

**FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
MAY 18, 2014**

**PRESENT:** Tim Postiff, Ellen Stoner, Donovan Marley, Kathy Hurrle, Bette Bardeen, Brandt Kehoe, Dave Bauer

Also present: Ellen Stoner, Marcella Boteilho, Carolyn Skinder and Michele Roust

Minutes from April 16<sup>th</sup> approved.

**CAROLYN SKINDER** reported that the whale count from Wayne Perryman's team at PBLs has counted 420 gray whale calves to date which is above the norm. She also reported that results from Kelp Watch 2014 are negative for Fukushima nuclides, but positive for Cesium 137 nuclides from nuclear tests done during the 50s and 60s. Full report is available at <http://kelpwatch.berkeley.edu/results>. The White House has also released the 3<sup>rd</sup> US National Climate Change Assessment report. Highlights from that report can be read at <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/highlights>. She also mentioned that the MBNMS lecture series (May 30<sup>th</sup> 6:30 at Rabobank) will feature Mike Harris on "What's taking a bite out of the southern sea otter recovery?"

*Coastal Discovery Center Summer Programs* - Saturdays at 11 a.m: Programs alternate between Pier Oceanography, History of San Simeon Cove, Marine Mammal Center Presentation and Beach Walks. Information and updates will be provided by docent phone 927-6575. *Summer campground programs*: they need Saturday night speakers. Any volunteers that can give a 45 minute presentation on elephant seals welcome as well as bluff walks during the day. Contact Robyn Chase (805)203-5256. Electronic updates on campground programs to be sent to the San Simeon Chamber of Commerce, PBLs, FES and MBNMS.

**OFFICE REPORT:** 1) Marcella asked if anyone could help replace the lights over her desk area. 2) She also asked if anyone knew anything about seeing Cal Trans surveying the parking lot. Donovan said that he had recently talked to a Cal Trans truck driver and he said that they were "just getting started". There are plans to re-slope the parking lot so that it will drain to the road. Ellen also talked to the surveyors and got the same information but added that they also intend to redo the culverts. It was agreed that someone should contact Cal Trans to get further clarification. 3) Marcella also reported on the current printing issue; The State is no longer willing to print the E-News for the remainder of this year. Hereafter they are willing to print 10,000 per year which we go through in a single month during the winter season. Marcella got quotes but asked the Board to consider the bid from ASAP (\$2,237 for 50,000) because it also includes folding. Donovan suggested there might be a big price break if we ordered 100,000. The Board authorized Marcella to order 100,000 from ASAP. She will also qualify paper opacity (60 lb. vs 50 lb. to prevent "bleed through") and relative cost, volume of shipment and shipping costs. If there is a significant cost difference she will email the Board for with that information before final approval. Brandt will talk to State Parks to see if they would store the boxes. If State Parks is not willing Donovan and Dave are both willing to take delivery and will bring to FES as needed. 4) After showing the Board the new ESeal toy she reported that the cost will be \$7 each, they would retail for \$15 each, we would have to order 1,000 every time we placed an order, it will take 120 days to fulfill the order from China (which will require better order planning) and FES will have sole "exclusivity" for this product. She is confident that we could sell them. She does not intend to continue with the smaller version of the eSeal toy. The Board authorized her to order/purchase the first order of 1,000 pieces. When asked about whether or not to continue selling the other marine mammals as well, it was agreed that they are popular items and should continue to be available on the bluff. Marcella will decide but will also be looking in to selling the new eSeal toys on Amazon and eBay.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Brandt reported that he had been contacted he had been contacted by State Parks requesting us to have a booth and volunteers at the Mid State Fair for part of the time. They also asked if "Fes" could be available Brandt will find out where "Fes" is and if State Parks can pick him up to take him to

the Fair. He will also determine if volunteers will have to pay entry fee. Ellen will put this “volunteer opportunity” in the next docent newsletter.

