

**Friends of the Elephant Seal
Board Meeting
January 20, 2016**

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

Also Present: Gwen Watkins, Dawn Fiegel, Tim Bridwell, Marcella Boteilho, Lisa Harper Henderson, Kyle Brady, and Rob Chambers

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

Following two corrections, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the December 16 Board Minutes.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

1. Dave Bauer welcomed two California State Parks Rangers, Rob Chambers and Kyle Brady to our meeting. In turn each Board member introduced him/herself to the Rangers.
2. Rob Chambers shared that the new phone number to use to report a 'resource violation' (e.g. marine mammal harassment and crowd control) is 951-443-2969. He advised us to continue to use "911" to report a crime.
3. Dave also introduced visitor and docent Tim Bridwell; and new Docent Coordinator, Lisa Harper Henderson.

REPORTS

National Monument Initiative: Donovan Marley

In Donovan's absence, Dave distributed Donovan's written report. Of note was Donovan's recent meeting with Dan Falat, the new Superintendent for the SLO Coast District of California State Parks and Nick Franco, retired Superintendent. They suggested certain steps in sharing the initiative with Governor Brown.

Treasurer/Finance: Bill Goodger

1. The net income for January 2016 is a negative \$7181. It is too early to make any judgments but Bill hopes that grant funding will mitigate this projected loss in budget.
2. Due to less table sales in January due to El Nino conditions, there is a difference of \$4000 compared to January 2015.

Training: Dave Bauer (in Polly Tatton's absence)

1. At the January 9 luncheon for the most recent docent cadre, there was much feedback provided to the Training Committee. The Committee will review and consider the recommendations at the next meeting.
2. The advertisements for the March 19 spring docent training have begun.
3. Rob Chambers asked if some State Parks Rangers might attend and Dave responded that FES would be delighted to include them in the training.

School Groups: Gwen Watkins

1. So far in January, due to the weather, there have been about half the school groups as in 2015.
2. On March 1st a group of high school students will spend the day volunteering at the bluff.

Table Sales: Bob Grosse

1. Dawn and Bob continue to work on the credit card sales plan.
2. The Committee is trying some new sales opportunities due to the weather limiting sales on the bluff. Tim set up the table at the last Exploratory session; and Bob inquired about setting up the table at the Cambria Wine Festival, but had missed the sign-up date.

Research: Bill Goodger (in Brandt Kehoe's absence)

The committee has been writing and reviewing the information for the new website.

Website Redesign: Lynette Harrison

1. Lynette will send the links to the information that Brandt Kehoe has been writing and asked that the Board members review it.
2. The Training Committee should also review the new information to make sure it is consistent with the training notebook information.
3. Bob Grosse advised that in the "Planning Your Visit" section that the lack of restrooms be included. Ranger Rob Chambers asked for more information on this. Dave Bauer gave the history and new State Park plan to add rest rooms.
4. The new website will go live late in January.

Video Project: Lynette Harrison

1. Lynette reported that Mark Chiolis continues work on the pro bono video tape about the elephant seals and rookery. He would like to include an interview with one of our docents.
2. Dave suggested Phil Adams for the interview. Lynette will arrange the initial meeting.
3. Once done, the raw video footage will go to Brandt Kehoe.

Publications: Dave Bauer(in Kathy Hurtle's absence)

The February/March issue of Among Friends is now being written.

Membership: Bill Goodger

The next meeting of the Membership Task Force will be in April.

Staff: Dawn Fiegel

1. The new wi-fi password system is working well and has cut down on mis-use of our signal at the bluff.
2. The number of docent/visitor contacts (based on docent clicker counts) exceeds two million contacts!
3. The membership numbers for 2015 are up 8%, with 24% new memberships. We currently have 839 FES members. The business membership outreach has not been fully addressed this year and the numbers are down from the previous year.

Staff: Lisa Harper Henderson

1. Lisa has enjoyed being the new Docent Coordinator for three weeks.
2. In preparation for for the Docent Appreciation Dinner on February 6, she passed around a sheet to write "thank you" notes. Board members suggested two possible moderators for the event. As usual, Board members are encouraged to help with set-up at 4:00 pm.

President: Dave Bauer

1. State Parks employees are required to attend yearly EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) training and all State Parks Volunteers are encouraged to attend a two-hour class. Based on the written notice sent to FES Docents, sixteen docents have now signed up for the sessions being offered in January and February at San Simeon and Morro Bay.
2. Dave was very pleased with yesterday's staff meeting.

3. In Michelle Roest's absence, Dave shared that for the history project, Michelle has now finished the review of the FES historical documents and has identified the key people to interview and videotape. She will start with the most senior participants.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Abby Adams, Mary Forbes, and Tim Bridwell recounted the four-hour morning scenario on Sunday, December 27, when a bull got through a hole in the fence at the far end of the south board walk, traversed the entire board walk, and then fell asleep near the kiosk area. State Parks Ranger Kyle Brady responded as did The Marine Mammal Center (TMMC).

2. In the discussion that followed, Bill Goodger shared information about a similar incident last year and a recent encounter with a bull on the highway. He suggested that State Parks or State Patrol shut the parking lot as a first step if an elephant seal is in the visitor's area.

3. Safety ideas for Docents that were shared included:

- • Call for help immediately to TMMC and State Parks. We are not skilled professionals in crowd control, traffic direction, and seal rescue; and should not try to be.
- • Try to safeguard both humans and animals by keeping the two separate from each other. Ask people to move away from the seal.
- • Assist the professionals. Ask them how you can help and what you can do.

4. Ranger Rob Chambers shared that TMMC will be providing training to rangers on how to use the board shields. Lisa noted that TMMC provided the State Parks office with board shields last year.

5. Tim Bridwell shared that videographer, Dave Jones, videotaped the December 27 incident and has edited it to eight minutes. Tim is working with Dave on the dialog for the video. It will be donated to FES.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 pm followed by an executive session.

Respectively Submitted,
Abby Adams, FES Board Secretary

The next FES Board Meeting will be on Wednesday, February 17, at 1:00.