

MBCA Board Meeting **APPROVED** Minutes
Thursday, October 10, 2019 / 5:00 – 7:00 PM

Regular Meeting Call to Order: 5:02 PM

x Steve Bardwell _x_ Mike Lipsitz
x David Fick _x_ Ruth Rieman
x Pat Flanagan (phone) _x_ Laraine Turk
x Meg Foley _x_ Marina West
x Sarah Kennington (phone)

Introduction of Guests and Board Directors

Claudia Sall, Miriam Seger

Agenda approval

The agenda was approved by consensus after a few additions.

Minutes from September 12, 2019 BOD meeting

Ruth moved to approve the September minutes, Meg seconded, and all were in favor.

Treasurer's Report

Marina reported our CD balance as \$22,336.18 and the checking account at \$34,666.81, for a total of \$57,002.99 in assets. She provided printed documents with more details and noted we had two new memberships recently. The Treasurer's report was accepted.

Capacity Building & Organizational Issues

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

As noted at the last meeting, we are not reapplying for an Edison grant. Marina confirmed the \$5000 AWAC grant for next year, and commitments from water districts for the DWL series. Steve & Marina went to the MWA Board meeting for the Tour thank-you. Steve was impressed with the quality of the Board and added that they had high regard for Marina.

2) Air Quality Monitoring: AQMD support & installation/location Purple Air units –SB, PF

Pat is working on a letter asking for additional monitoring stations, especially in the Lucerne and Daggett/Newberry Springs area related to Daggett solar. This is also part of the Newberry Springs appeal of the EIR. LVEDA and the Desert Resource Conservation District have signed on and it's on the October 27 agenda for Newberry Springs CSD. The letter will request that CARB put in the monitors for live data. The units requested are accepted by federal and state regulators. RCD has agreed that their letterhead can be used. *When Pat has completed the draft she will forward it to MBCA's approval committee.* Pat had help from an air quality engineer in crafting the letter.

Steve talked to Curtis Yakimow during the CDPA event last week and Curtis seems open to further discussion about installing some Purple Air monitors in the Town. Marina said the installation is very quick based on the experience at her office.

3) Events Committee reports:

DWL Committee – 2019 Landscape Tour report, thank you to sponsors. SB MW

We are waiting for 29 Palms to re-schedule us for the Tour Thank-you.

Fall event 9-28-19: Post event evaluation – All

It was a great event and a significant number of people attended (57-58 total) considering competing events. Claudia would have liked to have seen more emphasis on the future in Tom McCarthy's presentation. She has heard him speak elsewhere about strategies but he didn't include them in this presentation. Marina noted that some aspects of such future planning are currently in flux, with changes in the environmental aspects. There's a lot of scrutiny about water banking at the state level. Marina said Tom really enjoyed the event. Pat has scheduled him to speak at the January 2020 MAC meeting and we can ask him for more specifics about the future then. Ruth felt it was important for newer residents to understand the past that Tom addressed, the history of the state water project since 1960s. The food from Boo's Organic Oven was great and thanks to Marina for adding the fruit skewers. Very successful despite the County's crossed signals about our starting time.

Spring 2020 landscape tour planning 10 for 10?

Ruth has suggested we shake it up a bit, make some changes, maybe just focus on the top ten with lowest water use. Laraine noted that we've discussed adding demonstrations. Ruth added that people really appreciate getting a piece of plant to take away, and that could also be a fund-raiser. Miriam suggested considering each house as an "event," as they're doing with an upcoming eco tour of solar homes, an event at each location each hour, staggered throughout the day.

4) 50th book: - ML

Mike and Laraine noted there have been some difficulties with communication and progress with Melissa, and some missed deadlines on both sides. We need to sit down with her. The bulk of the work's done, we're really fine-tuning. One issue is whether to list ALL docents and hosts (105 docents, about 70 hosts). *Mike will contact Melissa for a meeting soon.*

5) mbconservation.org / E-blasts / Social Media - All

Laraine shared some reports pulled from NationBuilder about donations and memberships. We still want to work toward having a social media person – Aimee is interested and will come to the next meeting with some thoughts.

