

**Friends of the Elephant Seal
Meeting Board of Directors**

October 18, 2017

(Prepared 11/11/17)

Friends of the Elephant Seal is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating people about elephant seals and other marine life and to teaching stewardship of the central coast of California

Present: Lynette Harrison, Polly Tatton, Stephen Beck, Sue King, Bill Goodger, Kathy Dowding, Bob Grosse; Lisa Harper Henderson and Wendy Sheridan-- Staff Members; Dave Bauer, Cam Arnold— Guests.

Absent: Tim Bridwell, Mary Forbes (both excused)

Open: 12:58 PM

Minutes of June 21 Meeting: It was moved to approve the minutes of the September 20 Board meeting. Moved Stephen, 2nd Sue. Approved.

Request for Public Comment on State Parks MND by Nov 6th: Dave Bauer discussed the request for public comment on the State Parks Mitigated Negative Declaration for developments in the Piedras Blancas area. He noted that three project areas are involved: The Boucher Trail from VP4 to the Light House; installation of public restrooms at VP4 and the planned campground site; and campground development in the vicinity of the Piedras Blancas Motel site. He recommended that we comment in detail on the Boucher Trail and the VP4 restroom projects since we are quite knowledgeable about those areas through our long history and expertise with the elephant seals and visitors to the area and confine our comments on the campground to specific portions that might impact on the elephant seals. A general discussion ensued on preparation of the comments.

Committee Reports:

Staff – Kathy. Kathy provided a written report by e-mail (Appendix A) and provided printouts of daily clicker counts and receipts from the Visitor Center for September. In addition, She reported that the Office 365 program is to start tonight (Wednesday, Oct 18); she noted that the Visitor and Clicker Counts for October to date are about the same as in September, She recommend FES support the coming Cambria Festival of Trees and noted that Wendy and Brian Sheridan have donated a tree they created; the proceeds of the auction of that tree will be donated to FES.

Finance-Bill: Bill provided the financial reports and a comment sheet (Appendix B) In addition he discussed plans to deposit part of the \$40,000 Witter grant in the Vanguard Fund and the balance in money market funds. He advised that members of the Finance Committee planned to be at the November Board meeting to discuss the grant and other financial matters.

Publications-Mary. Lynette reported for Mary that the Among Friends newsletter is on track for the winter issue.

Research—Bill. Bill provided a report via e-mail on research topics (Appendix C). A general discussion arose over whether there needed to be discussion of the pilot program at the November meeting as

previously decided at the September board meeting. Several Board members indicated that they had questions on the program that they would like to discuss further. It was agreed that time would be set aside at the November meeting to discuss the pilot program.

School Groups—Stephen. Stephen provided a report on school groups (Appendix D). Lisa commented that scheduling of docents for the school groups appears to be working well.

Training—Polly. Polly provided reports on the Training Program (Appendix E) and changes made to the Training Manual (Appendix F). She commented that the Training Committee is working on reorganizing itself with the resignation of Polly as Chair Person.

Table—Sue. Sue provided a report on Table concerns (Appendix G). She recommended that a map to the FES office be made so that table customers can find the office for items not available at the table.

Development—Lynette. Lynette reported that work is underway on preparing the end-of-the-year membership mailing. She noted that help was needed to hand address the letters. A discussion arose suggesting asking docents who cannot serve bluff shifts or friends of the docents to work on the envelopes.

Staff Reports: Lisa requested Board members to consider who they would nominate for the Docent of the Year award to be given in February.

Old Business:

Lopez Lake Outdoor Festival: Sue reported that the Lopez Lake Outdoor Festival was a good opportunity to tell people about the e-seals and was worth while doing again next year. (Appendix H)

History Project/20th Anniversary: Lynette reported (Appendix I) on status of the History Project and the 20th Anniversary program. Cam Arnold reported on plans for publicizing the 20th Anniversary. A general discussion arose over who to contact and when for the 20th Anniversary publicity.

SSTA Meeting – Lynette reported that the SSTA meeting this month was primarily dedicated to a presentation of the new “Visit San Simeon” website that is being designed by Solterra. Lynette advised their board about the MND released in October and that FES was going to be completing a response due to no mitigation plan in place to address the seals hauling out at Arroyo del Corral. They were notified of our open house occurring November 25th & 26th & advised that FES is willing to include coupons from other businesses in the blue canvas Elephant Seals bags supplied to FES (DIVA spa was interested). Finally, we advised them that we are developing a publicity plan surrounding our March 10th 20th anniversary celebration with the hopes that the CBID might be willing to sponsor a journalist to cover the event.

Storage at PB Motel—Lynette reported that she has the keys for the storage area so that we begin using it after repairs are completed.

New Business:

Replacement Board Members--Lynette remarked that replacement Board members will be needed for

Polly and Bill, both expiring terms in December. She asked the Board members to suggest candidates.

