

FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Meeting Minutes
July 18, 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: 1:02 PM

Tim Bridwell, Lynette Harrison, Michael O'Bannon, Stephen Beck, Kathy Curtis, Sue King, Cam Arnold, Deborah Way, Wendy Sheridan (Staff), Carol Henderson (Staff). Excused, Wayne Attoe

APPROVAL OF June 20, 2018 BOD MINUTES (L. Harrison, S. King, unanimous)

COOPERATING GROUP LIAISON REPRESENTATIVES AND GUESTS PRESENT:

- None

PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD

- None

STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS (Appended)

In addition, S. King updated the Board on her work to have the sales table covered for every day of the month. More docents are being trained and more shifts are being covered. T. Bridwell reported that there had been a discussion about D. Way working on the Finance Committee. D. Way reported on her meeting with M. Wycoff regarding her participation on the FES Speaker Bureau. C. Arnold reported that we now have 5 docents who will have asked to be included in our fall training class. K. Curtis reported that the Research Committee met and that they plan to work on a revision for the classification of sub-adult males. M. O'Bannon mentioned that we might need to adjust the budget item for the cost of goods sold. T. Bridwell reported that he did a calculation for our cost of goods sold and found it to be at about 64%. T. Bridwell noted that since April we have been in a negative cash flow of about \$3,000 per month. W. Sheridan passed out newly drafted job responsibilities for Office & Visitor Center Manager and Docent Coordinator. C. Henderson reported that there is very much to learn but she is enjoying her new position.

BOARD ACTIONS: Discussion and action

- Honorary Member Status – C. Arnold and L. Harrison shared the nomination form they drafted for Honorary Lifetime Member. Motion to approve using the Honorary Lifetime Member nomination form with the addition that: (1) it states only non-docents can be nominated and (2) the award can be given once quarterly, yet the Board has the option to approve the award for more than one recipient at an award presentation. (L. Harrison, C. Arnold, passed. Voting no, T. Bridwell)

- W. Sheridan is in the process of removing our Business Members that are no longer current. Our website will be updated. No action needed.
- T. Bridwell will speak to Donovan Marley and Barbara Sellers about the reason to list Advisory Members on *Among Friends* and report back to the Board. No action needed.
- Cambria Community Service District will come off our Sponsor list for *Among Friends*. No action needed.
- For our list of Partners, it was suggested that we should include the Marine Mammal Center & Cal Poly. We probably want to remove California Coastal Conservancy. We will review the best title for the Coastal Discovery Center based upon Carolyn Skinder's suggestions. No action needed.
- Motion to amend our school sponsorship program as suggested in S. Beck's report to the Board. (T. Bridwell, C. Arnold, unanimous.)
- Retreat follow-up. W. Sheridan reported that a first meeting is scheduled for Friday (7/20) to brainstorm on the exhibits for a new and larger center. W. Sheridan shared her plan to write for a grant to help with funding.
- L. Harrison and T. Bridwell discussed how they are monitoring the issues of increasing our docent base and stabilized funding for FES.

OTHER BUSINESS

- L. Harrison reviewed which Board members are now on an Office 365 email account. L. Harrison asked everyone not yet on Office 365 to make it a priority to establish the new email account. On the Office 365 issues, we also discussed whether Sharepoint was a feature that we had purchased. Lynette mentioned that she would find out. W. Sheridan will ask our IT contact, Colin Slaughter, to schedule a time to come to the office to help those who need his assistance with Office 365.
- Pinedorado – W. Sheridan signed us up to participate.
- L. Harrison asked the Board members to review new job responsibility statements for our Docent Coordinator and Office Manager positions and advise of any changes that might be needed.
- K. Curtis reported that she has received feedback from members of the Board of Directors and Research Committee on proposed changes and is working in collaboration with Cal Poly and The Marine Mammal Center on revisions to the internship program for 2018-19.

PRESIDENTS REPORT:

- T. Bridwell noted that the new FES Bylaws are posted on the website.
- The Goodger memorial bench is being ordered. The plaque will be ordered after the bench arrives.
- L. Harrison outlined what she presented and what she learned at the last SSTA meeting. (Appended)

- T. Bridwell reported the latest printing of Eseal News has been completed and he noted that the cost went from 5.3¢ to 6.4¢ per newsletter. More rack cards are being printed. Cost to print a rack card is 2.8¢.

