

FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
June 20, 2018 1:00 PM
CAVALIER PLAZA

Mission: 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 for the ocean off the central coast of California.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND DIRECTOR ROLL CALL: 1:05 PM

Tim Bridwell, Lynette Harrison, Michael O'Bannon, Stephen Beck, Kathy Curtis, Sue King, Cam Arnold, Wayne Attoe, Wendy Sheridan (Staff), Deborah Wey (guest), Nick Chase (Ranger, California Dept. State Parks), James Grennan (State Parks Public Safety and Acting Coastal Region Superintendent)

APPROVAL OF May 16, 2018 BOD MINUTES (King, Curtis, unanimous)

COOPERATING GROUP LIAISON REPRESENTATIVES AND GUESTS PRESENT: ALL ARE ASKED TO INTRODUCE THEMSELVES AND PROVIDE REPORTS IF APPLICABLE

James Grennan Discussed plans for training ALL local state park volunteers, of which there are around 400 working with the Coastal Discovery Center (CDC), Harmony Headlands, Friends of the Elephant Seal. Such training is being planned and will be coordinated with FES Docent Training programs.

PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD

- None

STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS (Appended)

In addition, King reported that Curtis and Attoe will be trained for table duty; the practicality of two people splitting a six-hour table shift. Sheridan reported that use of the storage unit is being improved. Beck proposed a 'thank you' event for school program docents. The Greenspace Creekside Reserve in Cambria was suggested as a location.

BOARD ACTIONS: Discussion and action

- Lynette Harrison approved for second term. (Bridwell, King, unanimous)
- Discussion of Honorary Friend Status for folks who have helped FES to an exceptional extent. Harrison and Arnold will bring the Board a detailed proposal.
- Discussion of potential changes to bylaws language. The Board accepted the proposed alterations previously distributed. (Bridwell, O'Bannon, unanimous)
- Sheridan distributed a sample packet that could be used for Business Membership Solicitation. Following discussion it was agreed to give feedback to Arnold by July 1. Fund-raising for Visitor Center exhibit development was also discussed.
- Shift requirements for Board Directors was discussed, along with reducing shift staffing in the summer. Bridwell and Harrison will prepare a procedure.
- Bridwell cautioned that Board Members shouldn't be overloaded with additional responsibilities.
- Retreat follow up and actions in future regarding strategic goals
 - VC Enlargement and Enhancement. A group is discussing this.

- Increased Docent Base and Categorization. See Harrison's report (appended)
- Stabilize Funding (not discussed)

The Board voted to put the 'Best View' sign out on Friday, June 29. (Bridwell, Harrison, unanimous)

OTHER BUSINESS

- Goodger Memorial Update Discussion. Details regarding procedure, payment and installation were discussed by Grennan. FES needs to acquire a 4" x 6" inscribed plaque.
- Unfavorable Comment & Changes to Google SEO. Arnold attended meeting and spoke to the issue.
- Office 365 email set up. Harrison reported on progress and difficulties. Directors are advised to pursue this technology.
- Intern Program Continuance. Report appended. Curtis handed out a draft for future and asks for comments.

PRESIDENT(S) REPORT

- SSTA meeting. Issues: Lack of signage; seals at W.R. Hearst State Beach (leave them alone); public service announcements during birthing/mating season.
- New Printing of Eseal News

NEW BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING at 3:37 pm. (O'Bannon, Arnold, unanimous)

CONVENE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION at 3:40 pm. Adjourned at 3:59 pm. (Attoe, King, unanimous)

RECONVENE REGULAR BOARD MEETING at 3:59 pm. (Arnold, King, unanimous)

- Nomination and Election of Deborah Wey as Board Member. (Bridwell, O'Bannon, unanimous)
- Incoming new Board Members and Committee Assignments. To be determined.

ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING. 4 pm. By Consensus

Submitted by Wayne Attoe, Secretary

FES Board Meeting June 20, 2018

Research Report

1. In late May, Tim Postiff has announced the completion of “citizen science” docent observations of SAM-1 and SAM-2 elephant seals on VP3 South and North beaches during the Spring molt. Data was collected from March through May, 2018. Tim presented an interim summary at the quarterly docent continuing education dinner on May 20, 2018. The final report is pending.
2. Keith Mueller has agreed to manage the monthly tag resighting data base, starting in mid-June. Wendy Sheridan will prepare copies of the monthly resighting logs and Keith will reformat, enter into a data base, and distribute to Brian Hatfield, research committee members and provide copies for the office files.
3. Susana Gonzalez and Catie Michel completed the FES 2018 internship with a culminating presentation entitled, *Presence of Sub-Adult and Adult Male Northern Elephant Seals at Piedras Blancas During the Spring Molt*, at the docent continuing education dinner on May 20, 2018. The presentation was well-received and evoked a lively discussion of related research questions.
4. A draft report of the outcomes of the Spring 2018 intern project has been distributed to Research Committee members and docent investigators for review and comment. Following the peer review process, the white paper, *Presence of Sub-Adult and Adult Male Northern Elephant Seals at Piedras Blancas During the Spring Molt*, will be added to the [Piedras Blancas Research Reports](#) repository on the FES docent website.

