NEWPORT BAY CONSERVANCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
MINUTES
Wednesday, September 24, 2025, 5:30 PM, In Person and **ZOOM**

Attending:
President – Bryan Tsu
Board Members – Julie Powers, Mario Cuevas, Susie Onate, Peter Bryant, Maureen Flanagan, Yugina Yun, Lori Metherate, Diane Daruty, and Bettina Eastman
Staff and guests - Heather Cieslak, Thomas Shields, Lisa Scolman
OC Parks – Molly Waldram

Excused Absence: McKenna Wegner

5:33 Call to order/roll call: Bryan

Approval of Minutes:
August 2025 Board Minutes
Molly moved; Julie seconded; Unanimously approved

1. **Operations Report: Heather**

The Operations Report was provided (see attached). Heather highlighted recent activities, including hosting events and receiving a $77,000 retention payment and a new $500,000 grant from the California Natural Resources Agency. Heather mentions the board's involvement in the planning commission meeting for the Snug Harbor surf project and the potential environmental impacts. The board discussed the possibility of writing another letter to the city council and attending the upcoming city council meeting.

2. **Treasurer's Report: Julie**

The Finance Committee Report was provided (see attached). Julie discussed the need to upgrade QuickBooks due to financial growth, estimating a $100 monthly increase. The organization expects to exceed $2 million in revenue by 2026, necessitating hiring a consultant to set up the accounting system in preparation for financial audits.
Heather and Julie to vet the financial consultant (Deanna) more thoroughly and consider other consulting options.

3. **Board Development:**

The Board Development Committee Report will be provided at the next meeting.

4. **Restoration Committee: Yugina**

The Restoration Committee Report will be provided at the next meeting.

5. **<u>Fundraising Committee</u>: Bryan**

   The Fundraising Committee Report will be provided at the next meeting.

6. **<u>Education/DEI Committee</u>: Mario**

   **The Education Committee Report was provided (see attached).**

7. **<u>Research and Advocacy Committee</u>: Peter**

   The Research Committee Report will be provided at the next meeting. Peter proposed discussing the Green Vision Plan for the county at the Wetlands Days symposium, with a budget of $500 allocated. Peter will continue discussions with Mike Wellborn to present the Green Vision plan at the upcoming Wetlands Days symposium.

8. **<u>Community Outreach Committee</u>: Bettina**

   The Community Outreach Committee Report will be provided at the next meeting. Heather, Julie, Yugina, and Bettina to draft a letter to the City Council regarding the Snug Harbor surf park project and coordinate with other groups to submit individual letters.

   Diane and Lisa proposed the Spirit Run event, projecting $40,000 in net proceeds. The event would include a half marathon, 5K, and mile races, with potential beneficiaries including the Newport Bay Conservancy. The NBC Board Meeting discussed the execution of an upcoming event, emphasizing the importance of Jody and Lisa's meticulous work. Heather Cieslak highlighted the need to raise awareness among local schools and suggested making the event environmentally friendly, including reusing materials and reducing waste. Concerns were raised about the potential impact on wildlife, with estimates suggesting 3,000 participants, including spectators. The board discussed capping participation at 1,500 for the half-marathon and 2,500 for the 5K. The board agreed to review the proposal further and make a decision next month.

7:20: Adjournment: Bettina moved; Mario seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Susie Onate
Secretary