

**Friends of the Elephant Seal
Board Meeting
October 19, 2016**

Board Members Present: Dave Bauer (President) Bill Goodger (Treasurer), Abby Adams (Secretary), Mary Forbes, Polly Tatton, Tim Bridwell, Lynette Harrison

Board Members Absent: Bob Grosse, Christel Chesney

Also Present: Lisa Harper Henderson, Donovan Marley, Shirley and Jeff Weir, Sharkey Warrick, Dawn Fiegel, Kris Baird

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

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the September 21 Board Minutes.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Dave Bauer introduced docents Shirley and Jeff Weir. Jeff inquired about the correct numbers, such as the number of visitors yearly and seal counts. Dave said that the Docent Training manual was up to date on various seal statistics, but that the number for yearly visitors was an estimate. Based on docent clicker counts, there are about 150,000; but total visitors is probably over a million a year. The State Parks will be installing a laser counter later this year to count the number of cars that enter the parking lots.

REPORTS

National Monument: Donovan Marley

1. Donovan attended the Rendezvous by Conservation Lands Foundation meeting and updated the group on the National Monument initiative.
2. He shared a copy of the September 16 SLO Tribune article.
3. Greenpeace has written a letter of support of the initiative to President Obama thanks to the work of Misty Wycoff.
4. He shared a Greenwire article: National Monuments: These are the places Obama may protect by January.

Finance: Tim Bridwell

1. Tim met with the Finance Committee on Monday. The Committee is working on the non profit tax statement. A CPA has been selected for this task
2. The committee recommends that the Board be reminded that several years ago the Finance Committee made a recommendation to the Board, of which they subsequently agreed, and as such were reflected in the minutes at that time, that an amount of \$50,000 always remain in reserve for the rainy day fund.
3. The previous reports have been corrected and realigned.
4. Sharkey Warrick was invited to join us today to share the history of the Endowment Fund.

Treasurer/Finance: Bill Goodger

1. Bill thanked Tim Bridwell for his help in balancing the Balance Sheet.
2. Dawn shared that FES just received a \$2000 donation from the Rousseau Foundation for the internship program.
3. The Board approved Bill's recommendation that the \$4560.50 currently in the Docent Jacket Deposits line item, be decreased to \$500.00 of which Dave agreed and mentioned that this was a Treasurer's prerogative to do so.
4. Although the Profit and Loss statement shows a \$15,417 deficit, the profits are now heading in the right direction to cover this by the end of the year.

Publications: Mary Forbes

1. Mary reported that the Publications Committee is a well oiled machine under Barbara Seller's leadership.
2. She suggested in future publications including more information about the concerns about

drones. Dawn commented that if the publications went digital, the actual sounds of drones could be added.

Research: Bill Goodger

1. On November 12, the committee will have a luncheon meeting with Pat Robertson (researcher from Ano Nuevo), then take him to the bluff prior to his address at the Docent Dinner that night.
2. At the Docent Dinner, Brian Hatfield will be presented with a “Best Friend Forever” award.

School Groups: Abby Adams

1. Abby thanked Lisa for scheduling the first September school group of 113 participants when Peter was on vacation. Polly shared that the group arrived forty minutes early prior to the school group docents arrival; but that Diana Barnhart and bluff docents rose to the occasion.
2. Peter is now scheduling four groups through November. Many other schools are beginning to sign-up for visits during winter pupping season. Polly asked if we had a set capacity of how many groups/students we can cover each year. Abby responded that we now require five weeks notice on requests, but there is not a limit. The School Groups Committee will look at our data as well as bluff coverage needs this year to determine if we need to set limits.
3. The school groups presentation by Peter Frith and Diana Barnhart at the October 8 Docent University session was well received.
4. On November 4 there will be a School Groups Appreciation luncheon at Dave Bauer’s home.
5. On November 16 at 11:00, there will be a School Groups training session in the room used for Board meetings (prior to the Board meeting).

Training: Polly Tatton

1. Polly introduced docent Kris Baird who led us in a chant that she wrote. We joined in the refrain “We are e-seal docents”, clap, clap (to the tune of “We will, we will rock you”). The Board agreed that this would be a fun addition to our February Docent Appreciation Dinner.
2. The new docent training has been going well, both the training sessions and mentoring! Twenty-one different mentors have supported the fifteen fall docents. The final session and graduation lunch is this Saturday.
3. Twelve different visitors (from outside agencies/organizations) have attended parts of our training, as well as ten current docents. These additional chairs at the training sessions cost \$10 per session. Dave mentioned that the cost to train each docent is about \$800.

