

NEWPORT BAY CONSERVANCY
MINUTES, FEBRUARY 17, 2016

Attending: Board members--Tim Brown, Frances Cork, Donna Flower, Liz Flynt, Nancy Gardner, Molly Stallcup, Dick Zembal (excused--Peter Bryant, Jean Whitaker, Danielle Zacherl); Past President Peter Fuhrer; Guests Howard Cork, Kathleen Kort, Dave Waller; Staff: Heather Cieslak, Carissa Macias

Meeting called to order at 2:05

APPROVAL OF MINUTES with correction of Kathleen Kort (from Koch) on motion by Stallcup, second by Flynt

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Presented by Vice President Cork: The symposium was hailed as a success with over 130 people attending. There was a brief discussion of a letter received about renovations by SACC impacting water quality. The County is handling.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Flower urged asked committee chairs to start preparing budget requests in time for the board retreat. She explained why some income doesn't appear until the subsequent month. She agreed to provide the 2014 variance report so that comparisons can be made to 2015.

CURRENT BUSINESS

1. Board Retreat--Thursday, March 3, 9-3, Huntington Beach Wetlands conservancy Instructional Center. Howard Cork, who will facilitate, provided a suggested agenda and will send out the materials which emerged from last year's retreat so we can evaluate how we did. Committee input on the budget is needed by 2/24 to get it out ahead of the retreat. The retreat will open with a discussion of Dick Zembal's "preamble" to a plan for the bay. Molly Stallcup will try to get a copy of the County's plan.
2. Upper Newport Bay Collaboration Meeting report--In discussions, Carla Navarro of CDFW seemed amenable to the suggested direction of the plan provided by Dick Zembal and Sarah Kimball which takes a more holistic approach. The signage plan was discussed, and the County has money for 8 of the 16 proposed signs. CDFW has expressed interest in closing the informal trail below the salt dike overlook. This will be on the March agenda for discussion.
3. Plein Air Art Show--the proposed MOU was distributed and will be discussed at the retreat. One plan to bolster attendance is to put the art up earlier.
4. Corporate Sponsorship--the Fundraising Committee will come back with more specific suggested underwriting amounts and guidelines as to selecting underwriters. Information on the number of visitors to the web site, Muth Center, etc. will be useful. There is a meeting 2/23 to discuss grants. The hope is to develop basic boilerplate so that grant applications can be turned around quickly.
5. Bayview Project--The upper part is in good condition with maintenance under the stewardship of Peter Ridley. Schneider Electric is bringing a group to work for the second time. Planting on the lower part will start by the end of February.
6. California Watershed Protection Fund Grant Application--It's too late to apply for this year.
7. OC Spirit of Volunteerism Award--After some discussion, Dick Zembal motioned, Liz Flynt seconded that NBC participate. The motion passed 5-2, Flower and Gardner voting no.

8. Alliance with NCC--NCC has expressed interest in having someone from NBC on its Technical Advisory Committee. Gardner will find out meeting times. The board agreed that working more closely with NCC is desirable. Gardner will be the liaison with the NCC board.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

Committees:

1. Advocacy--working on RAMSAR and expanding the styrofoam ban and participation in the Upper Newport Bay Collaboration meetings. Liz Flynt asked about the need for involvement in Newport's Local Coastal Plan, but it was explained by Tim Brown that the proposed LCP had already been submitted to the Coastal Commission.
2. **Restoration:** Director Zembal hopes to have a Wetlands Recovery Program grant for Hotdog Island and the edge of the Upper Bay. He reported there has been significant cordgrass die off and is considering constructing nesting rafts for rails using volunteers.
3. **Marketing:** The Hidden Gems brochure is being redone, but meanwhile, 1000 will be printed. Kathy Kort said Tracks will come the end of March.
5. **Advocacy:** The committee is pursuing RAMSAR designation for UNB which would make it a wetlands of international significance. The Tijuana Slough is so designated. It is expected that there will need to be close coordination with CDFW.

Operations Director Report

OD Cieslak reported that she and Liz Flint will participate in the Annenberg Alchemy Leadership Training. 6 Cleanup Days took place (5 by NBC, 1 by Inside the Outdoors with NBC assistance) with 183 participants. Having a board for people to report their unusual finds kept interest high.

OTHER BUSINESS

Howard Cork who directed the board recruitment effort in 2015 announced that Ian Swift of IRWD, who had been a candidate, was now able to serve. A motion by Donna Flower, second by Gardner, moved to add an item to the agenda to allow a vote on this which was passed unanimously. A motion by Liz Flynt seconded by Gardner to recommend President Bryant to appoint Swift for the remainder of the term. Unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT at 4:15