

**MBCA Board Meeting APPROVED Minutes**  
**Thursday, September 12, 2019 / 5:00 – 7:00 PM**

**Regular Meeting Call to Order at 5 PM**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Bardwell	<input type="checkbox"/> Mike Lipsitz ( <i>advance notice, sent report</i> )
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Fick ( <i>left at 6</i> )	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruth Rieman
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pat Flanagan ( <i>via phone</i> )	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laraine Turk
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meg Foley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marina West
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Kennington	

**Introduction of Guests and Board Directors**

Gayle Austin, Janet Johnston, Aimee Buyea, and Yvonna Mullen later, around 6 pm.

**Agenda approval**

Approved unanimously with Laraine’s requested changes: Change #6 under Organizational Issues to a short report on review of our By-Laws (task assigned at Retreat) and then make the Board Members discussion #7.

**Minutes from July 11, 2019 BOD meeting**

***Ruth moved to approve the July minutes, to be finalized after Laraine contacts Chuck to confirm intent of membership. Sarah seconded and all were in favor.***

**Treasurer’s Report**

Marina provided details. Our CD is at \$22,336.18, checking at \$35,181.23, for total assets of \$57,528.20. We’ve received \$300 from MDLT for their half of the online maintenance of the Conservation Priorities website. There were a few additional income amounts from the Tour, plus some memberships and donations. Our DNO insurance was renewed in August for \$550. We made a payment to the International Dark Sky Association related to the Night Sky Tour. The Treasurer’s report was accepted.

**Capacity Building & Organizational Issues**

1) Grant status: DWL - Edison & AWAC – SB

Steve reiterated that we’re not pursuing an Edison grant due to information that they may not be providing such grants in this cycle. We’ve received \$5000 in grant funding for the Desert-Wise Living series from the affiliated non-profit organization of the Mojave Water Agency, AWAC/Association for Water Awareness and Conservation.

2) Purple Air monitors: AQMD support & installation/location additional units –SB, PF  
We’ve learned that some local monitors including Wonder Valley and the Joshua Tree Community Center are working but not reporting online probably due to internet limits.

3) Events Committee reports: *DWL Committee – 2019 Landscape Tour report, thank you to sponsors. MW.* Marina is spearheading the “Thank you Tours” to funding agencies, has finished several and there are two more upcoming.

*Fall event 9-28-19: Water for the Morongo Basin: The Next 50 years – All*

Marina went over the details. Laraine passed out flyers. Marina has talked with Tom about our preferences for his presentation, asking him to focus on longer-term planning and climate change issues, both local and the Sacramento Delta, but stay away from Mojave River adjudication. Ruth is working on a draft ad with the newspaper, and the radio ad is coming. Ruth sent the press release to 39 recipients and is working on other publicity. *Laraine will send out the Eblast. Marina and Steve will create a few pre-set questions. Laraine and Marina will create a digital 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Display.* Jim Ventura has indicated he will attend. MBCA will have the usual display table (it was mentioned we might ask Melissa if she might help us design a more formal display for the future). *Steve will get the CDPA logo to Laraine to put on the website announcement.*

4) 50<sup>th</sup> book: - ML

Mike provided a written report. Laraine added that the Committee will meet soon and we also have some photo additions and/or changes and will have a discussion about how to handle the Timeline.

5) mbconservation.org / E-blasts SB & LT

Laraine reported:

- We have a new Student member, Yvonna Mullen, CMC Student Trustee, membership paid by Greg Gilbert.
- A number of news items and events have been recently added.
- Nora helped Laraine get access to some Google analytics data and she will pursue and report.
- Nora is setting up membership parameters for 2020 memberships.

6) Short report on review of By-Laws (addition)

Laraine had agreed at the Retreat to review the By-Laws and see if anything needs addressing. There was nothing urgent but we discussed making the objectives broader in the statement of geographical scope, such as adding Lucerne and Johnson Valleys etc., under **2. Specific Purposes** (current language):

- b) To promote master planning for the entire area known as the Greater Morongo Basin including all of the various communities therein.

