

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

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

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

Directors Absent with Apologies: Donna Flower, Peter Bryant, Sarah Kimball, Danielle Zacherl

Staff: Heather Cieslak, Operations Director, Jeanne Stein, Volunteer Coordinator

Attendees: Jack Keating

The meeting was called to order by President Cork at 2:10 pm.

The Closed Session to approve the minutes of the April and May Executive Sessions was cancelled due to a lack of quorum of members who had been present at those two meetings.

2. Secretary's Report

Sec Fuhrer presented the minutes of the May 20, 2014 Board Meeting. There were no amendments or corrections made. Motion made by Mbr Hayter to approve, seconded by Mbr Cork. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer not present.

4. President's Report

President Cork asked for comments regarding the report he sent out to the Board prior to the meeting up-dating several pending events and issues (see report attached).

A discussion of Estuary Awareness Day ensued. There is consensus among the volunteers who have helped with the event that the attendance has been low for the last two years and that this is due to lack of advertising and a dearth of information about it in the community. Point was made that if we want the event to be enlarged, NBC will have to initiate this and be willing to take more responsibility for organizing it. DFW has made clear their concern that they do not want to be overwhelmed by numbers because of limited parking and staff, therefore any changes would naturally have to be made with their willingness and agreement.

5. Committee Updates

Research Committee

Chair, Peter Bryant was not present to make a report.

Mbr Clemente reported on the NBC Symposium, Defining the Sustainability of the Upper Newport Bay, to be held on the morning of June 28 which she and Krista Sloniowski have been organizing. Several leaders in the watershed have been invited to a luncheon afterwards to signal to the

community NBC's desire to take a coordinating role in regard to the Bay and to encourage cooperation and collaboration between the agencies involved, both government and non-profit.

Mbr Zembal reported that sea level rise from Climate Change may already be affecting Clapper Rail nesting. The cord grass is not as robust as it should be in certain areas. Studying the water levels and measuring high and low tides could be an area for collaborative investigation and sharing of data.

The issue of trash removal was raised and discussed. Suggestion was made that we ask the City Council to close Back Bay Drive on Clean-Up Day to enable a more thorough cleaning of the east side. This would involve some expense by the City and the approval of DFW to allow work in certain areas of the salt marsh.

Restoration Committee

Chair, Sarah Kimball was not present to make a report. Pres Cork reported that Mbr Kimball had organized two half-day walk-throughs of the Bay to survey what restoration projects have already been done, how they have been maintained, and what needs yet to be done. The attendees were an inclusive group of people who have been involved in past and current restoration projects – NBC Board members including Francis and Howard Cork, Restoration Committee members including Don Millar, representatives from DFW, Riley and Jessica Pratt from IRC and UCI, Portia Bryant from OCParks, and Matt Yurko from the Coastal Commission's Community Restoration Project. Survey forms were completed and a photographic record made. A third walk-through is scheduled. It was suggested that Barry Nerhus who is doing the Bayview Project for NBC should be invited. Mbr Zembal raised the question of where the records of all of the restoration projects done in the Bay are located.

Pres Cork reported that the land-owners Coalition which he is facilitating is gradually moving toward an integrated up-grade of the signage around the Bay. He has suggested that Jim Cokas present a sample to the coalition for their review and approval. Then NBC will apply to the city for some seed money for the project. The land-owners seem enthusiastic about this idea. Dave Kiff, NB City Manager, and Stacy Blackwood, Director of OCParks, have expressed support.

Fund Raising Committee

Mbr Cork, Chair of the Membership Drive, reported that a mailing has gone out to solicit membership renewals. This will be the last mid-year mailing. Per Board action at the May meeting, the membership drive will henceforth be held annually in November.

Mbr Hayter, Chair of the Fund Raising Committee, reported on the progress of the SOCALPAPA Plein Air Exhibit and Sale to be held July 18-20. Mary Thornton is organizing the Friday Gala in which NBC honors the artists and their guests and NBC's supporters and donors. Mbr Cork is helping with the food. Two hundred people are expected to attend, by invitation only. Board members are encouraged to attend and to suggest people for the invitation list. Treas Flower will be in charge of the front desk and sales transactions throughout the weekend when the event will be open to the public. There will also be a membership table managed by NBC Volunteers.

NBC did not receive the Gimbel grant this year which will significantly impact the Outrigger Program unless we can find other funding. It was suggested that the Grant Writing Committee convene to brainstorm and develop a plan.

OD Cieslak reported that REI is wanting to bring groups in to volunteer. She is looking for sponsors for Clean-Up Day tee shirts.

Board Development Committee

Sec Fuhrer, Chair of the Board Development Committee, reported that the committee is beginning its work of shaping next year's Board. The first order of business is to determine how many current Board members will be returning. She asked that members let her know if they will either be

fulfilling their two year commitments or running for the Board again if they are in a one-year position. She also requested that members refer names of potential candidates to the BDC for consideration.

Sec Fuhrer also raised the issue of NBC's Advisory Board which the BDC would like to see reinvigorated. There are currently five members of the Advisory Board but this resource has not been well utilized for the past three or four years. Several names have been suggested to enhance the group. It was suggested by Mbr Hayter that the incoming President in November take up this task.

Sec Fuhrer announced that the BDC intends to create a new Board Handbook. The last handbook was developed in 2003 and is sorely out-dated. Mbr Hayter and Mbr Cork expressed an interest in helping with this project.

Sec Fuhrer also discussed the need to consolidate all of NBC's records which are currently scattered in various places and need to be sorted and organized into an archive. This will involve a long-term project which the BDC would like to see initiated.

6. Other Business/Matters Rising

VP Fuhrer, Chair of the Education Committee, reported that the committee had met and discussed revamping the Outrigger Program. Our staff feels that this is a very valuable program and would like to reorganize it and possibly make it self-sustaining through fees.

Pres Cork made the point that we need to refocus on fundraising, get the entire committee together and decide on a few targets that we will concentrate on instead of segregating our efforts into subcommittees.

The issue of corporate fundraising was raised. OD Cieslak reiterated that we need to build a foundation for this. We need to have publications describing our programs and our goals and a packet that representatives can take to potential donors. We need a focused approach and people to carry this out, and we need to spend money. Mbr Clemente volunteered to help develop published materials. Mbr Zembal expressed the view that we need to develop the idea that we have a product, something to show for donors' investment, something that they can relate to such as the signage project, benches with donors' names on them, staircases, etc. We also need something like a donor wall to recognize people's investment.

Mbr Cork mentioned the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner which is currently being planned for September 4. Matt Yurko has agreed to organize this again as a joint venture with NBC, OCParks, the City of Newport Beach, and DFW in which the volunteers of all five agencies will be honored. Board members are encouraged to attend.

Pres Cork requested that Board members keep their ears open for volunteers' responses to the OCParks training mandates and report feedback.

7. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Mbr Clemente and seconded by Mbr Zembal. All were in favor.

Holly Fuhrer
Board Secretary, Newport Bay Conservancy