Publications Report

1. July 2 is the deadline for the next *Among Friends* newsletter articles to be submitted for review for the July 16 scheduled publication. Topics include:
 - Water Conservation in Elephant Seals (Kathy Curtis)
 - Foraging Behavior of the Female Elephant Seal (Kathy Hurrle)
 - The Role of Vibrasse (Tim Postiff)
 - Photo essay and overview of the Mud Creek road repair (Donovan Marley)
 - Brandt Kehoe’s article on gray whale migration will be deferred for inclusion in a future issue.
2. Donovan Marley and David Cooper, from the PB light Station, were given a VIP tour of the Mud Creek project by Cal Trans officials in support of the upcoming article(s) for *Among Friends* and *The Beacon* (which is the Light Station’s publication).

Submitted by Kathleen Curtis, June 17, 2018

June 2018 FES School Program Report

The Numbers for the 2017-2018 School Year.

For the 2017-2018 school year that finished a couple of weeks ago, we had 28 school visits and we welcomed about 1,941 students to the bluff. This year's numbers were very close to the 2016-2017 school year when we had close to 2,000 students from 31 school visits.

To run the program this year, I requested 194 docent school shifts on the "SignUp" website. FES docents covered 193 of the 194 school shifts. About 35 different docents covered the 193 school shifts. The attached spreadsheet provides additional information on our school visits for 2017-2018.

The FES School Sponsorship Program - Past and Present.

Here is a brief background on our school sponsorship program. Some years ago FES selected 15 schools that had a high percentage of students from low income households. For the selected schools, the FES school sponsorship program reimbursed student transportation expenses for outings to the elephant seal bluff. Since transportation reimbursement to all 15 schools would cost much more than what FES could budget for one year, we began a rotation system. We placed them into three groups of five schools. One group of five schools receive letters from FES each year offering student transportation reimbursement for a 4th and/or 5th grade field trip to our elephant seal rookery. We are missing one-third of the students by being on this three-year rotation.

Attached is a spread sheet that shows that for the past four years, we have not exceeded our annual budgeted amount of \$3,000 for transportation reimbursement. (An additional amount of \$1,550 came to our school sponsorship program this year from the SLO County Board of Supervisors as a result of grant work by Tim Bridwell. Thus, it is my understanding, that for this school year we had a total of \$4,550 set aside for this year's school sponsorship program.)

Our student transportation reimbursement costs for this 2017-2018 school year came to \$2,256. This year only two schools used our sponsorship offer. We received 274 FES sponsored students which is a cost of about \$8.23 per student.

Most of the fifteen schools bill us between \$300 and \$700. One of our larger schools has billed us up to \$1,347.

The FES School Sponsorship Program - Going Forward.

Our current sponsorship program has provided an enriching educational experience for many students. However, I would like you to consider the following modifications to the school sponsorship program so that one third of the students will not continue to be excluded from the experience of visiting the elephant seal rookery.

I suggest that we increase our annual budget from \$3,000 to \$4,000 and place a cap on the reimbursement amount that we offer for transportation.

I also suggest that we drop our sponsorship program for three of our fifteen schools; they would be Cambria Elementary, Oceano Elementary and Lillian Larsen Elementary. Here are my reasons. A few

years ago, I found that almost all of the 4th and 5th grade students visiting from Cambria Elementary School had been out to visit the seals prior to their visit. Oceano Elementary School has not shown an interest in accepting our sponsorship offer. Lillian Larsen Elementary comes to the bluff almost every year but has told me that they can afford their own transportation costs. I see no record of this school asking for our transportation reimbursement even in the years we offer it to them.

If we had just twelve schools in the program we could offer sponsorship to six schools each year instead of the current five (perhaps with a cap on the amount as mentioned above).

Beginning with the 2018 - 2019 school year we could inform the schools that have billed us in excess of \$850, that going forward the maximum transportation reimbursement from FES will be \$850. A reimbursement of \$850 to these few very large schools once every two years would cost us about the same as a transportation reimbursement of about \$1,300 once every three years. I would hope that these affected schools would pick up a bit of their added transportation cost and still send all of their 4th and 5th grade students. Of course, it is possible that they would limit the trip to one grade level so this might need further exploration in the coming years.

Question for the Board. Do we wish to continue our sponsorship program as we have operated in the past or do we wish to try to modify it to serve more students?

A School Group Docent Recognition Event & A School Program Committee Meeting.