NEW BUSINESS: C. Arnold reported that the organizer of Ocean Cleanup Day said they can add elephant seal bluff to their coverage for Saturday, September 15th. C. Arnold also told us that FES can be included for the Friday night speakers program being organized by a stakeholders group consisting of the Coastal Discovery Center, Lighthouse, San Simeon Tourism Office and FES.

ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING at 3:16 pm. (C. Arnold, S. King, unanimous)

CONVENE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION at 3:25 pm. Adjourned at 4:20 pm.

Submitted by Stephen Beck

July 2018 FES School Program Report

Like many students, the school program docents are enjoying a summer break!

The school program committee is scheduled to meet for our annual school program review on July 24th.

Following our last Board meeting, I consulted with Lynette and decided that it is not necessary for us to put together a school docent luncheon event similar to what we did in past years at David Bauer's house.

August is the month to mail letters to the principals of the schools that FES will sponsor in the 2018/2019 school year. The letter will advise the principal that we will pay student transportation cost for a fourth and/or fifth grade field trip to our Piedras Blancas elephant seal rookery. We need to decide if we will offer sponsorship to five schools as in the past or six schools as I suggest that we do.

For Board consideration and/or Board action. * If we believe that there will be sufficient funds in our budget, then I suggest that beginning this next school year that we invite six of twelve FES sponsored schools (instead of five of fifteen FES sponsored schools) to take advantage of our student transportation reimbursement program. In addition, starting this year I can advise our larger schools the FES reimbursement is up to no more than \$850. If we make this change, then at budget time I will ask that we place \$4,000 into our budget for our school sponsorship program. (The added \$1,000 in the budget will give us the funding to bring about 121 additional students to the bluff each year, or up to about 486 students per year.)

*If you wish to reread my more detailed review on our school sponsorship program, below is a copy of what I presented at our June Board meeting.

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 spreadsheet 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.

Submitted by Stephen Beck, July 2018

July Board Report
Office and Visitor Center
Submitted by Wendy Sheridan
July 13, 2018

I am very pleased to report that June was our best month this year with \$3,587.00 in sales in the shop. July is looking very strong as well; as of June 12th we had taken in \$1,800.00 in sales, and will once again certainly reach my monthly goal of \$2,000.00.

- Since last month we have added 11 new members for a total of 78 new members in 2018.
 - 34 Friend
 - 19 Good Friend
 - 16 Great Friend
 - 5 Best Friend
 - 4 Friend for Life
- The reorganization of the storage area at the old motel continues.
- The revised E-seal news has been delivered and stacked at the motel.
- The Docent Communiqué has been received very well. 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.
- Thanks to Kathy Dowding and Marcella Boteilho the 2017 hours have been recalculated and corrected and the 2018 hours are current and correct. Docents who previously received incorrect hours pins have been notified and enough new pins have been ordered to make sure everyone gets their pin.
- The samples for the elephant seal socks have arrived. I have approved the production. We will have them in the shop in January 2019. The final step is designing, and sending to SockSmith, the sticker which will have our logo and mission statement and be on the label of each pair of socks sold world-wide.
- I am working with **Your True Nature** to design “Advice from an Elephant Seal” merchandise. Lynda Nolte has created an original watercolor of an elephant seal to use on the merchandise. The process has just begun. Samples will be coming soon for final approval.
- Special thanks to Stephen Beck and Marcella Boteilho who will be covering the VC during my vacation, July 30-August 4.
- Thank you cards were sent to Stephen Beck, Kathy Dowding, Peter Frith, Wayne Attoe and Marcella Boteilho for their assistance covering the shop last month. Get well/thinking of you cards were also sent to Bob Grosse, Brandt Kehoe, Alan Fillmore and Nancy Hendricks. Mary Forbes received a thank you note for her help completing the inventory.
- The next docent dinner is August 11th and will be held at the Morro Bay Community Center. The topic presented will be on Tag Re-sight procedures. Evite went out July 14.
- The entry for the Pinedorado parade has been submitted. I am working with Kathy Dowding to have all materials ready and get the float E-Seals ready to be moved out of

the storage. The Harrisons are once again donating their truck and trailer to haul it and their driveway to decorate it.