No one was sure if we need to notify any entity if we make changes to the By-Laws, *so Pat will check with attorney Paul Smith.*

7) Board members

Laraine showed in projection the Board membership terms for this year and next. If we bring in 2 new members and they both enter at year 2 (per By-Laws), the 3:5:3 proportion is reasonable, or we could have one person enter at year 1 or year 3 to get a tighter balance of 4:4:3 or 3:4:4.

2019	2020
Marina 3	Marina 1
Sarah 3	Sarah 1
David 1	David 2
Pat 1	Pat 2
Ruth 2	Ruth 3
1	2
Laraine 1	Laraine 2
Meg 2	Meg 3
1	2
Steve 3	Steve 1
Mike 2	Mike 3
5:3:3	3:5:3

Steve spoke about our discussion at the Retreat to add some new Board members, to start by just inviting them to attend our meetings (as several have today) and perhaps later consider becoming Directors. We appreciate today's visitors.

**Conservation Issues** (David had to leave.)

1) Paradise Valley EIR: SK, PF

As we already know, the Riverside County Planning Commission voted against this Project. It still has to go to their Board of Supervisors. Sarah & Steve attended and reported that the audience was about 90% opposed to Paradise Valley. Pat was among the commenters. It seems hopeful that the Supervisors will accept the Planning Commission's recommendation.

2) Solar projects - PF

- *Daggett* – PF – Pat reported that the Planning Commission will hear comments on Daggett on Thursday, September 19, in San Bernardino. Pat is working on her/our comment. There are CEQA environmental issues but we also need people to make the health, social, and economic arguments. It does not satisfy the RECE element 4.10. Pat will provide talking points and hopes some other Board members will attend. Pat reminded us that the comments of rural living people did impress the SB planning commission on RECE 4.10. Lucerne Valley is very concerned as it would impact their future.
- *Ord Mtn. Solar & Energy Project* – Still on hold. There's some private land for sale by other than the major land owner.
- *Calcite* – waiting.

3) Countywide Plan & Community Action Plans

- PEIR comments were due 8-15-19 – Janet heard that the issue may be on the October 3 Planning Commission Agenda. One good thing is there is language prohibiting franchise businesses in Joshua Tree. The Community Action Plans are still a problem issue and we should speak against them. Janet suggested sitting down around maps to look at

zoning, especially after we know more about the County's agenda for October/November, and work with Mark Lundquist.

4) Cadiz water harvesting proposal – SB. Steve noted that Cadiz is changing their business plan toward growing hemp and cannabis on about 1200 acres, mostly hemp.

5) Dark Sky ordinance –Night sky tour report. SB, PF

Steve reported about the Night Sky Tour that included representatives from Yucca Valley (Yakimow and Stueckle), the County (Rowe and her entire staff), 29 Palms (Jim Thornburg, Code Enforcement), IDA, the Base, the Park, and Sky's the Limit. After presentations during dinner and a very well-received experience at Sky's the Limit, there was a bus tour of non-compliant lighting in some Joshua Tree locations that ended across from the new County mental health facility which had a particularly bad light. The County responded fairly quickly to redirect the wrongly-aimed light. Terri Rahhal has committed to writing a new lighting code. The Committee will next meet on September 17. Paul Smith has become a member and is eager to pursue education and marketing efforts. Tom O'Key made an IDA presentation at the recent MAC meeting. Gayle reported that Supervisor Rowe mentioned working with Riverside County because their lighting is so harmful for the Park – she's eager to work with them. Pat is pursuing a program where people can easily trade a white for a yellow bulb at a number of locations. This enhances awareness in a quick and easy way. Breanne of TBID and 29's Code Enforcement employee are on board, and she has talked to Mark Lundquist. The bulbs in bulk could cost as little as \$2/each. Perhaps MBCA and the County could contribute to the funding.

6) Scenic 247 - SK

There is progress. The Committee has completed a visual description of the whole highway including Lucerne Valley and Yucca Valley (if YV gets officially involved). The project goes back to the County to work with the Committee on a corridor protection plan.

7) Eagle Mountain pumped storage – DF

Before he left, David reported that their organization has renewed their DNO and they are still in litigation in a Sacramento federal court and with a judge appointed by Obama.

