

NEWPORT BAY CONSERVANCY
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Back Bay Science Center Conference Room
Wednesday October 15, 2014 2:00-4:00 pm
OPEN SESSION

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors Present: Howard Cork, Peter Fuhrer, Donna Flower, Holly Fuhrer, Peter Bryant, Michelle Clemente, Frances Cork, Ginger Hayter, Jean Whitaker, Dick Zembal

Directors Absent with Apologies: Sarah Kimball, Danielle Zacherl

Staff: Heather Cieslak

Guests: Jack Keating, Martha Wolf, Krista Sloniowski

The meeting was called to order by President Cork at 2:08 pm.

2. Secretary's Report

Sec Fuhrer presented the minutes of the September 17, 2014 Board Meeting. Motion made by Mbr Hayter to accept, seconded by Mbr Cork. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Treasurer's Report

Treas Flower presented the financial report with handouts detailing her report, the 2014 operations budget, the balance sheet, and the profit and loss statement (see attached). There was brief discussion about why the SOCALPapa event was less profitable this year. Suggestion was made that we have more than one fundraising event yearly to increase our income streams.

Mbr Hayter made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report, seconded by Mbr Cork. All were in favor. The budget for 2015 will be taken up by the new Board in January.

Heather Cieslak arrived at 2:25 pm.

4. President's Report – Howard Cork

Mbr Cork thanked VP Fuhrer, project manager for the Bayview Restoration, for his presentation at the scheduled Public Meeting the previous night at the IC. Mbr Cork noted that this project is limited to two segments of the Bayview Slope and wondered about the status of the remaining area, some of which has been previously restored and is flourishing and some of which remains degraded. Several factors were cited: long-term drought, lack of maintenance, failure to properly analyze the soil, and lack of support from the local community of equestrians who insist on cutting trails through the restored areas and have even cut the fences meant to limit access to protect the flora. An attempt has been made to accommodate the horse owners by establishing a trail for them. OCParks would like to see the laws enforced more effectively. The City could also tighten up the permitting process for the horses stabled in that area. It was suggested that those involved in the restoration sit down with the horse owners, try to elicit their support and come to some compromise. It was also suggested that more signage be posted to remind people of relevant ordinances and that someone is watching, as well as installing more sturdy fencing.

5. Committee Updates

Restoration Committee - Sarah Kimball, Chair

Mbr Kimball was not present. Discussion of the Bayview Project, reported above, was conducted by VP Fuhrer who until now has been the project manager. VP Fuhrer announced he will be handing over supervision of the project to Chairperson Kimball and her committee.

Watershed Committee - Howard Cork and Krista Sloniowski

Pres Cork reported that the Watershed Grant Advisory Committee had met to discuss the extension project and to decide whether or not NBC should pursue funding opportunities for implementation of the concept proposals which will be generated through this project. The upshot of that discussion was that other agencies are better positioned to take on the planning and execution of such projects directly and that NBC is more suited to play a facilitating role in the larger watershed. NBC's primary role should be focused on providing leadership in developing strategies to improve the health of the Bay but we can also encourage other agencies to take an interest in the larger issues, provide support, and help facilitate projects. We should continue our efforts to help determine what a healthy Bay looks like, as we did at our last symposium, and establish our credibility as information gatherers, awareness builders, educators and facilitators. The Advisory Committee recommends that NBC not over reach its capabilities and therefore not pursue grant funding or be project applicants but rather encourage and help others to do that.

Mbr Cork made a motion that NBC continue to focus its energies on the Bay and determining the health of the Bay and not pursue specific funded projects at this time. Seconded by Mbr Hayter. All were in favor.

Mbr Hayter made the point that Irvine is the last place left in the watershed where there is significant development going on and encouraged NBC not to miss the opportunity to exert some influence on that if possible.

Fund Raising Committee – Ginger Hayter, Chair

Operations Director Cieslak reported that the Fundraising Committee is focusing now on rebuilding relationships with individuals and corporations in the community to establish a basis for soliciting donations. She introduced NBC volunteer Martha Wolf, an experienced fundraiser, who presented her thoughts about developing a fundraising campaign over the next three years using a "catchy" theme and centered around our 50th anniversary celebration in 2017. To do that we must "bundle our assets" and put them out there for people to see to entice them to reconnect with the Bay, their Newport Beach "Hidden Gem", and NBC as its greatest promoter and protector. We need to encourage residents and businesses to take ownership of the Bay and support it, and remind them of the citizens' movement that saved it for posterity, our core of volunteerism, and the programs we conduct and make available. We should emphasize the uniqueness of this piece of "wild nature" in the midst of such dense development and the scale of use by the public which NBC enhances. Another volunteer, Liz Grant, is doing research to find grants and foundations to which NBC can apply.

Board Development Committee – Holly Fuhrer, Chair

Sec Fuhrer presented the 2014-15 Slate of Candidates approved and recommended by the Board Development Committee as follows:

Peter Bryant
Donna Carroll
Nancy Gardner
Jean Whitaker
Danielle Zacherl
Dick Zembal

The Committee has left one Board position unfilled this year because we were unable to find a candidate with strengths in fundraising, business, marketing, and PR which we believe the Board needs most importantly. We will continue to search.

There are 62 volunteer/members to date who will be eligible to vote.

The Committee is recommending that the Board Code of Involvement be modified as soon as possible as there is agreement that the requirements for Board Membership are outdated. The Committee recommends that the current code be temporarily suspended and will propose a revision in the near future.

6. Other Business/Matters Rising

OD Cieslak reported that she recently attended safety training at the Sea Base and made good contacts there. There is a possibility that we could restart boat tours in the Bay with DFW's permission.

Mbr Cork inquired about the progress of the new training protocol initiated by IRC and OCParks. OD Cieslak reported that there continue to be issues of disagreement about how to integrate the new training with NBC's existing program but these are being negotiated as they go along.

7. Adjourn to Executive Session

Motion to adjourn into Executive Session was made at 4:31 pm by Mbr Hayter and seconded by Mbr Zembal. All were in favor. The Executive Session was called to order at 4:32 pm.

The Executive Session, which involved discussing, amending, and approving the minutes of three past Executive Sessions (April 15, 2014, May 20, 2014, and September 17, 2014), was conducted and concluded at 4:39 pm.

Since there were no objections, the Executive meeting was closed at 4:39 pm and the Open Session adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Holly Fuhrer
Board Secretary, Newport Bay Conservancy