6) Review of By-laws re: geographical scope of MBCA - PF

As a follow-up from last meeting, Pat checked with (attorney) Paul Smith about whether any state agencies (e.g. Secretary of State's office) that would need to be contacted about formal changes in our founding documents. Change of mission – NO. Change in Articles of Incorporation - YES. Changing the By-Laws? Uncertain – Paul is checking on this.

7) Board members and Burn-Out Bandwidth Limits – All

A Nominating Committee for new Board members was created: Sarah, Ruth, Mike. Steve reported that Janet Johnston, who has a high regard for MBCA, also has obligations that would curtail her ability to be a Board member. Gayle Austin is interested in attending meetings when she can. Wendy & Paul Hadley were mentioned; *Sarah will invite her to next meeting.* We thanked Miriam for her presence and participation. We talked of other possible Board members at the August Retreat.

Miriam suggested we consider having Board members who aren't able to commit full-time but are ready to participate on specific projects, providing someone to helm/direct a project with other Board members.

Steve briefly noted that we're all heavily involved in our work and would like to find some time to consider how to avoid or reduce burnout. Laraine noted that adding new Board members would help.

Conservation Issues

1) Paradise Valley EIR: SK, PF

The project is tentatively scheduled for Riverside County BOS agenda on November 5.

2) Solar projects

Daggett – Report of Planning Commission action PF, SB

Pat & Steve attended the Planning Commission; the project was approved and forwarded. There is an appeal to the BOS by Newberry Springs CSD. There are 3 issues; environmental justice, dust, and batteries known to ignite and burn. The Fire Department in Newberry Springs is not equipped for that. There was no review of environmental justice in the project, thus the County has not followed state directives to consider environmental-economic issues in CEQA. Pat is working with Jack Unger who wrote the appeal. A presentation will be made to the BOS when the project is on the agenda. The appeal is against the certification of the EIR by the Planning Commission. It should be heard before the BOS, with 15 minutes for Land Use Services and the developers, then 15 minutes for challengers, then 3-minute comments. The certification is inadequate and incomplete. The appeal is available on the [Newberry Springs CSD website](#).

3) Countywide Plan & Community Action Plans - SB

Steve checked with Mark Lundquist and there is no schedule for a BOS hearing on this yet.

4) Cadiz water harvesting proposal – SB

Pat noted that Cadiz is planning to grow 9000 acres of marijuana or hemp. Steve added he's heard that successful hemp growing is difficult in windy areas.

5) Dark Sky ordinance –JT street light replacements, ordinance update SB, PF, LT

At the Dark Sky meeting next week, Jennifer Cusack will be in attendance and provide some explanation of the excessive new streetlights. The Committee is in flux, with Tom O'Key resigning. Dawn Rowe is still committed. Laraine talked about wanting to focus on getting the ordinance in place before doing a big marketing/education campaign that new member Paul Smith is proposing.

6) Scenic 247 - SK

The committee is disappointed to learn that per CalTrans guidelines, in order to be labeled "scenic," there can be only 25% of the landscape "disturbed." There are calculations for "disturbance." The Committee will meet to determine whether to pursue as scenic the whole highway or just parts of it, specifically the OWS section and the Barstow Road sections.

8) WEMO record of decision published- PF

Sarah and Miriam have been reviewing the ROD. The *Federal Register* has a summary of comments. In the summary, 29 individuals' and organizations' comments were labeled either "dismissed" or "denied." Miriam noted it isn't clear what those categories mean. Where do the comments stand? Do they remain or disappear? They've reached out to CBD and Advocates of the West. Pat reminded us that some routes in our area have been improved. Miriam agreed that our local area is much better off but there are lots of bad WEMO decisions across the Mojave Desert. There's a 30-day period to respond, with a November 4 deadline.

Marina noted that there are new OHV Boundary signs in her neighborhood, e.g. everything north of Linn towards Giant Rock is now signed as legal for OHV.

