

Newport Bay Naturalist and Friends Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Back
Bay Science Center March 31, 2010

1. CALL TO ORDER

5:15 P.M.

Board members present: Blake Anderson, Jack Keating, Jerry King, Krista Sloniowski, Peter Bryant, Don Krotee, Dennis Baker, Steve Bender.

Board members absent: Larry McKenney, Cathy Lam

Staff Present: Roger Mallet

Other public members present: None

2. MINUTES

No minutes offered for approval.

Chairman opened the meeting with comments related to the agenda organizational structure and its need to highlight highly critical issues.

Chairman instructed Committee Chair Persons to distribute Committee Reports ahead of Board meeting, detailing content with intent to reduce meeting discussion time as members are forced to read then discuss at the meeting.

Members were instructed to keep track of volunteer hours and that their time should be turned in by project to enhance the organization's effort in grant request.

D. Krotee asks of any concern as the reporting of time/hours and the IRS criteria for non-profits. Several members responded with a No, never has been a concern.

3. TREASURERS REPORT

D. Krotee indicated that there was no report and no action was taken. Director Krotee indicated that he was awaiting the Executive Directors organization report at which time he would evaluate the funding situation by line item and provide full details of the budget. The Executive Director indicated that the report would detail all funding tasks looking out 120 days or more to assess budget needs.

Treasurer expressed concern with the existing budget and future shortfalls if new revenues were not forthcoming. He indicated that revenues related to membership had been dropping due to factors related to the present economy. The Board's responsibility was discussed relative to the areas of responsibility assigned to major donor cultivation.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director reported that the organization had been operating on an unrestricted income of \$ 90,000.00, plus or minus for the years 2005-7, an amount insufficient to support a full-time executive director's position. In 2008 NBNF undertook a Data Cataloging Project funded by the City, which provided sufficient additional revenue to fund a full time executive director's position. This project was intended to be a pre-cursor of an additional project also funded by the City – the development of a Comprehensive Resource Management Program (CRMP) for all of Upper Newport Bay.

The Data Cataloging Project stalled in May 2009 because of staff changes in the City and California Department of Fish and Game. Thus final billing on that project and commencement of the CRMP project did not occur as planned. As a result there was a budget shortfall in 2009 and so the Executive Director did not take his full pay in 2009. He has also not taken pay yet for the first 3 months of 2010.

The Executive Director reported that the Preliminary 2010 Budget projected unrestricted income of \$292,000.00 of which about a third is ongoing Data Cataloging and CRMP funding. City, DFG and OC Parks staff support this work, but it is unclear what funding is still available in the City Budget.

Discussion took place on the outstanding Data Catalog funding and Director D. Krotee indicated that he would work with the Executive Director and the City to settle the program account.

Board member P. Bryant asked when the Data Catalog would be made public so that the work of NBNF could be fully realized. Executive Director indicated that the data was ready for release as soon as the agency participants have agreed to the final report.

The Executive Director referenced other projects that could provide us funding for design, construction and management services. These include a Master Conceptual Design Project for the Delhi Channel which NBNF has proposed to the City, which held settlement money to be used to improve water quality in the Delhi Channel. This is not included in the 2010 Budget.

Board member King asked the Executive Director to detail how he would balance the projects if they all came in at the same time as this would relate to our staffing concerns. The Executive Director indicated that based on his experience managing multiple construction schedules and projects, he did not anticipate any problems. Board member Sloniowski indicated that consulting assistance was also available.

The Executive Director proposed that grant income needed to be a significant revenue source if the NBNF wanted to continue its growth. He specifically was looking for research management and data management grants. He expressed the urgency of going after our major donors, grants and exhausting all options.

The Executive Director made reference to changes in the Army Corps of Engineers dredging project that were going to potentially reduce the effectiveness of the catch basin at Jamboree, and increase local costs for maintenance dredging. He explained how his participation in articulating the design issues and offering a solution had resulted in a resolution agreed by all agencies and a potential saving to the City, County and other local funding partners of \$2-3 million. Board member D. Krotee suggested that a letter be sent to the City Council and staff documenting the concerns and ultimate solution and the role played by the Executive Director.

The Executive Director reviewed the "Undertakings List" with the Board. The Executive Director explained that his recommendations of priority reflect the availability of resources, criticality to our operation, and any hard deadlines to be met. He continued that, with 55 items on the list; the organization should not be taking on more projects. Board member D. Baker suggested sorting the list from highest priority to lowest in descending order to help the Board's understanding and focus.

