

**Friends of the Elephant Seal  
Board Meeting  
September 21, 2016**

**Board Members Present:** Dave Bauer, Bill Goodger, Bob Grosse, Lynette Harrison, Mary Forbes, Christel Chesney Polly Tatton, Tim Bridwell **Board Members Absent:** Abby Adams  
**Also Present:** Dawn Fiegel, Marcella Boteilho, Lisa Harper Henderson, Donovan Marley, Bette Bardeen, Rangers Robyn Chase and Kyle Brady.

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

**Minutes:** A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the August 17 Board Minutes.

## REPORTS

**San Simeon Cove E-Seals:** Robyn Chase reported on the continuation of ‘Elephant Seal Ambassadors’ to assist the State Parks in managing visitors to the San Simeon Cove during the winter months when e-seals are expected to be present at Hearst State Beach. The ambassadors are to be volunteers stationed at the entrance kiosk and on the beach to advise visitors of correct behavior around the seals. The volunteers will be expected to be on hand on winter weekends and Monday holidays with 3&1/2 hours shifts. A brief discussion ensued—FES board members agreed to publicize the Ambassador program and to include a note in the next FES newsletter so that our volunteers know the plans for San Simeon Cove.

### **National Monument Initiative: Donovan Marley**

Donovan presented a written report that contained the following information:

1. A detailed report on the National Monument Hearing at Cambria on September 16.
2. A summary of the next steps necessary for the Initiative to be submitted to President Obama for his possible approval and execution.
3. A number of questions expected about possible National Monument status including what advantage will accrue from it, where did the funds come from to promote and publicize the Initiative and hold the hearing, and Donovan’s assessment of what changes will occur as a result of Monument status.
4. What are the FES legal and relationship changes with respect to State Parks, Bureau of Land Management and other legal entities expected.
5. Supporting documents pertaining to FES and its part in the initiative process.

Donovan offered his own prognosis on possible changes that will occur in the next decade if National Monument status is achieved including significant increases in visitors to the bluffs and the area, need for improved services like toilets, trash, parking and road access to serve the visitors and possible changes in FES operations as the area grows and changes.

**Bookkeeper Issues: Marcella Boteilho** Marcella noted several issues that need to be resolved for timely bookkeeping: The final bill for FES sponsored school tours is needed by October 15 for tax purposes. The Tax Accountant is late in finishing the FES tax returns which are due by November 15.

### **FES Website Provisions for Childrens' Information: Bette Bardeen**

Bette presented an idea to include pages of information specifically for children in the FES Website. The pages could include educational and/or entertainment material relevant to the e-seals She provided several pages of ideas that could be used and indicated that the School Committee might be interested in adding others. She had no specifics on time required to prepare a Childrens' section, possible costs and man-hours involved. After a brief discussion, the Board moved/seconded/approved authorizing Bette to continue with developing a completed proposal for consideration by the Board.

**Research Committee:** Bill Goodger reported that he had contacted Pat Robinson who is our speaker at the November 12 docent dinner about coming early on Saturday to meet with the Research Committee regarding collaborative research and maybe making a trip to the bluffs before his presentation. The Research Committee was contacting several people to be speakers at our dinner meetings. No firm arrangements were set at present. Brian Hatfield will be at the November meeting to receive the Best Friend for Life award from FES.

**School Groups:** Lisa Harper Henderson reported for Peter Firth who was not able to be present. Several requests for school visits have already been received from area schools including a visit this Saturday by 100 middle school students from Santa Monica.

**Training:** Polly Tatton reported that 44 people attended the Basic Training Session September 12. This number included 15 Fall trainees, current docents and Guests. ( Guests were from Marine Mammal Center, PB Light Station, Morro Bay Natural History Museum, State Parks) Polly reported that we have a total of 18 new docents in 2016 in the Fall Class and 3 in the Spring Class.

**Table:** Christel Chesney reported that manning of the table is doing well with nearly every day covered. Bob Grosse commented that with the future increase of visitors as discussed by the FES Board back in August and by the possible changes of National Monument status, the present table facility with folding tables and a few tubs of merchandise hauled out to the bluffs each day is less effective that it could be. Bob suggested that it is time to review some method of making a more permanent display that could include t-shirts, sweatshirts and other items that are unable to be sold on the bluffs at present. A discussion arose about the importance of table sales for FES budgeting and possible alternative methods. It was agreed to form a team to consider table improvements with Dave Bauer, Lynette Harrison, Christel Chesney and Dawn Fiegel as members.

**Finance Committee:** Tim Bridwell reported statements previously forwarded to the Board Members by Treasurer Goodger. He thanked Bill Goodger for his support in working with members of the finance committee to resolve issues. Tim reported that some areas of concern had recently been recognized with regard to the FES endowment account in the SLO Community Foundation: When the initial account was established in 2013, FES had provided \$30,000 funding. It was mentioned that the opening account according to the Foundation was actually \$30,250 and Crystal clarified that another donor provided the \$250 directly to FES and FES then contributed the same amount to the endowment bringing the opening balance to \$30,250. Subsequently, a group of five contributors contributed another \$5,000 to the account. According to the Foundation when an Entity (such as FES) provides funds directly to the foundation, it

becomes what is defined as an “Agency” account, however when individuals contribute to the fund and designate the intentions for use of the funds, it becomes what is defined as a “Designated” account. Under General Accounting Principles (GAAP), an “Agency” account remains the “Asset” of the entity (FES), however the “Designated” account is an asset of the Foundation and cannot be recognized as an asset of the entity (FES). This created the need for changes in both the Profit and Loss statements as well as the Balance Sheet. A challenge now is that for multiple years, our books have been carrying an inflated asset level and corrections need to be made to adjust this now that this is realized. The method of adjustment is thought that perhaps an adjusting journal entry needs to be made to the 2016 unrestricted net assets (current 12/31/2015) however consultation with a CPA should first be sought. Tim will follow up with this matter.