7) *Eagle Mountain pumped storage –DF*
Nothing new, per David.

Outreach & Communications

1) CDPA 25-year celebration <https://desertlands.org/lands/25years/> – Recap SB, PF, MF
Good event and good MBCA representation. Excellent speakers including Steve. Dawn Rowe pushed through a County resolution in support, with emphasis on the value of a sustainable tourist economy.

2) CMC SLR – RR
Alfredo is on board for meeting with CMC's new President Darren Otten and we're looking for a date for meeting, hopefully this fall. Micro grids will be required on college campuses by 2025 (per Ruth).

3) MAC - SB, PF
Hate-free zone resolution to be proposed at next Monday's meeting. Joe Ruddon will be a speaker about the Health Care District.

4) Chambers of Commerce –SB, PF
We publicized our September 28 event in the Chambers' websites.

5) YV aquatic and recreation center: – SB
Steve learned that they still haven't specified a site. The \$22 million has to be spent by June 2021 so it's a close call (funding from Prop 69 via Chad Mayes). Pat wondered if this is relevant to MBCA and we decided to drop it from the agenda.

7) Short Term Rental ordinance report on PC hearing 9-5-19, SB
This is also only peripherally relevant to MBCA so we will add it to the agenda if/when there is a related conservation issue.

8) AutoCamp development Planning Commission report SB, PF
Pat and Steve made presentations to the PC. The 55-unit Airstream hotel (planned fall 2020 opening) had no solar or other environmental aspects. It was forwarded and will likely be approved by the BOS.

David brought up the project statement that "an environmental group is to get \$1 per person." Miriam shared that the AutoCamp people went to MDLT but MDLT declined the money although they could assist with native plants or conservation education programs. Miriam is planning to contact AutoCamp to connect them with MDLT and try to get them to voluntarily do solar. Thanks to Miriam.

9) MBCA as a vehicle financial help for JTNP – PF
Pat spoke about meeting active climber/community member Rand Abbott (Climbers' Collective) who is seeking to raise money for the Park, has resources and connections, but needs a financial non-profit host. More interpreters are especially needed but money needs to go through a non-profit for the Park to use for other things and then use the saved money to hire interpreters. Pat feels MBCA could serve that pass-through need. We could hire people to handle the program. Others have concerns as it puts us into another

category of non-profit with larger cash flow with tax and audit consequences. There needs to be further information and discussion before we take any action. *Steve and Pat will talk with David Smith.*

10) CDC CEQA workshop - Claudia

They are requesting information on CEQA projects that people want to work on during this workshop. There is support from MDLT and NPCA, and Claudia is requesting an MBCA contribution. The event is free but they are asking participants for a \$10 donation. We donated to pay for the room last time but they were never billed. Their expenses include lunch, advertising, some printing, and room rental, for a total estimate of \$1500. **Steve moved we provide \$350 to the CEQA workshop to help cover costs. Marina seconded, and all were in favor.**

Miriam said she was impressed with the previous workshop on NEPA. Claudia will email a flyer to the MBCA Board. Meg and Miriam both suggested taping it and suggested Bob Stephenson, whose rates are reasonable. Facebook and Eblasts were effective advertising last time.

11) Climate change: Extinction rebellion XRLA <https://xrla.org/> -SB

Cathy Zarakov sent Steve information about the movement Extinction Revolution. There is a local person working on organizing, and Steve hopes to meet with him, maybe start a branch here.

#12 added – Chris Clarke invites us to Bonanza Springs in November.

#13 added – Sustainable Tourism - Chris Clarke – Try to get Chris on the agenda for next meeting. Sarah added that there are models so it's not starting from scratch. *Sarah will reach out to him.*

Information from Marina: There will be a hydroelectric MWA ribbon cutting on November 7, 10 am, at the MWA Operations Center. This will put them at near net zero energy use. *Marina will send us details.*

Adjourned at 7:03 PM.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, November 14, 2019 5:00 – 7:00 PM
YV Community Center / YV Community Center / Mesquite Room