it is to be held in this area. It is a celebration of Marine Protected Areas in the State of California. Activities are planned at Point Buchon, Morro Bay and Piedras Blancas. Bette is hoping for a little help with the booth and hike she is planning. Morro Bay going to have a photo exhibit with an emphasis on birds in the MPAs at the museum, starting on the 15th.

She also mentioned that Sam Ham, who is considered the "guru of interpretation", is going to be a guest speaker for the Central Coast State Parks Association on March 8th at the MB High School. Other organizations contacted will be charged \$25/per person to attend. Bette suggested that perhaps the school group docents and the training committee might be interested in attending.

MICHELE ROUST has re-joined the Board as an advisor. She has been hired to open and run the San Simeon Chamber of Commerce. Her position is being funded by the tax assessed by the local hotels (CBID). She will be looking for ways to partner with the Chamber and FES. County Business Improvement District (CBID) has worked with hotels/motels/lodging and vacation rentals to add a 2% tax on overnight lodging. 1% of that goes to the County BID fund (for promotion of SLO county) the other 1% goes to local business improvement districts. Emphasis is on unincorporated areas (Morro Bay, San Simeon, Cambria, Harmony, Cayucos, Los Osos, Oceano, Nipomo and into the Edna Valley area). New additions to the Chamber include a touch screen, two computers, a dedicated wireless system plus free WiFi. There are plans for a scrolling video to show things to do in the area. Michele also said there is another theme in the works called the Stewardship Travel Program designed to encourage tourism to the unincorporated areas to target eco sensitive tourists. If FES wanted to become part of the stewardship travel organization an application would have to be filed (all other criteria has been met). Michele thought that the lecture series in January and February would be a perfect stewardship travel opportunity. The CBID website is already launching a media campaign promoting ocean related activities for February. She will work with Marcella to follow up. She also said that there will be a name change from the Chamber of Commerce to San Simeon Visitor's Center in the hopes of getting their website up and active in order to promote membership. Michele also encouraged Brandt to come to the next SSTI/CBID meeting in order to explain the issues with web cam streaming and to perhaps open the door for further conversations and information sharing.

Tim Postiff brought up the issue of docents overgeneralizing an item in training having to do with a single juvenile elephant seal being given MRIs at the beginning and end of the fall haul-out and showing an increase in bone density. Bill, originally (not at the meeting) brought up the issue when writing an article for the research group and included in his conclusions what docents could reasonably say about juvenile haul out and bone density. Brandt suggested that an article containing this information be prepared for the docent newsletter.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Megg McNamee