

NEWPORT BAY CONSERVANCY
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Back Bay Science Center Conference Room
Wednesday June 17, 2015, 2:00-4:00 pm
OPEN SESSION

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Directors Present: Peter Fuhrer, Donna Flower, Holly Fuhrer, Peter Bryant, Frances Cork, Howard Cork, Nancy Gardner, Sarah Kimball, Jean Whitaker, Dick Zembal
Directors Absent with Apologies: Michelle Clemente, Danielle Zacherl
Staff: Heather Cieslak
Guests: Jack Keating

The meeting was called to order by Pres Fuhrer at 2:10 pm.

2. Secretary's Report

Sec Fuhrer presented the minutes of the May 20, 2015 Board Meeting. No corrections were offered. Motion made by Mbr Gardner to approve the minutes, seconded by Mbr Cork. All were in favor.

3. Treasurer's Report

Treas Flower presented her monthly report. Regarding the 2015 budget, we will increase our Administration Fee budget due to our ability to bill the Department of Conservation 15% of the total paid to contractors. The budgeted income will thereby increase from \$2,600 to \$13,500. She requested that any committees that need to make changes to budgets let her know soon since she will be preparing the Variance Report at 6/30/15 comparing budget to actual for the first six months of this year.

Regarding the Outrigger Program, we are out of money for this and have a \$2,100.00 deficit. She proposed that we use money from our mid-year fundraising appeal to cover that deficit since the letter is soliciting funds for educational programs. Motion made by Treas Flower that this recommendation be accepted. Seconded by Mbr Kimball and passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mbr Gardner to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Mbr Cork. All were in favor.

4. Committee Reports

Research Committee – Peter Bryant, Chair

Chairman Bryant called attention to the Naturalist Night coming up on Thursday at the Muth Interpretive Center featuring a distinguished professor from UCI as the speaker. He also announced that Mbr Zacherl has put together a description of the mini-grants the NBC Research Committee is offering and a call for proposals.

Plans are progressing for the NBC Summer Symposium on Saturday August 1, 2015 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Muth Interpretive Center titled "Invasive Species and Their Impacts In and Around Newport Bay." There will be five speakers featured in the morning and Field Trips and Work Parties conducted in the afternoon. If we include lunch, fees will have to be raised. It was suggested that we give participants a list of restaurants in the immediate area and let them manage lunch on their own.

Fundraising Committee – Frances Cork, Chair

Chairwoman Cork reported that the committee has just sent out the mid-year fundraising letter for the June Gift Drive. Operations Director Cieslak has suggested that NBC buy a mailing list for our fund drives to expand our reach into the community. The SOCALPapa Plein Air Exhibit and Sale, our biggest fundraising event of the year, is coming up soon the weekend of July 17-19. Ms. Cieslak will be meeting with Visit Newport Beach to discuss ways that they can provide us with publicity and advertising.

5. Report of Fundraising/Grant Writing Meeting with OneOC – Holly Fuhrer

At the April meeting the Board discussed how we might enhance and develop our efforts to procure grants to implement our programs. Sec Fuhrer was charged with the task of contacting OneOC to find out what assistance they might offer in this area, specifically about the possibility of NBC hiring a professional grant writer and what this would entail. Subsequently Pres Fuhrer and Sec Fuhrer attended a meeting with Victoria Torres, the OneOC Director of Training, on June 5, 2015. A detailed report of this meeting has been sent to the Board and referred to the Fundraising Committee for action. The highlights of information discovered are as follows:

1. OneOC offers multiple training opportunities that NBC could take advantage of in the area of fundraising including many workshops and an 8 week course called “Fundraising Fundamentals.” She emphasized the importance of training our Board and Staff.

2. If we are looking for grants specifically to help us staff our operations, the buzz word for that purpose is “Core Operating Support”. There are funders that will give grants strictly for operating expenses with no strings attached for 2-5 years with the contingency that we prove that we have a viable plan to continue to monetize the program post-funding.

3. OneOC offers to its members the use of their “Foundation Directory” which provides extensive information about potential funders which helps non-profits discern which sources are worth their while to pursue which saves much time and energy doing the research required.

4. Regarding the use of professional grant writers, once we locate a funding source and decide that it has good potential and is worth our effort to apply, we can create a job description for a grant writer and post it on OneOC’s employment board. We would need to find someone who has expertise and experience in the areas of environmental conservation and education. Ms. Torres has put us in touch with someone who works with an organization of grant writers who can help us find an appropriate grant writer for our specific needs.

5. Ms Torres recommended immediately that given the size of our staff, the Board needs to take the lead in our fundraising efforts.