- Plans for a “scarecrow” for the Scarecrow Festival are under way. More info to come.
- The first exhibits planning committee meeting to develop a plan for the expansion of the interpretive exhibits in the visitor center will meet on July 20th.
- Cam Arnold and I have reviewed comments on the business member packet and will be revising it and making a final presentation at the August board meeting.

Regular member renewals continue to be sent out monthly.

Docent Coordinator Report

Submitted by Carol Henderson

JUNE STATS

Clicker count: 12,735

Bluff hours w/drive: 1.311

Bluff hours wo/drive: 836.5

Active Docents: 81

1. Trained with Tim Postiff on the docent scheduling. Trained with Kathy Dowding on the docent schedule and how to enter docent bluff hours for reporting to Wendy for the state report.
2. Trained with Wendy on manning the office and all other aspects of my duties
3. Went to the bluff twice, one time with Kathy Dowding for a training tour.
4. Met with several docents. Had a chance to get to know some of them and some of their concerns. Received a very warm welcome from everyone I met. Going to continue to meet more docents and make sure their needs are met. I am establishing a more regular scheduling routine.
5. Sent out thank you cards to Tim Postiff and Kathy Dowding. Will be sending cards to Kathy Dowding for my tour at the bluff and two other docents who have health issues.
6. Fitting in well with the variety of jobs I have in and out of the office.
7. Had a staff meeting with Wendy on Thursday, July 12th, which we will be doing each month.
8. Familiarizing myself with the culture of FES.
9. Took pictures at the bluff to be used on social media and other docent communications.
10. Will set up Social media on the following platforms by the end of July. Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, Pinterest, Veimo. Looking forward to showcasing the amazing work over the years to the present. Will work in collaboration with Wendy on what we can do on social media to promote the work of FES. Will encourage docents to send pictures and stories to me for posting and for the monthly docent communiqué.

11. Facilitated the visit of David Morton, Mobile Visitors Center Team Leader, Marine Mammal Care Centre LA with Gil and Valerie Eastman who took him and his colleague for a tour of the bluff. Received an email later and David Morton was very impressed with his visit.

12. In conclusion. I have thoroughly enjoyed my first three weeks. I look forward to the coming months with FES. I love working in a team environment. Love this whole experience.

July 16, 2018

FES Board Meeting July 18

Training Activity Report

1. 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 July 25, August 29
2. Four current docent applicants for Fall Training:
 - a. Dian Nathan – San Simeon (Community Volunteer Fair)
 - b. Brian Mummert – Templeton (Wildlife Fair SLO)
 - c. Marita Nath – returning docent
 - d. Carol Henderson – new Docent Coordinator

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 meeting 7/11@ PB Lightstation
 - a. Mission Statement (draft):

To allow local agencies and partners to coordinate coastal activities between Cambria and Ragged point that provide value, knowledge and appreciation of the area's cultural and natural resources.
 - b. Investigating Live tours / State Parks
 - c. Considering public Friday night seminars
3. UK Travel professionals FAM tour - October
4. Discovery Ocean Fair 8/25
5. Piedras Blancas Hike-Ins July 25, August 29

6. Oceans Clean Up Day – September 15
7. School Table on Bluff / Family Day / Summer Hours
8. Morro Bay Harbor Festival - October 8

FES Board Meeting July 18, 2018

Research Report

1. Re-sight Data Management
Keith Mueller has initiated the data entry process for the tag re-sighting data base. After catching up, through entering the data recorded during the months of March through June, he will be able to submit a monthly update. Man thanks to Keith for managing this process.
2. Alignment of Sub-Adult Male Criteria
The Research Committee is collaborating with Dr. Heather Liwanag from Cal Poly Biological Sciences Dept. to discuss realignment of the Piedras Blancas Sub-adult male criteria with Año Nuevo and Cal Poly criteria
3. Docent Dinner Presentation on Tag Resights
A presentation by Dr. Heather Liwanag on Tag Re-sight Reports is planned for the next docent dinner on August 11, 2018 at 5:00 PM at Morro Bay Community Center
4. Proposed changes to Bill Goodger Memorial Internship Program:
Members of the Research Committee and Board of Directors have given input on the internship and are in strong support of continuing the program, in collaboration with Cal Poly and The Marine Mammal Center, with increasing emphasis on FES-related activities and in alignment with appropriate Cal Poly curriculum offerings. Some of the proposed plans include incorporating the interns in the docent training sessions, providing opportunities for the interns to spend time on the bluff shadowing docents and participating in community events.