**TRAINING COMMITTEE:** Bette reported that they had not run their ads yet but there were a couple of applicants, a couple of who could not make last years’ training. Bette reported that there was an inquiry from someone interested in administrative work, not working on the bluff. Apparently there was an ad in the newspaper asking for office help (perhaps from RSVP?). It was also discussed that if there were another office worker, they would need to go through the training program. There could be a need in the future for an office volunteer for Saturdays.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Bill reported that 40% of the years’ worth of income and expenses are in and are reflected in the Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual Report as of May 19th. Increased budget expenses include \$2,000 for the internship stipend, \$2,000 for library research program and an increase of \$2,200 for printing brochures (eNews). Sales from the table are down and predicted to be \$50,000 rather than the projected budget amount of \$75,000. If projections are correct there should be a net income of approximately \$6,000 which represents a 5% contingency. Bill noted that he would prefer a 10% contingency. At present there is a balance of \$59,308 in the money market account and \$22,675 in the checking account.

Marcella and Ellen both commented that there is a shortage of people taking the table out due to illness and “burn out” along with terrible weather.

**INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:** Bill reported that the annual Open House for the Center for Coastal Marine Science in Avila Beach was very successful with over 1,000 people attending. Both Tim and Bill were impressed with the other exhibits and the numerous “hands on” approaches they had. Craig (our winter and spring intern) has decided to continue his internship through the summer. Projects under consideration for the intern include a count of sub-adult and adult males during the molting season. Brandt pointed out that Katherine Karako conducted roughly 5 years of counts on a monthly basis to determine how many seals there were at VP3 by type (age and sex), separated by north and south. She also made maps of the various coves, pockets and beaches. Brandt will give the data to he has to Bill. Michele will ask Katherine if she still has the section maps. Brian Hatfield also has detailed maps from several years ago that could probably be used. The proposed new count would include all 6 sites from the tree to Cappuccino Cove. Given that the older date is not recent it would be interesting to compare the numbers.

An additional project under consideration would be to follow up on research data base project on fasting and the Fall haul out or anything else the Board is interested in.

**ENDOWMENT FUND:** Bill pointed out that the endowment is funded by monies different from the table or membership and is for long term projects such as scholarships and an educational center. There is over \$50,000 in the money market account, the average return of which is .84% – 1.4%. Endowment Fund A has \$5,495.04 (monies donated by individuals that specify what the donation is to be used for) and Fund B has \$32,883.52 (monies that FES contributed). The market return on these funds is between 4% - 16%. Endowment money cannot be withdrawn until the second anniversary and then only 4%. Brandt pointed out that the reason the Board initially approved the endowment idea was to hedge against the loss of our current sources of operating money and not for major projects. It was noted that there were no long term projects being considered at that time. Since then scholarships, endowing a chair and an education center have been discussed. Bette pointed out that an endowment is also a fund raising tool. All board members agreed that it is a good idea to have diversification of funds (CDs, Endowment, Savings, etc.).

**SCHOOL GROUP REPORT:** Kathy reported that the school group program is probably not going to cost what has been budgeted (\$10,000) even though there are several bills from the schools still outstanding. At this point in time, there is no way to know exactly how much the school program is going to cost.

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT:** Donovan reported that there are 311 members to date and is running ahead of last year. He is concerned that Acquisitions are down to 19% of membership but because are giving slightly more they represent 21% of the membership income total. He feels that it is likely we will hit last year's total of \$52,000.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**SCOOL GROUP LEADER:** Tim asked the Board about the possibility of creating and funding a "school group leader" at least during the busy breeding season. It was agreed that the office cannot afford the time needed to coordinate the scheduling. Ellen said that RSVP frequently advertises for short term jobs and projects. Michele advised that this particular position requires a fine set of skills and that whoever does it needs to know how to do scheduling. It was agreed that this temporary short term position would be salaried. The job could easily be done from home using a temporary cell phone and email. A separate email account could also be set up that would "direct line of communication" for the coordinator and the teachers. It was agreed that the initial organization, contacts with schools and teachers should start in September and continue through February. Kathy Hurrelle will create a job description, salary and time requirements and talk to potential applicants.

