

NEWPORT BAY CONSERVANCY
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Back Bay Science Center Conference Room
Wednesday December 17, 2014 2:00-4:00 pm
OPEN SESSION

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors Present: Peter Fuhrer, Donna Flower, Holly Fuhrer, Peter Bryant, Michelle Clemente, Frances Cork, Nancy Gardner, Sarah Kimball, Jean Whitaker, Danielle Zacherl, Dick Zembal

Directors Absent with Apologies: Interim President Howard Cork

Staff: Heather Cieslak

Guests: Jack Keating

The meeting was called to order by VP Fuhrer at 2:06 pm.

2. Secretary's Report

Sec Fuhrer presented the minutes of the October 15, 2014 Board Meeting. Motion made by Mbr Flower to accept, seconded by Mbr Cork. The minutes were approved unanimously without amendment.

3. Election of Board Officers

Nominations for Board Officers were opened by VP Fuhrer starting with President.

President - Peter Fuhrer was nominated by Mbr Bryant and accepted, seconded by Mmbr Gardner, all were in favor.

Dick Zembal arrived at 2:11 pm.

Vice President - Frances Cork was nominated by Mbr Bryant but declined because she will be absent for six months. Michelle Clemente was nominated by Mbr Zacherl and accepted, seconded by Mbr Gardner, carried unanimously.

Treasurer - Donna Flower was placed in nomination by Sec Fuhrer and accepted. Seconded by Mbr Gardner and carried unanimously.

Peter Bryant left the meeting at 2:16 pm.

Secretary - Holly Fuhrer was nominated by Donna Flower and accepted, seconded by Mbr Gardner. All present were in favor.

Peter Bryant returned at 2:20 pm.

President-elect Fuhrer thanked the Board and welcomed the new officers and new Board member Nancy Gardner. He stated that he will be very reliant on Board members and Committees to carry forward NBC's work in the coming year.

4. Issuance of 2014-2015 Board Handbook

Sec Fuhrer, Chair of Board Development Committee, distributed new Board Handbooks to members, explaining this was a project initiated by the Committee with the assistance of Mbr Cork and Mbr Hayter. This is the first edition put out by the Committee since 2006 with the hope that it will be

kept updated and current in the future. Sec Fuhrer and Mbr Cork went through each section with the Board so that members would be aware of the important historical and current information it provides to them.

5. Discussion of Committee Structure and Committee Assignments

President-elect Fuhrer referenced the information in the new handbook detailing committees, committee functions, and 2014 committee membership. He asked that Board members think about where they would like to put their energies in the coming year, reminding them that the Board will need to strengthen the committees' functioning this year since the new President is employed outside of NBC and will not be able to participate in all of their activities. He also reminded members that historically the activities of NBC were run by committees with less involvement by the officers and that some believe that we should return to that model of operation. Discussion followed.

Several specific comments and suggestions were made. According to the Bylaws, the Vice President is Chair of Bylaws and the Treasurer Chair of Finance, two standing committees of the Board. The remaining committee chairs are appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Board. Committee Chairs appoint their membership. Treas Flower suggested that a Planned Giving Sub-Committee be added to the Fundraising Committee. Mbr Zembal suggested that Board members should be encouraged to attend committee meetings that interest them even if they do not want to be committee members. Mbr Bryant raised the question of whether there should be an Events Committee even though the role of being in charge of events falls to the Operations Director. Mbr Gardner questioned whether we have a Strategic Plan and suggested we should review the committees with regard to how they are moving us toward our strategic goals. She also mentioned that some organizations have the Bylaws and Board Development Committees together. Pres-elect Fuhrer suggested that we devote more time to this discussion at the next Board meeting in January as well as at the Retreat.

6. Proposed Letter to Newport Beach City Council

Mbr Cork presented a letter she had drafted to the NB City Council as a result of Mbr Gardner's suggestion at the Annual Meeting. The letter presents NBC and the UNB as valuable assets to the City, expresses a desire to work collaboratively, and requests a study session with the Council to elaborate this. A study session precedes the Council meeting and offers an opportunity to provide education and awareness to CC members. A power point can be presented at that time. A request for a study session has to be made to the City Manager or the Mayor.

Mbr Bryant suggested we mention that the UNB could be designated "an estuary of international significance." Jack Keating suggested that we clarify the terms "estuary, bay, and wetlands". Recommendation was also made that we include a line about what activities the City could participate in with NBC. Mbr Gardner stated that she feels the letter is good and that we can elaborate these points in the study session. She recommended that the letter be taken to the NBCC in person by our representative (Howard Cork recommended) along with the Annual Report attached, explained briefly, and handed over to the Council.

