

**FRIENDS OF THE ELEPHANT SEAL
MINUTES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING - JUNE 19, 2019
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.

THE FES BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT: 1:05PM by FES President Bridwell.

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Bridwell, Curtis, Arnold, O'Bannon, King, Fowles, Kneeland and Beck.

STAFF PRESENT: Wendy Sheridan.

COOPERATING GROUP LIASION REPRESENTATIVES AND GUESTS PRESENT: Eric Hjelstrom, CSP Supervisor III and Nick Chase, CSP Ranger.

ERIC HJELSTROM'S REPORT TO THE BOARD:

- Hjelstrom announced to the Board that State Parks has hired a new District Interpreter III; Cara O'Brien was promoted to this District Interpreter III position. On the use of drones at the elephant seal rookery, Hjelstrom noted that the restriction against flying drones is by posted order, not statute, making enforcement more difficult. Hjelstrom said that looking back to February on Ranger issues concerning elephant seals, he found that State Park Rangers had a ratio of 30 "proactive contacts" with the public to every 1 "reactive contact". State Parks has hired a new Ranger who is scheduled to begin work in our District next week.

APPROVAL OF MAY 22, 2019 BOD MEETING MINUTES:

- **Motion to approve the FES Board meeting minutes of May 22, 2019. / Arnold / O'Bannon / Unanimous**

REPORTS and UPDATES:

- Attached reports include: Research Report, Communications Report, Training Committee Report, School Program Report and Board Report.
- Arnold reported that we have a date and room confirmation so that we can invite all FES docents to discuss the FES effort to deal with the expected seal and human interaction issues this coming winter at W.R. Hearst Memorial SB and Arroyo Laguna Beach. The meeting is scheduled for July 9th in the Cove Room at 5PM. All docents will soon be invited to attend.
- O'Bannon pointed out that the SLO Foundation account balance on our financial reports is for April 30th rather than May 31st. In his effort to get a May 31st balance for the financial reports, he found that the SLO Foundation staff was not able to provide him with the updated calculation that he requested. He has concluded that it may not be feasible to get monthly account updates from SLO Foundation and that, for the future, we may be limited to quarterly updates on the SLO Foundation account balance.
- Sheridan asked that Ferrer be copied when Board members send out future reports and minutes for BOD meetings.
- Fowles added to her school program report by noting that a school program committee meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday at Beck's house.
- Web Cam Update – Bridwell said he spoke to Brandt and has learned that we have new software for the camera but that it will probably be months before FES has accessibility to control the camera. Control of the camera is more important when the seal population on the beach drops and it becomes more likely that there will not be any seals in the view of the camera. Hjelstrom said that Jack Payne might be a good contact at State Parks to help FES make the camera operate as desired.
- Sheridan reported that a "Seal of Appreciation" box is in the office and suggestions are being placed into the box.
- Bridwell said that some of our "No Drone Zone" signs are missing from the bluff. State Parks reported that more signs are available and ready to be installed. Curtis asked if fixed wing radio-controlled gliders are considered to be drones. Hjelstrom said the law is not yet clear on this. Hjelstrom said that radio-controlled gliders need a permit to fly in State Parks. Hjelstrom suggested that for making a determination if flying drones or radio-controlled gliders violate the Marine Mammal Protection Act, it probably will not be a question of how many feet the flying object is above the seals but rather a question of any observed disturbance to the seals.

- Bridwell gave an insurance report. Docents are covered under California State Parks worker's compensation insurance policy and CSP's liability insurance coverage when doing interpretation work. For those docents who enroll, VSP also offers insurance coverage when they are doing interpretation work. In addition, FES has liability insurance to cover both FES directors and FES as an organization. Sheridan asked about any requirement for the FES office to be doing the scheduling to have State Parks worker's compensation coverage, mentioning the FES Speakers Program as an example. How important will FES office scheduling records be to the determination of coverage? Hjelstrom suggested that what the docent is actually doing and speaking about at the event will be more important on a coverage determination than the question of the event being on an office schedule of docent events. If the docent was doing interpretation work for State Parks then a claim will be submitted for coverage. Final determination of coverage, or lack of coverage, will be determined by a process between the insurance carrier and the individual docent.
- Curtis passed out and spoke about a flyer developed by Cal Poly describing their elephant seal research program. It was suggested that the flyer could be made available to visitors at VP3. Approval to distribute the Cal Poly flyer at VP3 should be directed to State Parks (Hjelstrom).