**VP3 IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS DISCUSSED AT THE RETREAT:**

- 1) Donovan said that several "manmade objects" have been removed from the beaches (probably by Brian Hatfield). Donovan also suggested we have a "clean up day" and designate a date. Michele offered to get the word out if we wanted to have outside community help but it was agreed that because of the nature of the real estate it would be best to have people who know the area the best do the work.
- 2) There has been an accumulation of sand, dirt and gravel due to ground squirrels excavations on the board walk, so much so that weeds are beginning to grow in it. Shovel work required.
- 3) Replace 1,200 feet of chain link fence at a cost of \$9,000. Upon later discussion, it was decided that Brandt would get in touch with Nick to find out who actually owns the fence (CalTrans or State Parks). If it belongs to CalTrans they could be approached to replace the fence.
- 4) Cal Trans has added some gravel in the low spots along the fence and in the parking lot but the real puddles occur on State Parks land south of the parking lot at the entrance to the boardwalk.
- 5) Replace plexi-glass in VP3 kiosk - discussion
- 6) Design, fabricate and install multi-lingual signage on the ocean side of the VP3 parking lot will not take very long once all languages are available in both text and recordings. There are a few segments of either text or recordings still missing. Brandt and Donovan are working on finishing the project soon.
- 7) "Today's Best View" sign has been fabricated and shipped (\$220). Sign will be placed by the entrance to the parking lot when needed.

**NATIONAL MONUMENT STATUS FOR THE COASTAL TRAIL:** Donovan reported that last year the Russo Family Foundation gave FES a grant in the amount of \$2,000 for the purpose of paying honoraria/scientists to give educational presentations the docents. The same person from the Foundation has contacted Donovan to let him know that they are considering this year's donations and wanted to know what projects FES would be interested in. She indicated great interest not only in the Coastal Trail project but also working to get National Monuments status for the entire trail. They have very good contacts through Green Peace and feel that they could be of service. Donovan wrote to Jim Boucher (BLM) and asked several questions regarding this project and was given a very detailed responses regarding anticipated costs and agency participation. His proposed budget is \$37,530. Donovan then proposed that FES get involved financially a publicly to support the development of the coastal trail from Piedras Blancas VP4 parking lot at least to the road that goes to

the light house (a total of 1/3 mile and the most intensely used). He further suggested that FES postpone the proposed replacement of the chain link fence (\$9,000) in order to pledge our support. Other revenue sources include a \$5,000 commitment from the government, a \$10,000 pledge from the Piedras Blancas Light Station Association and a request for \$5,000 from the San Simeon Tourist Alliance (Michele was confident that would happen). Donovan suggested that FES to raise the balance of \$17,530 by 1) allocating \$10,000 to match the light station's commitment from the FES 2013 surplus, 2) ask for a \$5,000 restricted gift from the Russo Family Foundation and 3) allocate \$2,500 from the 2014 FES surplus. All of our funding would be contingent upon the acquisition of all necessary compliance permissions (still missing are opinions from the Army Corps of Engineers regarding wetlands and CalTrans regarding scenic easement). A motion was made and carried that Friends of the Elephant Seal allocate \$12,530 for the development of the coastal trail from VP4 north for approximately 1/3 mile with release of those funds contingent upon receipt of all applicable permits.

**DOCENT COORDINATOR:** Ellen reported that the new elephant seal size signs are installed. Ellen will try to add the "baby" board by superimposing it on top of the "mom" board. Ellen also requested permission to get a new bank card in her name for her use. The bank requested a letter signed by the secretary requesting the new card before they could issue a new card. Ellen will draft the letter and Kathy and/or Brandt will sign it.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**KIOSK SIGNAGE:** Tim presented a written cover sheet and picture mock ups of the signage ideas from Carole and Phil Adams. The panel material they suggest (di-bond) would be made of metal with an extra laminate on the surface for added protection. This is the material they use at the light station which has held up very well and eliminates the need for plexiglass. The panels are inexpensive, easily replaced and can be cleaned with a cloth. They also suggested replacing the roofing, repainting and using pieces of Trex to hold the panels in place, all of which could be done by volunteers. The entire project would cost between \$800-1,000. Phil and Carole also donated royalties from the sale of their book go toward this project. The project met with unanimous approval and support from the Board. There were several changes suggested including changing the migration map, updating the FES logo, perhaps the addition of the NOAA logo, fixing incorrect wording, spelling errors, weight translations, etc. Tim will communicate the suggestions to Carole and Phil.

**LOGO DESIGN:** Michele said that she had spoken to Pierre Rademaker and was assured that even though they are a bit behind schedule he still wants to do it pro bono. They are a "little bit stumped by the parameters" but intend to stick with it. Marcella also mentioned that she received a bill from Gaia Graphics in the amount of \$500. She explained that was for meeting time, travel time, contract labor.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Megg McNamee

Next Board meeting will be on June 18<sup>th</sup>.