For the few years that I have been working on FES school program outings, there has been a year end thank you party for our school docents at Dave Bauer's house. I think we should do something to thank our school docents for this past school year, but don't yet have a recommendation on what that should be.

I'm planning to hold our next school program committee meeting on either July 24 or 25th. It will be a review of this past year and plan for next year.

June 12, 2018

FES Board Meeting June 20

Training Activity Report

1. June 27, Training Committee Meeting – focus on Fall Training, Recruitment
2. Kathy Escobar is joining the Training Committee to handle facilities, food and documents. Kathy will replace Ginny Drew who has generously worked on the committee for six years.
3. Carolyn Chambers is considering joining the committee but feels she may not have enough time for training committee work right now.
4. Spring Class mentoring complete.
5. Fall 2017 Class Peer Reviews complete.
6. Recruitment activity in process:
 - a. Advertising July/Aug
 - b. Banners on Bluff

- c. Docent Cards
- d. Reminder to Docents in Docent Newsletter
- e. Social Media
- f. Zebra Radio
- g. Morro Bay Summer Solstice 6/23
- h. Docent Dinner 8/18
- i. Discovery Ocean Fair 8/25
- j. Discovery Saturdays
- k. Piedras Blancas Hike-Ins June 27, July 25, August 29

Outreach Activity Report

1. Wendy and I are working on an event calendar and date for FES public event.
2. Participating in Coastal Stakeholders Group
 - a. Joint training activities
 - b. Investigating Live tours / State Parks
3. Morro Bay Summer Solstice 6/23
4. Discovery Ocean Fair 8/25
5. Piedras Blancas Hike-Ins June 27, July 25, August 29
6. Article in NOAA Ocean Communicators Alliance SPLASH!
7. Oceans Clean Up Day – September 15
8. School Table on Bluff / Family Day / Summer Hours
9. Morro Bay Harbor Festival - October 8

June Board Report

Office and Visitor Center

Submitted by Wendy Sheridan

June 15, 2018

May ended a little stronger than April with \$2, 7821.00 in sales in the shop. June is looking strong as well; as of June 14th we have done over just \$1,659.00 in sales, and will certainly reach my monthly goal of \$2,000.00. I ran a Father's Day promotion for the San Simeon motels that should help to achieve, or hopefully exceed, the monthly goal.

I am very pleased to report that as of June 14th we have already exceeded the projected shop income for the entire year. Income to date is \$15,624 with a total of 2,396 visitors in the shop.

- We have 67 new members since January 1, 2018.
 - 31 Friend
 - 15 Good Friend

- 14 Great Friend
- 4 Best Friend
- 3 Friend for Life
- Repairs have been made to the bathroom and both the bathroom and storeroom have new flooring and have been reorganized.
- Thanks to the extra hours put in by Mary Forbes we have completed the inventory of merchandise in the shop and the motel storage unit. Going forward we will do two inventories a year, one in Oct./Nov. prior to birthing season and one in April/May prior to the summer season. I will, of course, still be doing ordering as required throughout the year to keep the shop stocked and interesting for visitors.
- By the time the board meets I will have completed ordering of new merchandise to take us through the summer season. There is some new merchandise in the shop so check it out if you haven't already.
- I have begun the reorganization of the storage area at the old motel. This first phase has allowed me to determine the number of shelving units we will need to organize records, paper good and other historical data and office supplies.
- The E-seal news has been ordered and should be ready for delivery the week of June 18th. It will be delivered to the old motel storage area.
- The Docent Communiqué will be a monthly newsletter emailed to docents. Deadline to have an article or information included in the newsletter is the 25th of each month. I will be sending out a reminder to all docent on the 20th as a reminder to send me information.
- Special thanks to Stephen Beck, Kathy Dowding, Marcella Boteilho and Peter Frith for helping cover the shop this month.
- The last 2 docent dinners of 2018 are in August and November. In addition to the Vet's hall in Cambria and Morro Bay I have been researching other venues. I have talked to the owners of the Lodge in Morro Bay and the staff at Camp Ocean Pines in Cambria. Both are promising.
- Plans are in place for our participation in the Summer Solstice event at Morro Bay State Park on June 23rd. Tim Bridwell, Mary Forbes and Cam and Phil Arnold will be manning our table.

I have begun to put together an exhibits planning committee to develop a plan for the expansion of the interpretive exhibits in the visitor center. This plan will then allow us to develop a budget and begin to identify funding sources. To date Stephen Beck and Carole Adams have agreed to be part of the committee. I am looking for 2 more docents. Additionally; John Brewer, a museum exhibits designer and builder, has agreed to donate his time and expertise for this first design phase.

Cam Arnold and I have been meeting and working on a packet for the Business member solicitation we are planning later this year. We will be making a presentation with a sample packet at the board meeting on the 20th.

Regular member renewals continue to be sent out monthly.