Jack Witter Grant –Lynette advised that discussion on how to use the Jack Witter grant is being deferred until the Board checks to see if the Executor has any information or expectation on use of the donated funds.

Exploratories: A general discussion over how to do the Exploratories this year took place with alternatives of doing them on the bluffs or in the office and discussion of dates for the birthing and mating season and molting seasons. It was agreed to try holding the exploratories at the bluffs; no schedule of dates was set. Discussion also took place about staffing of the exploratories similar to doing school tours.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn was made by Stephen. 2nd Polly. Approved
Adjourned at 3:39 pm
Submitted,

Bob Grosse
Secretary

Next Meeting- Wednesday, November 15 at 1 pm.

Appendix A

FES Staff Update – October Board Meeting – 2017

- See attached report for “traffic” and associated receipts in the Visitor Center during office hours for September and MTD for October. September reflects a decrease over August (which was the best month to date) ; October seems to be trending with September.
- Staff job descriptions have been finalized...for now and are attached to this report.
- Performance Reviews for Staff are completed. Thanks to the Board for their input.
- Computer/Email resolution – Office 365 has been ordered; currently waiting for receipt. Kathy is following up with Michael Harrison(Growth & Technology, Inc.). Latest update is that staff and board email addresses are being structured to eliminate email confusion by keeping the email “names” discreet for each function.
- Docent Newsletter – Kathy and Lisa met by phone twice with Michael (Growth & Technology, Inc.) to review template in Campaign Monitor that will work for the vision and functionality that we want for the updated newsletter.
- During training, a question arose on docent “drive times” (commute time to the bluffs for which docents receive volunteer credit). This led to a review of past drive time allowances and the necessity to document the process for determining correct drive times. Kathy and Lisa are documenting the process and will share with the Board asap!
- Festival of the Trees – See email from Wendy regarding this event. Please share the word and plan to attend and/or encourage others to attend this event on 11/30. Wendy and Brian deserve our support and gratitude for their contribution of their time and talents to FES. Proceeds of the Tree they designed and that will be auctioned that night will go to FES. MANY THANKS WENDY AND BRIAN!!
- The next Docent Dinner is scheduled for Saturday, November 4th at the Cambria Vet’s Hall at 5pm. The assistance of all in helping with the setup is greatly appreciated. Please arrive by 4pm.
- November 25 and 26 Open House: Please let Wendy know if you are willing to work a 2 hour shift (10am – 12pm, 12pm – 2 pm, 2pm – 4pm) on either day.
- Office Calendar notes: Marcella is currently on vacation (through 10/23); Wendy is scheduled for Jury Duty on 10/23: we will keep you posted.

Appendix B

Finance report for October board meeting

1. There has been discussion by the finance committee and Tim Bridwell regarding the deposit of the \$40,000 from the Jack Witter Family trust. There are no special requirements or intended purposes for these funds. The consensus by the finance committee is to split the funds between the endowment and Vanguard. There could be some funds left in the money market if we decided to fund any Witter thank you or provide support to existing programs as some docents have suggested. I have decided to present to the board the following proposal that we put \$20,000 in Vanguard and leave the rest in the money market until the Nov board meeting. Vanguard is doing well and the funds are such that they are liquid enough to provide at least 6 months of backup in case of any financial losses that are unexpected. In addition Vanguard has been increasing on average about \$1000 per month. Tim is supportive of this proposal. At the Nov board meeting which Tim will be at, the board can decide what to do with the remaining funds in the money market as this would not be a good place to leave this amount of money very long at about a 1.5 % return. Also, Sharkey and possibly Bill Johnson will attend the Nov Board meeting to assist in the discussion regarding the endowment.

2. I have sent the GAAP version of the balance sheet and P&L for all of you who want to see how we look without any of our investments. I also have sent the cash flow version which shows how much money we really have. In addition you are receiving the comparison of our income sources.

Comparison through Oct 13, 2017-comments:

Membership continues to be ahead ;on-line increasing a little

FES shop and tube donations continue to increase reflection office being open and tubes taking table contributions when table is not there.

Table sales and contribution did not change

Balance sheet comments

Almost \$186000 in assets and probably need to consider more jacket writeoffs to keep up with Pollys recruitment of docents .

P&L comments

lots of \$ in misc contributions and grants under income or Net income is absurd

salary will probably go over budget but that is not always such a bad thing when you have good people

3. I have sent out requests for 2018 budgets from all the heads of all the committees with a deadline of Nov 6 which would be just before our finance committee budget meeting on the 8th. No budget returned no line item on the 2018 FES budget-just kidding and of course another check to see if you are reading reports.