Membership/Marketing: Dawn Fiegel

1. Dawn thanked her committee that includes Mary Forbes, Christel Chesney, Shirley and Jeff Weir. Personal relationships with individuals and organizations are the keys to increasing membership, sales, and donations.
2. Dawn is working on the e-vite and flyers for the January and February Exploratories.
3. There are plans to share more information about FES membership with docents who are not members.

Endowment: Sharkey Warrick

1. In the early years of FES, the organization tried a number of fund raising ideas that did not bring in much revenue.
2. This changed due to new efforts. In 2010-11, after obtaining state cooperating agreements, FES was allowed to sell merchandise and install donation tubes on the bluff. Donovan Marley’s ideas and campaign to have individual and corporate memberships to FES also brought increased revenues.
3. The Finance Committee decided to start an endowment fund in 2013 by FES providing the funds directly which currently has \$35,446 which is now called Fund L. Fund A is the fund that was given by individuals providing the funds for use by FES which currently has \$5760. Sharkey recommended continuing to reinvest the revenue generated by the funds with the idea that by 2020 our goal would be to have a 1 million dollars in the endowment. This would be generated by wills, trusts, and property. This would provide us potentially to draw \$40,000 for use in operating expenses. The final point being that there is a fund A and a fund C in our endowment account at the foundation. These funds for accounting purposes are listed differently fund A is in the balance sheet at the foundation whereas Fund L is on our balance sheet. Both funds A and L

are available for our use in drawing funds for our operating expenses. Currently, we only have \$2,292.00 from Fund L and \$581.00 from Fund A that we can draw funds for our operating expenses. That's the combination of "Fund Spending" for the accounts as of September 30.

4. Dawn shared that she sends a yearly legacy appeal for friends to remember FES in their wills.

Staff: Dawn Fiegel

1. The oldest printer in the office is failing. A recent donation of \$4500 will be used for the purchase of a new laser printer.
2. Dawn is currently placing orders for the new equipment provided by the SSTA grant.

Staff: Lisa Harper Henderson

1. Lisa is enjoying getting to know the new docents. They have successfully submitted their schedules for November, their first official month on the bluff.
2. She asked if the 4 dates in 2017 she suggested last month for docent dinners were good. The Board responded positively to the dates: February 11, April 29, August 19 and November 4.
3. Women docents have asked about the possibility of more shirt options (v-neck and/or polo shirts). Dawn shared that in the past, the costs were high. In the board discussion, no action was suggested at this time.
4. There continues to be lack of volunteer coverage in the Visitor Center on weekends from 11:00 to 2:00. This will become more of a problem soon because Jody Brown, who often covers Sundays, will be moving. After some discussion about the low number of visitors to the office, especially in the winter, we decided that we would not address this further, but may re-visit the topic in the summer of 2017.

President's: Dave Bauer

1. Dave will set-up an FES table for the Greenspace author presentation on November 13 at the Cambria Vet's Hall.
2. State Park Ranger Rob Chambers will soon retire.
3. SSTA is supportive of our plans for the 20th anniversary of FES. Diana Barnhart will be involved in producing a powerpoint for use in presentations to community groups.
4. Tim Bridwell agreed to draft the By Laws text regarding the need for an ongoing three-year audit of FES finances.
5. Drones continue to be a problem. After discussing whether to have a clipboard in the office to note drone encounters, we decided that docents should just note any problems in the journals.

Old Business

1. Abby Adams shared that after the August meeting, she shared a draft of new language with Dave Bauer and Polly Tatton for the Operational Guidelines regarding first year docents participation in school groups and the sales table on the bluff. The three concluded that the new language was cumbersome and recommend that our Operational Guidelines **not** be changed. Instead we will continue to use common sense on determining if first year docents' interest in helping in school groups and/or table sales is interfering with learning about/interpreting the elephant seal life cycle.

New Business

1. Lynette sought Board support of videographer Mark Chiolis permit request to use a drone to obtain shoreline footage of the elephant seals. After much discussion, the Board did not agree to this request. The Board remains very concerned about any drone use in the rookery.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 with an executive session to follow.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, November 16 at 1:00.

Respectively Submitted,
Abby Adams
Board Member and Secretary