

NEWPORT BAY CONSERVANCY
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Back Bay Science Center Conference Room
Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:00-4:00 pm
OPEN SESSION

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors Present: Pres Howard Cork, Sec Holly Fuhrer, Michelle Clemente, Frances Cork, Virginia Hayter, Sarah Kimbal, Jean Whitaker, Danielle Zacherl, Dick Zembal

Directors Absent: VP Peter Fuhrer, Treas Donna Flower, Peter Bryant

Staff: Heather Ceislak, Operations Director

Attendees: Dean Lambert, Jack Keating, Wynn Rhodes

The meeting was called to order by Pres Cork at 2:03 pm.

2. Secretary's Report

Sec Fuhrer presented the Minutes of the December 4, 2013 Board Meeting. Mbr Hayter made a motion to approve, seconded by Mbr Zacherl. Minutes were approved unanimously without amendment.

3. Treasurer's Report

Treas Flower was absent when this agenda item was scheduled. Mbr Hayter moved that agenda item #8, Other Business/Matters Rising, be considered at this time.

8. Other Business/Matters Rising

Heather Ceislak reported on the status of the Newsletter, Back Bay Bytes, which is currently being prepared for publication. The goal is to send it out this week and thereafter monthly.

Ms. Ceislak also announced that Board Members' Website email addresses will be linked with their personal emails so that they can receive them directly.

VP Fuhrer arrived at 2:10 pm.

Pres Cork announced that Tracks was sent out by mail to 1,251 volunteers and donors for the past four years. Three new Board members reported that they had not received it. Mbr Whitaker explained that they are not in the postal database and agreed to correct that. Ms Ceislak reported receiving positive responses to the publication which was described as a "sign of life" for NBC. Pres Cork called for articles for the next issue in March/April.

Treas Flower arrived at 2:12 pm.

Pres Cork requested comments on the Presidents Report sent out 1/20/14. He added an addendum regarding the Tidelands exhibit being planned with OCParks which has been essentially stalled for three years. The County is now requesting that funds be allotted and hoping for no further delays.

3.0 Treasurer's Report

Treas Flower submitted two charts (copies attached). Chart 1 indicates the status of our two bank accounts, Bank of America and Pacific Community, as well as two types of funds, restricted and unrestricted. She reported that NBC currently has substantial funds for this year but cautioned that they

will not be automatically replaced and that we will have to raise more money this year. Chart 2 depicts the budget for 2014, a projection based on 2013. Water tours, memberships, SOCALPAPA, and grants account for most of our income. We cannot count on the kind of unexpected large sums that “fell into our lap” last year. Mbr Hayter moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report, seconded by Mmbr Cork, and passed unanimously.

4.0 Retreat Planning

Pres Cork proposed that the retreat be focused on the fundamental question of what we ultimately want to be as an organization: He pointed out that we currently perform a combination of roles, both running programs and providing community services in UNB, which require us to have strong, collaborative relationships with the various agencies involved, and also an advocacy role which sometimes puts us in conflict with those bodies. He feels we should discuss this as a Board and take a position on whether this is how we want to operate in the future, or should we be focusing more on one of these roles at the expense of the other. We have two different relationships with DFW, one as a partner trying to support common interests and make mutual projects happen and the other trying to influence policies, some of which we may not agree on. How much do we aspire to influence the big picture through advocacy and how much do we want to do hands on activities and projects? If we can clarify this, we can focus our energies and our fundraising more effectively.

Mbr Bryant arrived at 2:40 pm.

An open discussion ensued.

Mmber Hayter raised concerns about the Watershed project. She had a different conception of what our role would entail than what has materialized. She expected that Krista’s work would include networking with all of the parties involved and ultimately organizing a large symposium to find out if they would buy into NBC’s leadership in the watershed.

Mbr Bryant asked if it is really even clear what DFW wants from us?

Mbr Clemente reported there will be a meeting of the newly regenerated coalition of landowners (The City, The County, and DFW) and NBC tomorrow and hopefully NBC will get a feeling for their priorities. NBC proposed this meeting and is acting as facilitator.

Mbr Cork suggested it is important to remember our history when planning for the future and as we make decisions about changing directions.

VP Fuhrer reminded the Board that NBC is the only non-profit agency dedicated to protecting the Bay. He would like us to brainstorm at the Retreat about what projects we want to focus on so that when grant opportunities come up, often with little lead time, we will be prepared to act quickly.

Mbr Zembal observed that there are a huge amount of acres in the Bay and there is a lot to be done. Projects require energy and follow-up which are often not there. There is also limited government funding and manpower. He will send Pres Cork a list of projects that he sees needing attention.

Mbr Bryant feels that the Board should be kept more in the loop regarding the Watershed project.

Wrap up re: Retreat:

1. We should have a strategic level discussion
2. Also have committee/operational level discussion
3. Establish fundraising goals for the six fundraising sub-committees

Treas Flower expressed concern that the Fundraising Chair has too much responsibility and that we need strong chairs for the four subcommittees. Mbr Hayter agreed she needs a lot of help as chair of this committee and that she sees her role primarily to “get the ball rolling.”

5. Cyclists on Back Bay Drive

Pres Cork said he had placed this item on the agenda as he wanted a Board view on what position NBC should take on the matter. He has spoken in the past with both Dave Kiff and councilman Petros, who are both aware of the issue but unclear how to deal with it. He has proposed an onsite meeting between the 3 of them one weekend morning. There are many cyclists who use the road in both directions, particularly on weekend mornings. Some travel very fast and there have evidently been several incidents over the years, some serious. Pres Cork asked whether the Board believes we should be taking a lead role in representing this issue as part of our advocacy role.

Several options were discussed:

1. Make all traffic one way as it is for cars
2. Enforce the 15 mph speed limit (police)
3. Add another trail for pedestrians
4. Tear up the asphalt and install a gravel road
5. Install speed bumps
6. Increase signage with warnings
7. Try to work cooperatively with responsible bicycle clubs
8. Encourage people to report incidents to police
9. Close the road to all wheeled traffic

Question was raised what liability the City and NBC have in the event of accidents occurring. The Board agreed that NBC should pursue this issue actively. Pres Cork undertook to take the lead and to report back on progress.

6.0 Committee Membership

This item was tabled to the Retreat.

7.0 Memorial for Rita McCoy

Treas Flower reported that there was no public funeral service for Rita McCoy, past Volunteer Coordinator and NBC Board Member, who passed away on December 24, 2013. The family has no plans for a memorial and would be happy if NBC would take on that responsibility. Rita's niece, Shona Milne, will be coming down from Washington state the third weekend in February. It was agreed that NBC would hold a memorial on Sunday, February 23, 2014 at the Muth IC. Rita's family and friends will be invited as well as NBC members, volunteers, and partners. Sec Fuhrer agreed to gather a committee of interested people together and take charge of organizing the event.

9.0 Adjourn

Mbr Hayter made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mbr Clemente. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 4:06 pm.

Holly Fuhrer, Board Secretary
Newport Bay Conservancy