a. Motion for SLO Community Foundation Account: Tim noted that the sole signee for the SLO Community Foundation account at present is Brant Kehoe who is not an officer of FES. In order to change the signatories to be current, Tim made the following motion:

Motion is made for the resolution of the Board of Directors that the organization’s President, Secretary and Treasurer be placed on the quarterly statement notification list from the SLO Community Foundation . Whereas the SLO Community Foundation has stated that such change statements must be reflected in the minutes of a Board of Directors meeting and be accompanied by a letter from the existing original signatory who is considered to be the “Fund Representative” who in this case is Brandt Kehoe. This letter from the fund representative must state a request for this change and include the current names and addresses of the new recipients of the statements. It is further resolved that the Board of Directors’ President will notify in writing of any new persons that may occupy the officer seats of these three persons including the new individual’s name and mailing address.

The motion was moved/seconded and approved by the Board.

b. Motion for Financial External Audit: Tim reported that financial records of FES had not been audited for several years, if ever, and that there was no mechanism in place to specify audit procedures or timing of such. Tim made the following motion:

Motion is made for the resolution of the Board of Directors that with the conclusion of financial calendar year 2016, that FES selects and retains a certified entity to conduct a standard Financial External Audit of the financial matters of the organization. It is further recommended that the Board resolve that an External Audit of this nature be conducted every three years in the future. This audit may be delegated to the Finance Committee for oversight of the Request for Proposal in solicitation of an entity to perform this audit and thus make final recommendation for this selection to the Board for their approval. The results of this audit will be made known to all members of the Finance Committee and the Board. If corrections or comments are noted by the audit entity, it will be the mutual responsibility of the Finance Committee and the Board to enter into corrective action. The entity selected to perform this audit must be certified in such audit activities and have sufficient experience in this practice with similar scope for not-for-profit organizations.

The motion was moved/seconded and approved by the Board.

c. CA Secretary of State Business Entity Detail: Tim reported that the FES Business Entity Detail currently on file with the CA Secretary of State does not have a current FES officer listed as “Agent for Service of Process” as is required. Revision of the Business Entity Detail requires a letter from the Board. Dave Bauer agreed to draft a letter from FES to the Secretary of State office as required.

d. Tax Accountant: Tim reported that required FES tax documents have not been completed on time. Tim and Bill Goodger agreed to begin search for a new accountant who can support FES financial needs including filing tax documents, creating reports, and auditing.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Bill Goodger presented the Treasurer’s reports as of September 18, 2016. He reported a Net Income to date of -\$13,213.89 and Total Assets of \$120,583.91. He noted that the financial status overall is satisfactory and should end the fiscal year on budget overall. A discussion of the finances ensued with the recommendation that in order to improve the balance by the end of the year, trash pickup by our contractor be reduced from three times a week to two times a week. No other financial actions other than continued oversight were recommended.

**Marketing:** Dawn Fiegel reported that she has a Marketing Committee in place and at work on membership activities. Dawn commented that a number of FES activities have a significant marketing impact: She included the website, various promotions, cooperative agreements with other organizations, and the representation by over 70 docents on the bluffs in August. She reported that the end-of-the-year Membership Drive will take place later this fall.

**Presidents Report:** Dave Bauer discussed a new outreach program to be performed during the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year with a universal program available to present at clubs and organizations around SLO County. Dave described the program as about 20 minutes long with general interest information on the e-seals and an invitation to join in membership. His goal is to make the presentation to every service club and organization in the County.

**Staff Reports: Lisa Harper Henderson:** Lisa Harper Henderson proposed the following dates for FES Dinners during 2017: February 11, April 29, August 19, November 4. She commented that all of the dinners were scheduled for Saturdays and asked for comment. There was a brief discussion on times and days to schedule the dinners; the consensus was that Saturday evenings seem to be the most acceptable time/days. Lisa reported that the total number of active docents is 105 including several on medical leave, substitutes and office volunteers.

**Staff Reports: Dawn Fiegel:** Dawn Fiegel discussed problems in manning the Visitor Center at present with no docents available to keep the Center open for sales on a planned schedule. She explained that the center needs to be open regularly especially on weekends to maximize sales potential. A discussion on staffing ensued with several Board members agreeing to fill in occasionally. Lisa agreed to contact docents who do not take a regular turn on the bluffs and ask them to serve in the office. She will prepare a schedule with available people.

**SSTA Meeting:** Lynette Harrison reported attending a recent San Simeon Tourism Association meeting where the Association approved a grant of \$6223.33 for FES in support of a new projector for presentations and expanding the foreign language wi-fi capabilities at the bluffs. She reported that FES is highly regarded and warmly welcomed.

**Old Business:** At the August 17 Board meeting, concerns about the use of first years docents for the table and school groups were discussed. Abby Adams agreed to rewrite the A6 guidelines to address the discussion. In the absence of Abby, no written policy was available.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 pm.

Submitted:

Bob Grosse

Acting Secretary

**Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, October 19, 2016, at 1:00 pm.**