BOARD DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL ACTION:

- Website Changes and Management – Curtis reported that a seven-page request for proposal (RFP) will soon be sent to potential service providers for creating a new FES website. Necessary fees have been paid so that the FES current website should either now or very soon be a secure website. Curtis stated that the FES website committee currently has a goal to have a new updated website operating by March or April of 2020.
- Vacant Board Position – Bridwell asked that all Board members keep in mind that we currently have one opening on the Board. When any Board member learns of a person who both might be willing to serve on the Board and who could be an asset to the Board's work, Bridwell or Curtis should be advised.
- The Board reviewed and discussed the signage designs created by Fowles to draw more public attention to the donation tubes that are placed each day on the bluff. It was agreed that Fowles will determine the cost of printing two plastic signs that could be used to test the effectiveness of such signage for increasing donations. If we see an increase in donations with the test signs, then more durable signs can later be installed. Most Board members expressed a preference for the first design created by Fowles showing a large male elephant seal and a title that starts with: "Bring it On".
- Sheridan said that from her perspective, SignUp.com is working for bluff scheduling. Docents do respond to her requests for help on bluff shifts needing more staffing. Time was taken to review the list of docents who are not working bluff shifts and not using SignUp.com. A few inactive docents were identified that should be removed from SignUp.com. Sheridan will ask Ferrer to remove the docents that were identified for removal from SignUp.com. It was noted that a few docents show up on the bluff without being on the schedule. Sheridan said that while she and Ferrer have taken on most of all of the duties of our former docent coordinator position, she has not yet been advised how the Board might wish for her to deal with the issue of docents who show up to work and are not on the schedule. Board members expressed different opinions on the issue.
- Arnold spoke about her recent nomination of Brian Hatfield for the FES Honorary Lifetime Member Award.

➤ **Motion to present Brian Hatfield the FES Honorary Lifetime Member Award. / Arnold / Fowles / Unanimous.**

- Bridwell and Curtis shared with the Board the FES presentation that will be given at a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – Sanctuary Advisory Counsel (NOAA SAC) meeting scheduled for Friday, June 21st. Curtis, with support from Bridwell, will be making about a 20-minute presentation, supported by PowerPoint slides and two very short videos, documenting the many past human interactions and disturbances to elephant seals at W.R. Hearst Memorial SB and Arroyo Laguna Beach. Following the Curtis' presentation to the Board, there was a Board discussion about what FES might be able to do this upcoming winter season at W.R. Hearst Memorial SB and Arroyo Laguna Beach. (As reported above, all docents will be given the opportunity to share ideas on this issue at a meeting on July 9th.)

NEW BUSINESS:

- Kneeland asked for clarification and guidance on exactly what FES docents should do when they find graffiti at VP3. Bridwell said that State Parks currently has employees in the maintenance department that will be dispatched to remove graffiti. When graffiti is discovered, it should be reported to Bridwell or Curtis with pictures and the location of the graffiti so that he can forward the matter to State Parks.

➤ **Motion to Adjourn Meeting: 4:07PM. / King / O'Bannon / Unanimous.**

Submitted by: Stephen Beck, FES Secretary – July 15, 2019

June 2019

Board Report

Docents/Office/Visitor Center

Submitted by Wendy Sheridan

June 17, 2019

MEMBERSHIP

- 65 new members year to date
 - 24 Friends
 - 23 Good Friend
 - 14 Great Friend
 - 2 Best Friend
 - 2 Friend for Life
- Joe and I have completed entering all member information into Excel and are now working on the best way to set it up and access it for reporting and tracking purposes. We are still referring back to Gift Works to check and double check and make sure we have correct and complete information on each member and donor. We are still able to use Gift Works to generate letters during this transition.

SHOP/OFFICE

- The May shop income was \$3,515.00 with 514 visitors.
- To date (June 17) the shop income for June is \$3,302.00 with a visitor count of 402.
- A letter acknowledging receipt of their donation and offering to list them as a corporate sponsor has been sent to Socksmith. I am waiting to hear back.
- The coloring books are in and have been received well.

DOCENTS

- We are now completely up to date with better impact. All information has been added, corrected and/or updated. New hours will now be added monthly for the month prior and new docents added as required.
- All state reports are up to date through May and have been submitted to the state.
- The new non-bluff hours form is now being used and is working well.
- Joe and I continue to collect emergency forms from ALL docents for FES files.
- The Seal of Appreciation box is out and available. I moved it to the sign in table to make it more visible.
- Abby Adams, Rusty Moore, Ann Krout & Gary Haskins will be covering the Summer Solstice event on June 29th at Morro Bay State Park.
- Newsletter items for the July newsletter should be sent to the office no later than June 27th. A draft copy for proofing will be emailed to the board by June 28th.

Cash Valuation-Non GAAP				May 31, 19
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Checking/Savings				
Restricted Checking Account				
			2018 SSTA Grant	9,793.00
			Speakers Bureau	200.00
			School Groups Transport	-517.00
			Restricted Interest	69.40
			Translation System	75.00
			Inservice for Docents	650.00
			Coastal Trail Develop/Signage	768.67
			Restricted Checking Account - Other	9.03
			Total Restricted Checking Account	11,048.10
			Heritage Oaks Money Market Acct	47,772.73
			Bank Cards	10.50
			Cash On Hand	335.00
			Heritage Oaks Checking	6,800.48
			Total Checking/Savings	65,966.81
			Total Current Assets	65,966.81
Fixed Assets				
			Fixed Asset	12,991.50
			Office Equipment	2,063.63
			Accumulated Depreciation	-15,055.13
			Total Fixed Assets	0.00
Other Assets				
			Vanguard	89,050.41
			SLO Comm Foundation	40,438.35
			Total Other Assets	129,488.76
TOTAL ASSETS				195,455.57
LIABILITIES & EQUITY				
Liabilities				
Current Liabilities				
Other Current Liabilities				
			Docent Jacket Deposits	2,035.50
			Payroll Liabilities	1,854.57
			Total Other Current Liabilities	3,890.07
			Total Current Liabilities	3,890.07
			Total Liabilities	3,890.07
Equity				
			Unrestricted Net Assets	190,279.11
			Net Income	1,286.39
			Total Equity	191,565.50
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY				195,455.57