Motion made by Mbr Gardner that we submit the proposed letter with a line about what activities the CC could participate in with NBC and the 2014 Annual Report attached. Seconded by Mbr Cork. All were in favor.

7. Planning for Wetlands Symposium

Mbr Bryant, Chair of the Research Committee, reported on plans for the NBC Symposium on January 31 explaining, "The Symposium marks the 44th anniversary of the adoption (on 2 February 1971) of the intergovernmental "RAMSAR Convention" (The **Convention on Wetlands of International Importance**), in the Iranian city of Ramsar. The Convention recognizes the ecological functions of wetlands and their economic, cultural, scientific, and recreational values. It provides the framework for national and international action for the identification of important wetland sites, as well as their conservation and wise use. The U.S. has so far designated only 36 sites (less than many other smaller countries) and only one of these is in Southern California (The Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve)." NBC could apply for this designation for the UNB.

Mbr Bryant has lined up interesting speakers representing some of the other wetlands in Southern California. The symposium will be held at the BBSC from 9:00 to 4:00 with speakers in the morning, lunch, and poster sessions and field trips in the afternoon. There will be a charge for admission which will include lunch. Treas Flower requested a budget. The Symposium Committee – Frances Cork, Heather Cieslak, Peter Fuhrer, and Peter Bryant - will meet this week to plan marketing, publicity, and other details of administration.

8. Robinson Addition to Donor Wall at Interpretive Center

Sec Fuhrer explained to the Board that Jay Robinson's partner, Denise Loxton, has offered to donate \$5,000 to have Fran and Frank Robinson and their son Jay Robinson's names added to the donor wall at the Peter and Mary Muth Interpretive Center. Although the Robinsons championed the movement to save the Bay from commercial development which ultimately led to the establishment of the Upper Newport Bay State Ecological Reserve, they were not involved in the establishment of the Interpretive Center in 2000. However, since they were so essentially and importantly instrumental in the citizens' movement to save the Bay, the officers are recommending that they be added to the wall at the highest (\$25,000) level. The Board agreed unanimously.

9. Operations Director's Report

OD Cieslak brought the Board up to date regarding projects and issues staff has been working on. There is currently a controversy about the NBC logo. At some time in the recent past, the logo was altered. Jim Cokas, the original designer feels strongly that it should be restored. Since all of our materials now use the altered logo, this would be a significant task. It was suggested that the Board invite Mr. Cokas to make a presentation to the Board to hear his rationale for the change.

OD Cieslak mentioned that the resignation of Ginger Hayter from the Board represents a loss to our fundraising momentum. Martha Wolf is continuing to work on developing a theme for our 50th Anniversary Celebration around which our fundraising will be organized. A list of ideas was distributed to the Board for review.

10. Other Business/Matters Rising

Jack Keating reported on the progress of the "Mesa Ditch" on the Cox property and recent obstacles to its resolution. Mbr Gardner recommended that he contact the City Council member in that district for assistance.

Mr. Keating also reported that he has 35 boxes of NBC files in his garage that he would like to dispose of within a month. Treas Flower offered to do a preliminary inventory. It has previously been

recommended by the Board Development Committee that NBC rent a small storage unit temporarily and make a call for all records being stored by members, then assemble a committee that would sort them and decide what should be designated for the archives.

In addition, Mr. Keating reported that one of our volunteers has been concerned that trees have been cut down on property bordering the ecological reserve specifically so that birds cannot nest in them. He wonders if NBC should take an advocacy position. Mbr Zembal commented that it would be illegal if the birds were nesting when they removed the trees but that would have to be proven. Pres-elect Fuhrer agreed to contact the volunteer for more information.

11. Discussion of Board Members Ideas and Hopes for the New Year

In the interest of time, this item was postponed until either the next Board Meeting or the Retreat.

12. Dates for 2015 Board Meetings and Board Retreat

The Board discussed keeping monthly Board meetings at the same time as 2014, the third Wednesdays of the month 2:00-4:00 pm at the BBSC. This will be confirmed. A Doodle Poll will be sent out regarding a date for the Retreat in February.

13. Adjourn

Member Kimball made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mbr Cork. All were in favor. The meeting closed at 4:40 pm.

Holly Fuhrer
Board Secretary, Newport Bay Conservancy