

**Friends of the Elephant Seal
Board Meeting
October 21, 2015**

Board Members Present: Dave Bauer, Polly Tatton, Bette Bardeen, Bill Goodger, Bob Grosse, Lynette Harrison, Mary Forbes, and Abby Adams

Also Present: Donovan Marley, Marcella Boteilho, Dawn Fiegel, Michelle Roest, Curtis Replogle, Nancy McKarney, and Gwen Watkins

Dave Bauer called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

Following one addition to the September 16 Board Minutes, a motion was made, seconded and passed to approve the Minutes.

Announcement about Visitors' TV

Bette Bardeen shared that in the Visitor TV series that is shown in the airport and local hotels rooms, there is a segment about marine protected areas that features elephant seals including interviews with Phil Adams and Bette Bardeen.

REPORTS

National Monument Initiative: Donovan Marley

1. On September 18 Representative Lois Capps introduced a parallel initiative bill in the House of Representatives to Senator Boxer's bill that had previously been introduced in the Senate.
2. Senate hearings are commencing.
3. Donovan is increasingly hopeful that President Obama will designate the National Monument before leaving office.
4. Dave Bauer requested an estimate on the number of people that Donovan has spoken to regarding the initiative.

Web Page Design: Lynette Harrison

1. Lynette, Marcella, Michelle Roest, and Nancy McKarney showed us the layout elements. We suggested a few changes.
2. The next step will be to take down the old website, go live with the new site, and then continue the review process for thirty days.
3. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to proceed with the new web page launch and thirty-day review.

Treasurer/Finance: Bill Goodger

1. Bill submitted a written report that suggested a possible need to cover a cash shortfall with funds from some of our investment accounts. He will meet with the Finance Committee soon to review the matter.
2. Marcella noted that this year the assets and liabilities have been skewed (e.g. \$14,000 for the new elephant seal toys, but once sold will bring \$33,000).
3. Dave commented on the problems when donors restrict the use of donations for specific projects.

Table Sales: Bob Grosse

1. More docents are needed to staff the table.
2. Bob and Dawn are investigating the purchase of devices for credit card sales.

3. The new plan of assigning the table sales crew to sell from the office/visitor's center has been positive.

Training Committee Report: Polly Tatton

1. The final training session and graduation for our 16 docents is on Saturday.
2. Next the committee will be setting the dates for training for 2016.

Membership Report: Dawn Fiegel

1. Dave stated that we are still in need of a Membership Chairperson and Committee.
2. Dawn reported that there is need for volunteer help with a big mailing in November/December.
3. Dawn's written report on membership included that there are 748 current members, with 231 new members (compared to 262 by year end in 2014).
4. Of concern is the cost of mailing the membership gifts outside the USA.
5. After discussion, we decided to reduce the number of exploratory presentations by half. There will be two in January, two in February, and one in May. Presenters might include Diana Barnhart and Bill Goodger.

School Groups: Gwen Watkins

1. The Committee has met the three goals established last year, including recruiting more docents (14 new).
2. Many schools are inquiring about trips to the bluff. A list of the five scholarship schools (527 students) was shared.
3. Due to the growing number of school group sessions requested, the committee may need to limit the number of days each week when groups are scheduled.

Office: Dawn Fiegel

1. Cost estimates to refurbish the existing office/visitor center were presented.
2. Dave is continuing to learn about possible State Parks plans for a new visitor center (see below).

President's Report

1. State Parks is planning to re-furbish the old motel site to include a campground, Visitor's Center, and cafe. There may be space available for FES, including storage. Dave will continue to learn more.
2. The new camera will be installed by December 1. FES will no longer pay for the webcam service since State Parks will instead.
3. The new Coastal Trail will extend from 1.9—4 miles. State Parks continues with planning, permits, and grant-funding requests.
4. State Parks is supportive of our history project and has been working with Susan Lyon in a commemoration of Roger Lyon, a significant figure in the establishment of FES.
5. State Parks also endorsed the native plants project, with hopes for grant funding.
6. Dave recently met with the Friends of Hearst Castle leadership.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Bette shared that the price for rent of the Morro Bay Vet's Hall is in line with the Jocelyn Center in Cambria. Some docents have suggested that some future dinners be scheduled in Morro Bay.
2. Smoking and cigarette butts. There are no county ordinances restricting smoking at Piedras Blancas, so docents do not have authority to ask visitors not to smoke.
3. Bill suggested better signage in the parking area between the two main elephant seal viewing areas. Many people just feed the squirrels because they do not know that there are hundreds of seals to see if they continue walking further south or north. Dave shared that better signage has been included in one

of the upcoming grants.

NEW BUSINESS

1. We regret that Kathy Dowding has resigned. Dave will post the Docent Coordinator position to all current docents. The position will include a minimum of two days in the office.
2. Lynnette and Brandt Kehoe will meet November 7 with Mark Chiolis, a FES member and professional videographer, who is interested in donating his services. Mark will need to obtain permission from State Parks prior to filming on the bluff.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15, followed by an executive session.

Respectively Submitted,
Abby Adams, FES Board Secretary

The next FES Board Meeting will be on Wednesday, November 18, at 1:00.