

**Friends of the Elephant Seal
Board of Directors Meeting
February 18, 2015**

- **Board Members Present** : Dave Bauer, Bill Goodger, Polly Tatton, Bob Grosse, Abby Adams, Kathy Hurrle
 - **Guests**: Judy Thompson (School groups), Curtis Replogle (Docent), Lisa Remington (State Parks), Michele Roest (San Simeon Chamber of Commerce), Kathy Dowding
1. Approve minutes from January 21 Meeting – Minutes from January BOD meeting not yet finalized.
 2. Guests –
 - a. Lisa Remington – to call rangers –1. Call 911 (if urgent) or 2. 805-927-8068 - Hearst Dispatch for seal harassment
 - i. Blowsand removal at the bluffs has been completed (last time this was done was 5 years ago.)
 - ii. Fence replacement – Bill Goodger has contract from CCC. The work is tentatively scheduled for the last weekend in March (a “rider” for the permit is pending). Bill will be ordering materials soon. Michele Roest might be able to provide grant support to assist with the costs of materials. Bill will provide quote to Michele.
 - iii. Hearst State Beach – Lisa reports that things are going well with regard to e Seal appearances at the beach and the State Parks Volunteers who have been working there. There are still some State Park Volunteers that work and so Lisa wanted to know when to expect the end of e Seal activity. FES Board advised her that at anytime now the seal activity will decrease – certainly by 3/15. Last weekend, a male was found right up against fence at HSB. If they end up in the parking lot, they will close the parking lot, but not the beach. They have permission from NOAA to divert them out of the parking lot. No pregnant females showed up there this year.
 - iv. Lisa will be attending a Law Enforcement Technical Advisory Meeting with NOAA next month (March 5th); she was interested in any issues that FES wanted her to address. Board response was: drones.
 - b. Judy Thompson from the School Groups presented a report prepared by Gwen Watkins:
 - i. There were over 600 school children who toured the bluffs in January. There were approximately 45 school group docents who assisted –of those, about 35 are formally (trained) school group docents.
 - ii. There are approximately 8-10 “core” school group docents.
 - iii. On 3/19, a school group of 70 2nd graders are scheduled with only 3 docents signed up at this time; a few others have agreed to help.
 - iv. We also need additional docents because of the table experiences. Friday (2/20) is another concern with a large group of students and few docents. Another large group of 9th graders next week. Recommendation from Judy: During training interview, ask new docents about being school docents/ working with children. Per Judy, at Ano Nuevo all docents are school docents.

- v. Dave Bauer response – Training Committee has discussed school group training – but it won’t happen in the Basics class. It could be an add-on after Basics – and it might be a good refresher for existing students. Polly suggested establishing mentors for school docents. Judy did not feel that it is necessary, but Kathy Hurrell and Dave Bauer thought it would be helpful. Dave suggested that a separate meeting/brainstorming session be scheduled so that a comprehensive plan can be developed. Judy will set up a meeting per Dave’s request.
 - vi. A suggestion was made to establish “Captains” with responsibility for managing the staffing for each school group tour. Michele Roest suggested another option – establishing a requirement/expectation that the teachers of the school groups touring the rookery will attend some training so that they can be Tour Captains. A similar program is being run through the Discovery Center. Teachers can receive training credits for attending the program. The schools that are funded by FES could/should be required to do this training.
- c. Michele Roest introduced herself and provided a summary of her background and experience. She grew up in SLO and has a degree in marine biology. She has been an advisor to FES since 1997. She is a former FES Board Member (2009-2011).
- i. She is always looking for opportunities for grants that might assist FES. She has applied for a grant for \$10000 to pay for the fencing installation by the Conservation Corps. This was approved, but now the labor costs have increased (per the quote/contract Bill Goodger has received); so the grant may not cover all of the labor costs.
 - ii. Michele attended the San Simeon Tourism Alliance (SSTA) meeting yesterday. Emergency/directional signage will be paid for by the SSTA; we will be reimbursed for the costs we have incurred.
 - iii. Michele will continue to look for additional grants to help us solve some issues.
3. President’s Report:
- a. Dave says that if you have not walked the new North Beach trail, walk it. It is awesome! There are 5 wetland crossings; 4 are easy, the 5th is a bit more complicated to traverse. We have restricted funds to use there. We want to re-seed the unauthorized trails so that they grow in. Michele is confident that the SSTA will reimburse us for our costs. Dave will be attending a meeting with SLO county planning and we want State Parks to assume the lead for that trail.
 - b. Dave is also working with Donovan on the National Monument project. Donovan will be attending a conference in New Mexico that is scheduled for organizations working on this type of project.
 - c. Dave also met with Best Western Hotel Executives. He met with them on the bluffs and thought it would be a few minutes conversation; it ended up being an hour and a half tour as they were very interested in the rookery and surrounding area.
 - d. The SSTA have asked us to supply 50 of our new seals to them for an event at Hearst Castle. Board approved plan to give them a discount rate on the seals. Our current cost is \$7/seal.