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Research Report

1. Citizen Science Program

The Citizen Science team reported a record 118 tag or mark resights in May , 2019. Of these, 55 included full or partial tag or mark reports. This is a tremendous effort on the part of our docents, reflecting close to 50% success in individual seal identification.

2. Be On the Lookout for more instrumented seals (continuing search)

Phil Arnold has now joined the radio scanning team and team members continue to scan weekly for instrumented Año Nuevo colony weanlings and females from Roxanne Beltran's project in Dan Costa's lab at UCSC. A few weanlings and females still remain at Piedras Blancas.

3. Contacts about resights with other rookeries

We have made contact with the Garry Fletcher, Warden at Metchosin, BC RaceRocks rookery. We asked him to let us know if they see a white-tagged elephant seal hauled out at their site. This contact was made possible with the research of Judy May, who will visit this rookery soon.

Garrett Duncan, Farallon Program Biologist, at Point Blue Conservation Science also recently provided some information about some pink-tagged seals that we sighted at Piedras Blancas in April

4. Cal Poly Research Brochure

Cal Poly undergraduate student, Jocelyn Esperanza De La Torre, has prepared an educational brochure that outlines the Cal Poly research efforts on the Piedras Blancas colony. It is attached to this report for Board review.

Submitted by Kathleen Curtis June 17, 2019

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Communications Report

1. Goals:

Goals in the last month have been to:

- (A) continue to develop our user base on social media accounts
- (B) recruit new members of the committee
- (C) address FES Communication functions
- (D) begin planning for Summer Edition of *Among Friends*.

The status toward these first steps:

A. Social Media accounts

Facebook: The top post in June (3 photos of the Boucher Trail on June 8, 2019) reached 3566 people. Next highest was a video of a sub-adult male sparring match on the south beach on May 27, 2019, reaching 3300 people.

Twitter: Still seeking password

Instagram: Not established yet

B. Recruiting New Members

Following our committee meeting on May 20, 2019, the Committee placed an ad in the docent newsletter seeking new members.

C. RFP for Website Revision: An RFP seeking competitive bids for website revision has been drafted and is pending review and revision. It will have a response deadline of July 30.

D. The Summer Edition of *Among Friends* will include 3 topics:

Who's visiting us? Resights at Piedras Blancas- Kathy Curtis

Dialects- Brandt Kehoe

Male Growth Spurt at Puberty- Tim Postiff

3. *Among Friends* deadlines

The schedule for the member newsletter, *Among Friends*, for the remainder of 2019 follows:

2019 SUMMER EDITION

Planning Meeting - week of May
20, 2019

Copy Due - July 7, 2019

Print - July 29, 2019

Mail - August 5, 2019

2019 WINTER EDITION

Planning Meeting - week of
September 16, 2019

Copy Due - November 4, 2019

Print - November 18, 2019

Mail - December 2, 2019

June 18, 2019

FES Board Meeting June 19, 2019

Training Activity Report

- Current Activity:
 - Fall 2018 Class Peer Review in final process
 - Completed Fast Track mentoring for Steven MacGregor
 - Conducted Training Committee Meeting – May 22, 2019, 10 AM
 - Training/Mentoring follow-up
 - Review plan for fall training
 - Six pending docents for Fall 2019 Training
 - Julie Ann White
 - Beverly Kurtz
 - Amy Handle
 - Steven MacGregor (fast track)
 - Ella Ver
 - Karen Graves

- Upcoming Activity:
 - Docent interview, Ella Ver, Thurs. 6/20/19 @ 3PM
 - FES Fall Training Dates - September 21 – Fall Basic Training
 - Three mentoring sessions between Sep 21 and Oct 19
 - Peer review @ four months – Feb/March
 - October 5 – Advanced Training 1
 - October 19 – Advance Training 2

June 2019 School Program Report

Since our last board meeting on May 22nd, we have hosted 1 school outing from Shell Beach Elementary School. They brought 42 students to the bluff.

We have had a couple requests for groups during the summer. As mentioned last month, The Girl Scouts of the Central Coast will be coming on July 13th. We have another outing scheduled for July 26th. This is a group from Kern County, Community Action Partnership, and will be bringing approximately 130 kids grades K-12.

Additionally, The Grizzly Academy has already scheduled their fall trip for November 15, 2019.

2018-2019 School Year Totals to Date		
# of Students Visiting	# of Schools	# of Docents
2,084	35	164

Submitted by Max Fowles, June 2019