

**Friends of the Elephant Seal
Board Meeting
August 19, 2015**

Board Members Present: Dave Bauer, Bill Goodger, Polly Tatton, Kathy Hurrle, Bette Bardeen Lynette Harrison, Mary Forbes, Abby Adams

Also Present: Donovan Marley, Dawn Fiegel, Kathy Dowding, Brandt Kehoe, Gwen Watkins, Mary Lee Becwar, Tim Postiff, Michelle Roest

Dave Bauer called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to approve the July Board Minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

National Monument Initiative: Donovan Marley

The initiative has been submitted to the U.S. Senate. Donovan explained the initiative and answered many questions about the various relationships and authorities involved in the Piedras Blancas Outstanding Natural Area and The California Coastal National Monument. The latest information will be posted on www.PiedrasBlancasMounument.org.

Treasurer and Financial: Bill Goodger

With a third of the year remaining, we may need to tighten our spending. This year the Board approved increased spending in such areas as new fencing, more e-seal brochures, school group expenses, and docent dinners. Bill will meet with the Finance Committee in early October to review our assets, income, and needs as we set the budget for next year.

Publications: Dave Bauer

Kathy Hurrle volunteered to join the Publications Committee and be the Board representative.

Table: Dawn Fiegel in Bob Grosse's absence

From May to Labor Day offers the best weather for the table. January/February has the highest sales. More people are being trained for this important revenue generator.

Training: Polly Tatton

At this time nine new docent trainees have been selected; four more are awaiting interviews; and two from the spring will attend the University sessions. The first training session is September 12. Members of the Training Committee will conduct the first mentoring session to insure that certain details are explained and shown to the new trainees.

School Groups: Gwen Watkins

1. In planning for which schools to provide scholarships for visits to the rookery, Gwen shared a list of schools with significant students that qualify for subsidized lunches. Last year six schools were provided scholarships for 4th and 5th grade student classes.
2. We discussed which schools to invite for the upcoming school year.
3. Gwen will continue the collaboration with the Discovery Center.
4. Gwen and Dave are planning a School Docent Luncheon at Dave's house on September 5.
5. Gwen is planning a school docent trip to the Discovery Center.

Research: Brandt Kehoe

1. Brandt noted that the Research Committee has become the Publications Committee, with six articles having gone into the last five publications.
2. Kathy Dowding requested that Brandt let her know when new articles are posted on the FES website.
3. After discussion we agreed that all newsletters should go to all docents, whether they are paid members of FES or not.

Membership: Dawn Fiegel

1. Dawn is continuing the members campaign.
2. A new chairperson is needed to increase activity for this important committee.
3. Bill Goodger shared that membership donations are currently up 14% from last year.
4. After discussion the Board decided that on the anniversary date of a large donation, the Membership Committee should send a letter of thanks stating how the donated funds were used.

Marketing/Outreach: Dave Bauer

As we recognize new and ongoing needs, the chairperson of this committee will be responsible for sharing the needs with appropriate groups (e.g. Cal Poly students seeking community service hours).

Continuing Education

1. Tim Postiff shared that Diving Deep articles are one means of providing continuing education to docents.
2. Tim and the Publications Committee will assist Kathy Dowding in her search for speakers for docent gatherings.
3. Kathy Dowding shared plans for sharing good questions asked on the bluff and correct answers.

STAFF REPORTS: Kathy Dowding and Dawn Fiegel

1. Kathy reported that Dee Villareal, class of 2014, is resigning at the end of the month. Kathy asked the Board members to sign a thank you card and said she would like to present Dee with a small gift—an FES mug. The Board agreed and furthermore suggested that this should be the action when we have docents in good standing resign.
2. Kathy proposed implementing a suggestion made during the Docent Interviews of having “North Beach” and South Beach” journal books. Some Board members voiced concerns. Kathy requested that a Board member assist in reviewing the suggestions/ideas raised in the Docent Interviews. Bette Bardeen volunteered. The potential change in journal books was tabled for review by Kathy and Bette.
3. In the Docent Interviews, interest in a docent excursion was high. The Board determined that a potentially costly excursion should be postponed, but that a visit to the local abalone farm was a good option for Kathy to explore.
4. Dawn shared that for the last two months we have surpassed our data allotment on the WI-FI. The data showed that 48% of the use was for website access. She will continue to monitor this to determine if use of the WI-FI for other purposes is becoming a problem. Docents need to remember to turn the units on at the bluff and off when returning them to the office. With the seals and crowds now currently at the north area, we will use the unit there and not at the south end.
5. Dawn noted that merchandise sales have been about the same as last year but if the predictions for a wet winter are correct, we could experience a drop in sales. In the discussion, Board members noted that the office/info center is not open to the public very often. We discussed scheduling docents there on possible Friday, Saturday, and Sunday shifts. We would need a set schedule so that docents on the bluff would know whether to send visitors there or not.
6. Kathy Dowding will be on vacation the month of October. Tim Postiff will do the November docent schedule. There will not be a docent newsletter in November.

PROJECT AND ISSUE UPDATES

1. Dave Bauer reported that State Parks continues to work on the trail project.
2. Lynette Harrison reported that the Webpage Design Committee continues to meet and hopes that the new page will be launched by the end of September. In 30 days FES will receive the \$3052 grant from the Tourism Alliance. Dawn asked to be included in the planning for any on-line forms on the website.
3. Michelle Roest requested that Bill Goodger submit a brief summary report on the fence project to the Parks Foundation.
4. Dave reported that State Parks is now drawing-up plans for the rest rooms. There are no details yet on the timeline.
5. Dave will be included in a conference call tomorrow about the web-cam.

NEW BUSINESS

To address the trash concerns, for two months the commercial trash pick-up has increased from twice to three times weekly. Docents have volunteered to also pick-up trash and put out temporary trash bags during their shifts. Dawn reminded us that the docents who place trash bags on the fence, at the end of their shifts, need to take the bags back to the dumpster behind the office. Abby Adams requested inexpensive, disposable gloves to use when doing trash patrol. Dawn is looking into this.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 pm.

Respectively submitted,
Abby Adams, FES Board Secretary