4. Office Report:

- a. Marcella had prepared a written report (due to her absence) and copies were distributed to the Board.
 - i. She raised some budget concerns regarding the “cost of goods”. DVD’s are almost sold out and will need to be re-ordered. It was also necessary to reorder a larger quantity (2400) of the elephant seal toys – rather than the 1000 originally ordered. Dave has agreed to store the more than 100 boxes that will arrive in early summer.
 - ii. There continues to be a storage problem.
 - iii. Continued catering of docent events may also cause us to go over budget for this expense category. She suggested doing one of our events as a potluck. The Board was not in favor of this alternative.
 - iv. She also suggested that Docents who are no longer able to handle the physical challenges of working on the bluffs could assist with office duties during our busy seasons to answer phones and talk to visitors.
- b. Kathy provided an update on docent-related issues:
 - i. She is continuing to collect data on the number of shifts needed to adequately staff the bluff shifts compared to the shifts that are scheduled and then ultimately worked. Bottom line is that we do not have enough docents.
 - ii. The impact of the January school tours were evident in the number of tours that some docents worked. There are a few docents who worked an unusually high number of shifts; many of which were not scheduled. Kathy is investigating this on a case-by-case basis. No assistance from the Board needed at this point.
 - iii. Kathy also discussed the newsletter. Due to short timeframes between monthly newsletters, there is not much time for extensive editing. Proofreading is always welcome, but she requested that some restraint be exercised in requesting extensive changes. Kathy also advised the Board that they are welcome to provide her with items to include in the newsletter – deadlines for articles is the end of the 2nd week of the month.

5. Training Committee Report provided by Polly Tatton:

- a. Three new docent trainees have been accepted and enrolled in the March 14 Basics Class; one applicant was refused for tardiness (late to the interview). New interns may also attend the training but are very busy dealing with sick sea lions. The Basics class will be led by Phil Adams, followed by mentoring and then the Spring Trainees will attend the FESU in the fall. There will be a bigger push for additional new docents in the fall.

6. Treasurer’s Report provided by Bill Goodger (see financial report for details):

- a. Profit and loss statement – table, tubes, all projections look good, but January is not a reliable predictor for the rest of the year. Too early in the fiscal year.

7. Intern report provided by Bill Goodger:

- a. Craig Brown has already written a report on the work he has been doing. He is also close to acceptance into Vet school. Bill and the interns will be meeting with Richard Condit to help beef up the interns’ presentations on April 18th; both Craig Brown and the interns (Kayla

Wolfer and Shawn Hannah) will be presenting. Bill and Dave are also inviting State Parks representatives to attend the dinner on the 18th.

- b. Bill shared the reports from the counting efforts currently underway (Bill and the new interns are working together). Very few discrepancies/variations in the counts from time to time indicating that the counting methods are very reliable.
8. Location identification Numbers for VP3 north and south – update provided by Bill Goodger:
The reference numbers to help docents id the location of an entangled seal when calling the Marine Mammal Center have been ordered. The numbers and nails are being donated by the company Pre-Max in Minnesota as they have local connections and want to support our efforts.
9. CCC Boardwalk maintenance:
CCC is responsible for the maintenance of the north boardwalk and apparently there are some state park funds that if released could support the needed maintenance. Lisa Remington is checking on the funds. If CCC can schedule the maintenance Bill is hoping they could also install the numbers.
10. Shark Monitor update provided by Bill Goodger:
 - a. Bill is working with Barbara Block (Stanford/Hopkins Marine Station.) A letter has been written to NOAA; the shark monitor may be returned to us in June. There is a monitor in Cambria, but it is not the same kind as we bought; data needs to be collected manually. Ours is instantaneous. Bill is trying to get some questions answered:
 - i. When the monitor was active, we got 4 hits. Does that mean that we do not have many sharks in this area?
 - ii. If the Stanford monitor only picks up tagged sharks, then how do we know that untagged sharks are not showing up? Bill will be calling Barbara Block to confirm.
11. Membership Report provided by Bill Goodger on behalf of Donovan Marley:
 - a. Membership report was distributed to the Board. The bottom line is we are \$3868 ahead of 2014.
12. Old Business - None
13. New Business: Storage – there is very little storage in Cambria – we are still looking for alternatives.
14. Meeting Closed.