

NEWPORT BAY CONSERVANCY
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Back Bay Science Center Conference Room
Wednesday April 15, 2015 2:00-4:00 pm
OPEN SESSION

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

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

Directors Absent with Apologies: Frances Cork, Howard Cork

Directors Absent: Dick Zembal

Staff: Heather Cieslak

Guest: Jack Keating

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

2. Secretary's Report

Sec Fuhrer presented the minutes of the March 18, 2015 Board Meeting. Motion made by Mbr Gardner to approve the minutes, seconded by Mbr Clemente. All were in favor.

3. Treasurer's Report

The 2015 Budget was presented by Treas Flower and discussed. The Treas requested a closed session to discuss personnel issues. Mbr Gardner moved that the Board move into closed session. Mbr Zacherl seconded the motion. All approved. The business of the closed session was conducted and concluded. Mbr Gardner made a motion to move out of closed session. Mbr Zacherl seconded. All were in favor.

Profit and Loss Statements from February and March were distributed.

The Treas recommended that we increase our reserves from \$30,000 to \$60,000. A motion to that effect was made by Mbr Gardner and seconded by Mbr Zacherl. The motion passed unanimously.

Question was raised as to why our anticipated proceeds from the SOCALPAPA event were lowered this year. It has been speculated that sales were down last year because five artists who are among the largest sellers were not there. The planning representatives from the artists association are trying to make sure they come back. They are also trying to reduce the advertising expenses and create a more focused and effective campaign. The costs of the Friday night Gala which NBC sponsors did not go up last year. It was agreed that the Gala is worthwhile because it honors the artists, provides opportunity for the juried show, and gives NBC good publicity. It was suggested that we add a silent auction to the event. This will be further discussed by the Fund Raising Committee.

A motion was made by Mbr Gardner that we accept the 2015 Budget with the exception of the matter that was discussed in the closed session which has yet to be explored. Seconded by Mbr Zacherl. All were in favor.

Mbr Zembal arrived at 2:33 pm.

Mbr Zacherl moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Seconded by Mbr Gardner and passed unanimously. Pres Fuhrer commended Treas Flower for her timely completion of the 2015 Budget.

4. Review of Board Committee Action Plans from Retreat

Actions plans were submitted by the Committee Chairs in the format suggested by Past Pres Cork and requested by Pres Fuhrer and were distributed to Board members for review prior to the meeting.

Mbr Gardner spoke for the Fund Raising Committee reporting that the committee is now focusing on preparation of the Corporate Package. They will also take a closer look at SOCALPAPA.

Pres Fuhrer reported for the Marketing and Outreach Committee, reviewed its goals and said they will be collaborating with the Fund Raising Committee on the Corporate Package.

Mbr Kimball spoke for the Restoration Committee. She has nothing further to recommend or report beyond the action plan and feels their goals are achievable. Mbr Zembal observed that past efforts to do plant restoration have focused mostly on the Coastal Sage Scrub habitat which favors certain species and have done little or nothing to enhance the marsh habitat which also needs attention, particularly since it supports some of our most valued and endangered species such as the Clapper (Ridgway) Rail and the Belding's Savannah Sparrow. He expressed the opinion that we should be focusing more of our efforts on sustaining our rare species. VP Clemente reported that in her work with the City, they are trying to identify these needs and prioritize some of these neglected areas. Mbr Zacherl inquired about funding sources for such projects. Reportedly SCWRP has funding opportunities for wetlands restoration. If we were to explore these possibilities, it would be as a facilitator and not a recipient or contractor.

Mbr Bryant reviewed goals for the Research and Education Committee. At their last meeting it was suggested that they add symposia on invasive species and the effects of climate change on the Bay.

Mbr Gardner moved that we accept the committees' action plans. Seconded by Mbr Zacherl and approved unanimously. Pres Fuhrer thanked the Board for its participation in the creation of NBC's Strategic Plan.

Mbr Gardner raised the question of what committee should be responsible for NBC's participation in the City's "Green on the Green Expo" event on September 19 from 10:00 to 4:00 pm. Marketing and Outreach was identified to take the lead. Mbr Gardner offered to advise and guide the committee.

5. Committee Reports

Marketing and Outreach – Peter Fuhrer, Chair

A written report was distributed by Chairman Fuhrer. The issue of NBC volunteer tee shirts has been resolved and the shirts ordered. The shirts will provide consistent branding and identification of our volunteers. The committee is focusing now on NBC's publications which are badly in need of up-dating and redesign. A small group of the committee are looking at all of the publications carefully with the goal of achieving a uniform, consistent, cohesive message and attractive appealing design. Single color brochures will no longer be used. These new brochures will be utilized in the Corporate Package as well as for other purposes.

6. Operations Director Report

OD Cieslak reported that she and Pres Fuhrer attended a meeting with several representatives of OCParks – Dennis Schaffer, Bill Reiter, Scott Fegley, Jackie Cordero, and Amy Erikson. She feels that they have reached a compromise about the branding of OCParks and NBC. OCParks agreed to allow the logos of DFW, the City, and the Coastal Commission to be embroidered on OCParks vests to indicate their partnerships with other government agencies whereas NBC volunteers will be allowed to wear their identifying name tags on the vests which include the NBC logo, as well as their volunteer tee shirts. Jackie Cordero will now be our liaison with OCParks replacing Dennis Schaffer.

7. Other Business/Matters Rising

Mbr Gardner announced that she and Jean Watt are launching a committee for the purpose of moving forward issues that affect the Bay that may not be initiated by the City Council or receive adequate attention from the power structure.

Jack Keating reported that a videographer, Chip Fesko, had called him and asked if NBC would be interested in helping him produce a video of the Back Bay. Jack agreed to arrange a meeting with him and Pres Fuhrer to explore the possibilities. This will be handed off to the Marketing and Outreach Committee. Mr. Keating also suggested that the Board consider ways in which NBC might impact water conservation efforts in California. In addition, he reported that the City obtained funding to complete the work on Cox Ditch.

Mbr Zembal agreed that NBC should explore ways to tie in our overall conservation efforts with water conservation since the lack of rainfall is affecting the edges of the Bay, drying up the bull rush and cat tails. The cordgrass is also suffering from the decrease in fresh water and increased salinity. We need to be aware that the effects of water issues on habitats can be dangerous to wildlife.

Pres Fuhrer brought up the issue of grant writing and requested input from the Board about how we can be more effective in this area. Several possibilities were discussed including the idea that we hire a professional consultant to help us since we may not have sufficient resources in the organization to manage it by ourselves. Sec Fuhrer agreed to call OneOC to find out if they can advise us on the matter.

8. Adjourn

Mbr Bryant made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mbr Zembal. All were in favor. The meeting ended at 3:50 pm.

Holly Fuhrer, Board Secretary
Newport Bay Conservancy