Appendix C

Research report for October board meeting

1. I have some great news regarding the planned research during the 2018 breeding season and I will provide an e-mail (see below) I sent to the graduate students in charge of the pilot research one of which was an intern in our intern program. Melissa definitely understands the difference between harassment and research and is very familiar with our rookery meaning all the beaches meaning she did about 10 surveys with me in both the breeding and molting seasons .

Melissa and Cameron,

“Thanks for all the work to make sure that the pilot project can go forward with FES. I talked to both presidents today about what we discussed yesterday and they were very relieved as I was. The plan to do the pilot at remote beaches such as Tartoga, Middle beach, Arroyo del corral, and arroyo laguna make sense. In addition to train and use the number of students from Cal Poly including our interns makes perfect sense. I will monitor your training and implementation so you probably need to provide me with a schedule. This will provide me with background to provide answers to questions that docents might ask. I have attached the summary of tagging through the end of 2016 to give you an idea of tagging program since 2010. The presidents do not see a need for either one of you to attend any future Board meetings at this point . I will keep you abreast of concerns and questions moving forward.”

The interesting point above beyond the beaches selected all resight will be done by trained Cal Poly students that will be a new course in biological sciences that already has more than 30 student signed up. Cal Poly has finally realized the ocean and all its potential for young students looking for exciting careers. Also, because this is a pilot project in 2018 the numbers will substantially reduced.

In addition to the NOAA and State park permits this research received an IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and use Committee permit) This committee oversees and makes recommendations regarding policy for **Cal Poly's** animal facilities and their care including research and courses not on campus.

2. Keith Mueller still working on his paper “Dives of elephant seals”.

3. The committee now has a near final draft for the docent only section of the website on “Effects of Age on Apnea and normal breathing in subadult and adult male Northern elephant seals” by Jenni Rind and honors graduate student from Scotland.

4. The committee met with Tim Bridwell our MC for the docent dinner on Nov 4th . see e-mail attachment entitled meeting oct 2 tim2. Essentially we decided on a process which will be initiated by questions docents will write on 3x5 cards placed at their table which can be collected before we start. There also will be 3x5 cards in the office for this purpose as docents sign up . Then tim will control the interaction between docents asking questions and committee members. Each one of us has also submitted to Tim areas of interest and questions related to those areas.

5. Brandt and tim have upgraded the docent only website and it is easier to browse through with regard to the scientific reports and the Piedras Blancas and Ano Nuevo research.

6. Tim and I are working on a new age category field id system using real pictures of seals rather than drawings.
7. We continue to add resighted seals by our docents to our database each month.
8. The announcement just went out for the 2018 intern program with the intern decision to be made around Dec 1.

Appendix D

October School Report to the FES Board

Since our September Board meeting we have not had any school visits to the bluff but we continue to receive requests to have school outings scheduled.

Lisa is working with the contacts from the inquiring schools to get the visits scheduled. Currently we have about 11 future school outings posted on SignUp with a couple more that are about to be confirmed and posted. Three visits from the Crossroads School are scheduled for the last week in October. Other scheduled outings stretch out to as far away as April 2018.

As many may now know, State Parks has told Duffy Burns that he is not to continue to volunteer as a FES Docent because of the Partnership Agreement we have with State Parks and because his work for State Parks is considered to be too similar to our FES docent work. While we won't be having Duffy on the bluff wearing a blue FES shirt for now, he told me that we can expect to see much of him working with us as a State Parks employee. Duffy enjoys working with school outings and he is scheduled to be with us as a State Parks employee on our next three school outings.

Appendix E

October 2017 Training Committee FES Board Report

16 Trainees set to complete training October 21. 17th was unable to attend Advanced Training Classes due to work conflicts. Graduation Luncheon is October 21.

FYI 2016 docents from Cal Poly and Cuesta...both ran into issues preventing them from meeting the one year commitment. One may return in January.

Clarified information re First Aid on the bluff with Dale Kinney, Supervising Ranger.

Emergency and Accident Forms Envelope for Packs – now reads

Emergency and Accident Forms 2017

Also enclosed – a list of Medical Facilities in the area

Injuries on the bluff:

FES Docents are not expected to provide care but to facilitate obtaining care.

-First aid- Call the Ranger they will come to the bluff.

-For more care: Provide list of Medical Care Facilities in the area

-Emergencies: Call 911

Appendix F

Updates for the Fall 2017 Docent Handbook

The Docent Handbook has been updated. – Stephen Beck is the committee member who is the Handbook Editor (see list of changes).

Section 2 of Handbook - Elephant Seals

What's Happening Yearly. Changed “The Breeding Season” to read “The Birthing and Breeding Season” (T. Postiff)

Piedras Blancas Population Charts. Updated for this year's pup count by B. Hatfield. The pup multiplier for estimating seal population was changed to 4.4 as suggested by B. Goodger.

Live Pup and Weaner Counts. B. Hatfield's report on his pup count for this year added.