9) Sahara Mustard weed and biologic control

MBCA had signed on to letters initiated by the Tubbs Conservancy to request this, and there was an announcement that the USDA research group has agreed to add research into biological controls for Sahara mustard to their agenda.

### **Outreach & Communications**

1) CDPA 25-year celebration <https://desertlands.org/lands/25years/>– SB, PF, MF  
*Steve will send the logo to Laraine for placement on the website.*

2) CMC SLR – RR

Ruth summarized the situation about the Susan Luckie Reilly bequest for solar energy at CMC. They have a preliminary proposal but the committee of Steve, Ruth and Laraine have met with

College officials and want to suggest using the donation as a seed for a microgrid and a great example for the Basin. The Committee met with Dr. Alfredo Martinez-Morales of UCR's Center for Renewable Technology program this summer. By 2025 all UC campuses will be microgrids. We need to meet with more people including the new President/Superintendent, the governing Board, then bring Alfredo to campus to generate interest. Today Alfredo sent Ruth a link about possibilities for seed money. Steve noted that Susan's bequest was specific about solar, but we believe moving to a microgrid would be more valuable to them and the community, and would help the state meet its goals. Sarah elaborated for guests on the connection with SLR and our interest in making her bequest go as far as possible to meet MBCA-type goals. Yvonna talked about many students having interest in greening the campus and being involved in this kind of thing. Ruth noted there's an education aspect to SLR's bequest. The new President apparently has some experience/knowledge in this area. Alfredo has done other programs to bring microgrids to communities, including a Chemehuevi community. He has just now received SCE data about CMC energy usage, will do an analysis, and share it with us. UCR's solar seminar every year in March has fantastic speakers – that's where we made the connection with Alfredo.

3) MAC - SB, PF

Steve noted that there may be a change in the MAC agenda as to when public comments are scheduled.

4) Chambers of Commerce –SB, PF

Steve would like to see Board members and other supporters going to the Chamber mixers occasionally. *Laraine will send a PDF of the event flyer to Steve for the YV Chamber website.*

5) YV aquatic and recreation center: – SB

Planning is still in process. Steve had attended early meetings and made some sustainability suggestions. \$15 million may not be enough; there may only be an interior pool.

6) MBCA table at Night Sky festival 9-21-19 LT (added)

Laraine read the invitation to have a table during the Night Sky Festival in 29 Palms (Saturday, September 21), but the value is uncertain and no one is available.

7) Short Term Rental Ordinance Planning Commission 9-5-19

There are some changes in the latest version to allow rental of accessory dwelling units for less than 30 days. That was the holdup, so it is now moving forward.

8) Under Canvas proposed campground – PF

Pat met and saw the location, 640 acres in Yucca, at the boundary with the Park. The project will have luxury tents in a high-end camping environment. The company has similar facilities near several other National Parks but off the beaten path. The land is pristine, just north of the Park border in the South Park area. Someone suggested they have to meet with Park Superintendent Smith but Laraine heard they already have and he is fine with it. Most of the acreage will be left undisturbed since it's only tents, not permanent structures. The

representative is working through the YV planning process. They bought the land from a private owner.

9) Pioneertown water ribbon cutting Friday 9-13-19 10:00am

*Whoever goes will hand out the September 28 event flyers that Laraine brought.*

10) Climate change: The Amazon is burning! While Greenland melts!

**Letters signed onto:**

Steve Mills coalition letter re: Countywide Plan DEIR

WVEC letter by CDC dated 7-22-19

**Additional Comments:**

Pat mentioned the Nevada project that is being monitored by Basin and Range Watch. There is opposition but not by Big Green.

Pat also noted a Nature Conservancy program "Power of Place" looking for solar placement parameters, but they don't look at the functioning of the entire ecosystem as much as specific biology.

Pat described Robin Kobaly's presentation on "the Desert Underground" as spectacular. She suggests we strategize buying some of Robin's books and providing them to appropriate decision-makers.

***Meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM***

**Next Regular Meeting:** Thursday, October 10, 2019 - 5:00 – 7:00 PM

YV Community Center / YV Community Center / Mesquite Room