Board member Keating informed the Board that Item 38 had been completed and should be removed from the list.

Board member Baker questioned the priority of Item 53 (Web Overhaul). After discussion it was agreed that the priority needed to be increased. Board member Bender offered to assist by gathering information and writing the specs for a new site for the Executive Directors review.

Discussion took place regarding the Grants Sub-Committee formed under the Executive Director at the November 2009 Board meeting. It was agreed that help was really needed with identifying suitable grant opportunities, and writing grants. Board member Baker put the Executive Director in contact with the lady in charge of grants at the Newport Beach Film Festival.

END OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

5. BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE Several members spoke in unison to support the appointment of Kristine Simon to the Board. Action and vote 8-0 for approval.

6. DONOR AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE No Report

7. RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Board member P. Bryant reported that there had not been a March meeting but that he was proposing further discussion on a butterfly garden and a possible location, and that his committee would be planning another workshop around June 3, 2010 and that he had 2 speakers confirmed. He reminded the Board of the continuing work on developing a field guide, and was working on the details as well as proposing a trail guide for persons using the bay area trails.

Board member J. King asked about the use of photographic inventory of area that might be used in the guide and suggested to the Board that they should provide information and materials to the Board member to assist in the project.

Chairman Anderson asks about a budget for the project.

Board member P. Bryant indicated that they had not progressed that far as the ideas

were still conceptual at this point and that he would send the executive director the funding information as it was developed by electronic file.

Board member P. Bryant reported that the shell fish in the bay had been assessed in 2003 as a result of a student assignment and produced a very good inventory. He added that he was seeking more expertise to assist in determining the goals of the research committee's undertakings and how they might approach new ideas for studies and the format for research reports associated with the Bay projects.

A further suggestion was that the NBNF coordinate with other oversight agencies and to discuss other known projects to determine 'gap' areas to be used in planning projects.

Chairman Anderson asked if Administrative Grant Funding had been working as planned.

Board member P. Bryant proposed that some changes would be suggested, specifically as they related to project funding with a recommendation that no personal checks be used in the funding process.

8. ADVOCACY COMMITTEE Board members K. Sloniowski and J. King referred to electronic distribution to Board members and expressed the need for their response and suggestions of expressed goals and procedures. Board member J. King explained approach to be acted upon related to organizations, associations and regional boards of directors adding that an on line search was also underway. A review of government committee's, regional programs and collaborative advocacies was also being researched for the use of the Committee.

9. COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Board member S. Bender reported that his committee had met in February and discussed a budget and operations business plan. He added that their consultant had volunteered some time to work on the business plan. Their focus will be on what they perceive the real needs to be and to better understand the focus of the promotional plan. The Committee will structure a document and format for the executive director's review so that the director might add detail to the primary issues associated with the organizational goals. The product will then be discussed for presentation and roll out to the public.

Board member D. Krotee indicated that their consultant had been concerned about approaches to donors relative to long term/short term approaches as they relate to the business plan. He indicated that he would re-engage the consultant on these issues.

Board member D. Baker suggested as a resource for selling points including education successes and environmental assets into the distribution.

The Executive Director said that he was expecting a fund raising strategy and a list of corporate as well as personal contacts related to the effort.

Board member S. Bender said that his committee was looking at a mid year event that would help to highlight the organization as well as seeking funding for the sharkmobile bus, and new outreach activities.

10. GRANTS TASK FORCE

Executive Director Mallett informed the Board that a few grants had been written and that they were working on new grant applications as appropriate opportunities became known.

11. DATA MANAGEMENT REPORT

Board member D. Baker informed the Board that he had been working with the Executive Director to fill resource needs to be used to refine data. The Executive Director is to review the proposal, and report back on suggested changes. Currently, report hours are available to the Board at existing site. Executive Director and Donna Carroll will discuss and coordinate effort to ensure data readiness and access protocol. The Executive Director expresses his concern that the Board may not use data and if this was so, they should not move forward with the effort.

Board member D. Krotee added that this effort may not have a practical application for the Board at this time.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

In a follow-up, Chairman Anderson suggested that he would meet with New City Manager D. Kiff to urge a resolution in the Delhi settlement money and request that the City Manager release the funding under his control so the project could move forward. He would also connect with the City Bay Issues Committee to request support in this matter.

The Chairman requested input from the Board on the Board meeting preferences with an individual response of the Board Members favoring a two-month rotating meeting schedule.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

14. ADJORNMENT:

8:54 p.m.