Discussion followed this report. Mmbr Zembal offered several recommendations from his own experience about how we should approach the area of grant funding, the importance of deciding what programs we want to fund, what funders and grants would be appropriate to our purposes, and what the funders are looking for from applicants. Mbr Gardner made the point that it is the Board’s responsibility to determine these priorities and suggested that we spend a large portion of a Board meeting discussing all of this. Mbr Zembal noted that there is a lot of money being made available now in the area of sea level rise and sediment flow. The latest big issue being discussed by many in the field is what are the wetlands going to look like in 50 years and what habitat conversion has to take place to address the needs of our endangered species. Pres Fuhrer mentioned that the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project has had money in the past for wetlands restoration.

Pres Fuhrer suggested that half of our next Board meeting be devoted to a further discussion of this topic. Mbr Gardner requested that we invite one of the potential grant writers to come to the meeting and give us an expert opinion. Pres Fuhrer suggested that we need a Grant Writing Committee of the Board to oversee all of our grant writing activities. He suggested that he would be chair, with Mbrs Kimbal and Zacherl, Sec Fuhrer, Liz Grant, and OD Cieslak as members.

6. Report of Meeting with Laguna Canyon Foundation – Peter Fuhrer and Howard Cork

Pres Fuhrer, Past Pres Cork, and OD Cieslak attended a meeting on June 12, 2015 with the Executive Director of Laguna Canyon Foundation, Hallie Jones, and the President of their Board, Michelle Kremer. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the OCParks/IRC transitioning into our two organizations, how we have responded to the challenges presented by this process and whether we want to try to have some impact on the up-coming renewal of their contract. All agreed that the effort has taken a lot of time and energy from our staff, Board, and volunteers to get where we are now and that we have had to do a lot of negotiating and compromising.

Pres Fuhrer and OD Cieslak have also recently met with Scott Fegley, Ellen Loftin, and Jackie Cordero to talk about how OCParks perceives the transition and what needs to be done to complete it. They were told that NBC has until September 1, 2015 to be in full compliance with their requirements – background checks done, Social Security numbers reported, OCParks vests ordered and worn, and CPR and First Aid Training completed by any volunteer who wants to work on OCParks property.

7. Report of UNB Collaboration Team Meeting – Howard Cork

Past Pres Cork reported that at the last meeting of the UNB Collaboration Team on June 11, 2015, some of the members expressed concerns reflecting the individual interests of their agencies that might impact the Team's ability to establish and maintain common goals in terms of a UNB Strategic Plan that they could all support. In response to this, he agreed to devise a list of questions that he would put forward to all of the members designed to try to discern what we need to be aware of and to keep in mind in trying to find common ground in our effort to draft a framework that would be inclusive and agreeable to all parties. He reiterated NBC's wholehearted support and willingness to help develop a strategic plan for the entire open space based on our mission to preserve and protect the Bay. He and Liz Flint will collect these inputs and draft a framework to be discussed at the next Collaboration Team meeting.

8. Operation Director's Report – Heather Cieslak

OD Cieslak gave a shortened version of her monthly report. Highlighted were: 1. a successful meeting with OCParks staff about training requirements; 2. donations received in honor of Dr. T.H. Gan, a resident of the Bay recently deceased whose family requested donations to NBC in lieu of flowers; 3. six additional programs that have been booked for the summer expected to bring in \$2,965; 4. a new perk from the Plein Air fundraiser receiving 35% of proceeds from the online sale of art from the juried show; 5. another DFW Lands Pass meeting in LA in the near future – comments have to be submitted 13 days in advance – to be further discussed by the Board.

9. Other Business/Matters Rising

Pres Fuhrer and Jack Keating had a meeting with Chip Fesko, a documentary film producer who lives in Newport Beach and is very familiar with the Bay. He is working on a \$5,000,000 documentary film about the Bay supported by the George Lucas Foundation. He wants to feature NBC and all of the land-owning and other partners connected with the Bay and is requesting our cooperation.

Our insurance carrier is offering NBC "Terrorism Coverage" for \$32.00 a year. The Board charged Pres Fuhrer with making the decision.

The Newport Beach chamber of Commerce is applying for a grant to fund Green Expo and would like NBC to be a co-applicant. It was agreed this would be a positive step.

A group of concerned citizens and conservationists is holding an event on June 27, 2015 to raise awareness of an incident that occurred on Balboa Peninsula on May 28, 2015 when a demolition

company illegally destroyed a heritage Ficus tree and wantonly killed many nesting birds and chicks. The group is requesting our support and the use of the NBC logo on a banner created for the event which is meant to encourage stronger protections for nesting birds. This was approved.

10. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn made by Mbr Zembal, seconded by Mbr Kimball. All were in favor. The Open Session ended at 4:10 pm.

Motion was made by Mbr Bryant to move into Executive Session. Seconded by Treas Carroll and passed unanimously. The business of the Closed Session having been conducted and completed, the meeting returned to Open Session and was concluded at 4:55 pm.

Holly Fuhrer, Board Secretary
Newport Bay Conservancy