

Friends of the Elephant Seal
Board Meeting July 15, 2015

Present: Dave Bauer, Bette Bardeen, Kathy Hurrle, Polly Tatton, Bill Goodger.

Guests: Lynette Harrison, Mary Forbes, Donovan Marley, Kathy Dowding, Gwen Watkins, Marcella Boteilho, Dawn Fiegel, Carolyn Skinder, Michelle Roest.

Meeting called to order 1:00pm.

Approval of June 17, 2015 Board meeting minutes. Passed unanimously.

NEW MEMBERS – Dave

Dave introduced and shared short biographies on current docents Lynette Harrison and Mary Forbes.

Motion to accept Lynette Harrison and Mary Forbes to the Board, approved. Passed unanimously.

COOPERATING GROUPS – Carolyn Skinder

1. There have been 3 summer humpback whales in the bay and there is now a free whale locator app (whale alert) available in an effort to help mariners decrease the risk of injury or death to whales from ship strikes.
2. Due to numerous complaints and reports of marine mammal harassment by boaters, paddle boarders and UAS(drones), NOAA/MBNMS have issued multiple public advisory releases stating restrictions and promoting awareness and protection of whales and all wildlife.
3. MMP is awaiting autopsy results on 2 dolphin carcasses received this summer.
4. The Sanctuary Classic has a summer youth scholarship contest to reward sustainable fishing practices.
5. Carolyn shared her excitement in the dual education support between the Discovery Center and FES School groups.
6. The Discovery Center's summer hours are Fri-Mon. 'Discovery Saturdays' include pier activities, exploration opportunities, local history, beach walks, and information on marine mammals of the central coast. An outdoor education exhibit is in progress.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Monument Initiative – Donovan Marley

1. Donovan gave his full slideshow presentation to the board.
2. MI presentations have been given around the community to many organizations. He currently has 41 supporting organizations.
3. A petition was launched in July with the goal of 1000 signatures. The petition currently has 800. The CA Coastal National Monument was reported to have legislative support and desire from Senator Boxer to leave her legacy.

4. This is considered Placeholder Legislation where the support process is completed early in order to be ready for designation with the next presidential election.
5. Discussion included the following concerns: benefits appear to be focused on commerce; lack of proposed impact to the elephant seals; lack of financial guarantees; the large focus on the promotion of the unincorporated areas; loving our tide pools to death.

Treasurer/ Finance Committee - Bill Goodger

1. The finance committee had not met yet, Bill Goodger as treasurer will suggest that when the august CD matures on 8-21-2015, that money be moved into the money market non restricted funds account to maintain our cash flow. This suggestion will be presented to the finance committee for their input on 8-12-2015.

Training Committee – Polly Tatton

1. Training has received 2 new interviews from rotary/community service presentations.
2. Seven new docent applications have been accepted to date.

School Groups – Gwen Watkins

1. No school groups are scheduled for the summer to allow the docents a break.
2. The committee is still meeting to acquire new school docents and create presentation tips and tools for talking with kids, to be given at the fall retreat.
3. Continued trainings are underway to recruit more group 'Leads' and expand the education stations.

Table Committee – Dave (for Bob)

1. Still inviting more docents to train with the table committee, including an offer to build two person teams pairing an interested docent and experienced table docent.
2. The biggest factor to reduced table times this year continues to be the Wind.

Research Committee – Bill

1. "Molting" and "breeding season" papers are now posted on the docent webpage.
2. Recommend an indicator highlighting what's NEW on the docent webpages.

Membership Committee – Dave

1. An invitation was extended to name a Membership Chair. Memberships contribute largely to the financial health of FES.
2. Member retention continues to be handled by the office. New outreach campaigns require a committee effort.

Staff Reports – Marcella/Dawn/Kathy

1. BEST VIEW sign is out. Discussion included some criticism of over packing the visitors to the north, in fact, decreasing the viewing experience especially while the South beach still has some seals. Suggestions were made for new signage along the parking lot fence pointing visitors to both the N and S areas.

2. Recommended removing the e-news receptacles from the parking lot fencing and concentrate on the N and S boardwalk areas.
3. TRASH pickup has been upped to 3 times a week for the rest of summer. Docents that are willing are encouraged to place trash bags near the tubes and bring back to the dumpsters behind the office.
4. WI-FI is resumed.
5. CONES have been placed on the uneven pathway at the south where guests have fallen. Please leave the cones in place until state can repair the terrain.
6. Our docent dinner is on schedule for Aug 15 at the Cambria Vets Hall. Robin's local restaurant will cater. In the absence of Kathy and Marcella, Board members are asked to serve and thank the docents.
7. Results of the docent interviews are overall positive. Some suggestions could easily be addressed. A results summary will be prepared and shared over the next few weeks.

PROJECT UPDATES

Shark Monitor – Bill

1. Monitor is due back in the water sometime this month with an encouragement to increase the number of animals tagged. The suggestion stands for shark tagging to be done both here and off the Channel Islands.

Grants – Michelle Roest

1. History Project is underway as planned.
2. A grant for CA stories may allow for funding of the oral interviews. These grants are offered biannually. A humanities advisor will be brought onto the team to vet the project validity.
3. Possible grant opportunity to cover trash removal costs on state park property with volunteer service.
4. Possible funding available to generate a complete N/S viewing area map if desired.
5. May be funding available for social media/website development and maintenance.

Trail Project – Dave

1. As of the April meeting, State Parks remains the lead agency for the environmental review process. Discretionary land use permits are still required.
2. The proposed 1.9 mile trail will link into 2 other trails through the old motel creating one 4 mile trail which may all be rolled into the highway realignment project.

Web Cam – Dave (for Brandt)

1. With the PBS promotion to stream the live seal cam on PBS airwaves, State parks representatives, Brooke and James, are now enthusiastic to take the lead and get the camera system up to par.
2. The proposed new camera has far better resolution and includes night vision. The slightly higher power usage is not a concern.

3. Warren, from Offshore Theater, proposed a service contract for considerably less than our current fees.
4. Meetings will continue with State Parks, FES, and Offshore Theater.

Solicitations - Bette

1. Summer travel has brought out pizza vendors, wind chime vans, music panderers and more. No outside sales of any kind are allowed. All docents are encouraged to call the rangers.

NEW BUSINESS

Pine Dorado Parade – Dawn

1. After some discussion, FES is declining to participate in the parade this year.

Plant Clean Up – Kathy

1. July 26 is the Non-native plant clean-up around the lighthouse and bluff, organized by Carole Adams.

Social Media – Marcella

1. The established FES Facebook page has an active and growing number of followers.
2. A task force to include Marcella, Lynette, and Michelle was created to continue to grow our social media and include a redesign of the webpage.
3. Preliminary bids range from \$3,000-\$5,000.

Motion to spend up to \$3000 on a professional to redesign the FES Webpage, approved.
Passed unanimously.

BOARD RETREAT

1. Call for retreat agenda items.
2. Dave will plan the lunch menu.
3. Retreat scheduled for Aug 19, at Dave's home.

MEETING ADJOURNED FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 3:58pm.

Respectfully submitted, Dawn Fiegel