Elephant Seal Vision. Modified second paragraph. (T. Postiff & S. Beck)

E-Seal Vocalizations. Updated. (T. Postiff)

Pinniped Evolution. New document. (S. Beck & T. Postiff)

Pinniped Adaptations. Updated by T. Postiff.

Tagging Elephant Seals. Rewrite by T. Postiff.

Frequently Asked Questions about E-Seals. Several updates and metric measurements have been added. (T. Postiff & S. Beck)

The Predators. Updated about where sharks live in the ocean. (T. Postiff)

Section 3 of Handbook - Daily Operations

Research Materials Index. Updated to list our more recent publications. (B. Sellers)

Section 4 of Handbook - On The Bluff

Fencing Referencing Numbers. New document added. (P. Tatton)

Section 5 of Handbook - Mentoring & Scheduling

Mentoring Program Description. Updated. (P. Tatton)

Section 7 of Handbook - Whales, Dolphins & Porpoises

Introduction to Cetaceans. Updated. (T. Postiff)

Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises. Updated and blue whale added. (B. Sellers & T. Postiff)

Whale Watching Calendar. New document. (T. Postiff)
Section 10 of Handbook - The Ocean Environment
Plastic Debris in the Ocean. Updated. (S. Beck)
October 5, 2017

Appendix G

October Table Report

We were not able to man the table for all the days of this month, due to multiple docents traveling. We have lost one full-time table docent. I am training one docent this month.

We held a Table Meeting with 11 of the 18 table docents attending, on Friday October 5 and discussed better communication with the FES office, consistency of procedures and the new items that are available to sell.

Canvas bags have been ordered to replace the plastic bags that are not holding up. Two new tables are on order as the old grey tables have structure problems.

Comments made from our docents:

They like the new items available.

Suggest a printed card with address and map to our Office, that we can give to visitors who express an interest in buying items (like jewelry and shirts) that we typically do not bring out to the bluff.

Different ways of setting up displays on the tables were discussed.

Submitted, Sue King

Appendix H

6th Annual Discover Outdoors at Lopez Lake

This was the first time FES participated at the Outdoor Discovery Fair. The SLO County Parks and Recreation was the host, and we learned that this was also the first time the event was hosted in the autumn. It is usually hosted in the Spring.

The Outdoor Discovery Fair is an information venue, not geared toward sales. We did not sell any e-seal stuffies. However, we did hand out half of the newsletters that we brought and the skull was a real draw. We had pretty consistent foot traffic most of the day. Bob and I spoke with lots of families and many who were new to the area.

My thanks go to Bob Grosse, who stayed with me all day, and Cheryl Vance who arrived to help set up. This event was well run with plenty of volunteers available to help set up pop-ups, put sand bags around the legs and unload cars. Unfortunately, about 3:00 the wind gusted and we lost our pop-up. Due to extreme heat, and no shade, we qualified as an "emergency" early pack up. The Park service people moved all our stuff down to my car and even escorted me out the back way (thru a locked gate!) so Bob

and I were able to leave an hour early. Foot traffic had slowed by then so we were not disappointed that we avoided the congested pack-up an hour later.
Should we repeat participating In this event: yes .

Submitted, Sue King

Appendix I

History Project / 20th Anniversary Board Update October 18, 2018

History Project

- October Docent Newsletter released – Included several articles related to FES history
- November Docent Newsletter
 - Release date – by November 10th (prior to Thanksgiving)
 - Will be mostly devoted to FES History
- Among Friends Article –
 - Winter Edition - Ready to be submitted to Publication Committee - Focus is on the problem & Solution that led to FES being formed
 - Spring & Summer editions – We would like to include articles on Accomplishments (spring) and Future (Summer).
- Core Document – Will included the following
 - History of FES - On schedule to be finalized by November 9th.
 - Accomplishments – Team will have key accomplishments document. Will need Board assistance to fill in the gaps
 - Future Plans – Board will need to provide once retreat has occurred & long term vision identified.
- Website – Looking to have History document/pictures added to elephantseal.org Website by Thanksgiving.

20th Anniversary Celebration

- Scheduled for March 10th @ Hearst Castle Theater.
- November 4th Docent dinner - will request assistance from docents to help identify unknown docents in class photos and will also request docents provide thoughts/memories of their experiences.
- Ann Grossman contacted – Team meeting with her October 24th
- Master list of docents being compiled – Will be turned over to Diana Teetzel to add addresses
- Invitations will be going out by mid-January – Mock up being developed
- Souvenir Booklet – 95% complete. Will be FES history told by docent quotes, interview quotes and newspaper article quotes
- Publicity plan – Cam Arnold to plan & coordinate. Needs Board feedback on audience we are trying to attract. Excellent opportunity to increase membership/donations if our story is told well.