The Cal Poly faculty advisor (Dr Liwanag) has also shared that there are specific classes, in which the interns can simultaneously enroll, which would maximize Cal Poly involvement and provide a means for interns to receive academic credit in alignment with their efforts.

The intern research exposure will also be expanded to include participation with Dr. Heather Liwanag's pilot tagging program during the breeding season as well as continuing with the male counts. This will require them to attend an orientation program in Fall 2018. Both Spring, 2018 interns have asked if they can return next fall to help us with the male count as well!

The next step will be to meet with all involved parties and develop a new written agreement.

Submitted by Kathleen Curtis, July 16, 2018

FES Board Meeting July 18, 2018

Publications Report

1. The Summer 2018 edition of The Friends of the Elephant Seal Member newsletter, *Among Friends*, was completed and sent for printing. Thank you to all for the high quality and informative articles and the edited final production proofs. The newsletter should go into the mail during the week of July 23.

Three interesting topics for this newsletter included:

- Water Conservation in Elephant Seals (Kathy Curtis)
 - Whiskers (Tim Postiff)
 - Scenic Highway 1 is Open (Donovan Marley)
2. Two additional articles are in the works for future issues:
 - Foraging Behavior of the Female Elephant Seal (Kathy Hurrle) and
 - Gray Whale Migration (Brandt Kehoe)

Submitted by Kathleen Curtis, July 16, 2018

SSTA Meeting – 7/17/18

- Provided the following updates on behalf of FES:
 - New Docent Coordinator – Carol Henderson (skilled in social media)
 - We have Exhausted the 50,000 rack brochures in the last 9 months.
 - We have ordered another 50,000
 - Our Among Friends member newsletter Summer Edition should be mailed to 850+ membership by end of this month.
 - Includes an article on the opening of Hwy 1
 - Visitor Count at Bluffs
 - Down by 15% when compared to 2017
 - Down by 34% when compared to 2016 (higher than normal year)
 - Down by 18% when compared to 2015 (normal year)
 - Outreach Activities
 - Continuing to participate in the Coastal Stakeholders Group Meetings

- Looking at having the “School Groups” tables on the Bluff during the Summer
 - Entered into the Pinedorado Parade
 - Planning to have an FES Scarecrow this year
- Advised that Hwy 1 is opening today. The ribbon cutting will be Friday the 20th @ 11:00 am
- Working on a Co-op digital Advertising Campaign headed by – Budget will be \$70k with CBID matching 50% of the budgeted amount
 - San Simeon, Cambria & Morro Bay
- Highway 1 Dream Drive – August 9th – 11th
 - 80 vintage cars will drive from Monterey to Morro Bay
 - Each car will include a journalist. Potential for them to individually stop on the drive down.
 - Each Local Fund Area can provide lodging for up to 12 journalists
 - Opportunity for Speakers Bureau to speak at San Simeon & possibly Cambria
- They approved the ordering another 5,000 Beach Cleanup Bags
- Cambria Film Festival – Successful last year
 - Will be from 2/7/19 through 2/10/19. Vets Hall will not be available on these dates as they have already reserved it.

Table report July

Simple: gearing up for the Hwy to open. Only two days (July 19 and 21) not covered but I am working on that. The August schedule (draft) has only 5 empty dates!
Cheryl Vance and Kris Baird are returning from travels. I am waiting to hear if Cristel will be back also.

Jennifer Bejanero is scheduled to train in August and hopefully Deborah as well.
Wendy and I have discussed which items to order to allow us to have inventory for our increased traffic in the bluff.

Submitted, Sue King
Sent from my iPhone

