

MBCA BOARD MEETING APPROVED MINUTES

Friday April 17, 2020 / 3:45 pm

Via Zoom

Regular Meeting Call to Order: 3:52 pm

Board of Directors

x Steve Bardwell

x Brian Hammer

x Ruth Rieman

x David Fick

x Janet Johnston

x Laraine Turk

x Pat Flanagan

x Sarah Kennington

x Mike Lipsitz

x Meg Foley

x Arch McCulloch

x Marina West

Social media consultants

x Aimee Buyea _x_ Stacy Doolittle

Blue Italics = action commitment

Black Bold Italics = Board vote

Introduction of Guests and Board Directors

Memorial of Ron Cone

Former Director Deb Bollinger's husband Ron Cone died recently, and we honor his memory and admire his life's activism. ***Marina moved to send a \$100 memorial donation to ALS. Steve seconded, and all were in favor. (12-0)***

Agenda approval

Sarah asked to add an OHV item, which will become Outreach & Communication item #5.

Minutes from March 20, 2020 BOD meeting

Steve noted that Ruth was erroneously mentioned as a member of the document/letter writing committee. ***Steve moved to approve the minutes as amended. Mike seconded, and all were in favor. (12-0)***

Treasurer's Report

Marina emailed current financial documents to us. At the end of March, everything has been paid, and we are expecting one more invoice from Melissa **for her design work on the Landscape Tour program**. Marina plans to invoice MWA to get whatever grant we can for this fiscal year. Checking balance is \$21,529.74; the CD balance is \$23,447.92. *Marina will create and send a budget with more detail on our expenses, and will be open to questions.*

Capacity Building & Organizational Issues

1) *General discussion re: CV-19. Food banks.*

At the last meeting we discussed supporting food banks. *Pat will talk with Mark Lundquist to find an appropriate recipient if we decide to make a financial donation.*

Sarah learned from Marjorie Smith of the County's incident command network there are a number of food providers in the Basin and Homestead Valley that are meeting needs at the moment. The challenge is staffing to distribute the food. *Sarah will keep in touch with Pat about the results of her communication to Mark Lundquist.*

Ruth noted that while this is important, we don't have specifics enough for a motion. There is consensus that we want to do something. Meg added that maybe there will be something

more important that we can do later on, whether it's funding or volunteer time or something else. *Sarah and Pat will continue to explore possibilities.* Both ARCH and Food for Life were noted as effective local groups.

2) Membership reminder letter-LT & All

50th book: - Distribution list, mailing of book

Laraine described the emails that have been sent out to request postal addresses for people we want to receive the book, starting with 2020 members and moving to past hosts and docents and other past advisors and volunteers, as noted in this chart:

Date sent	Message	# Sent	#Opened
March 29	Thanks for being a 2020 member; we're mailing you a book.	48	30
March 30	Thanks for being a 2020 member; need postal address to mail the book.	8	6
April 9	Thanks for being a host/docent between 2014-2020; need postal address.	128	69
April 13	Thanks for being a host/docent between 2011-2013; need postal address.	12	4
April 13	Thanks for being an advisor or supporter; need postal address.	11	5
	<i>\$105 in membership and donations is connected to these emails.</i>	207	114
	<i>Will eventually do another review of bounced or bad emails etc.....</i>		

Sarah and Steve are addressing envelopes and sending the books from Pioneertown Post Office. Steve said we've received positive feedback.

3) Business cards - Melissa Sabol re-design

Mike said it's been hard to get everybody's information but he is on the last one and *when he has that information will send it all to Melissa.*

4) mbconservation.org / E-blasts / Social Media – Stacy and Aimee

Steve will do a Eblast for Earth Day. Aimee said the video of Sarah and a tortoise was a big hit on both FB and IM. MDLT has been putting a lot on FB and we've been cross-posting.

Stacy and Aimee have drafted a \$1,250 budget for social media for the year. A new idea to get younger followers is to have contests or to award sign-ups with a gift certificate drawing, perhaps for climbing or for Pappy & Harriet's. MBCA might match the donor amount to enhance the value.

They also would like to do some focus on kids (some now but especially long-term) and are open to ideas. Another suggestion is to have people post photos of plants in their neighborhood for us to identify; Arch could help with this. We could also provide instructions on how to identify plants, or how to take a good photo of a plant for identification.

Stacy described the learning path idea. Since our website is dense and large, it would be helpful if the Board could focus on smaller groupings of content for social media posting, for instance, "the top ten things you need to know about MBCA," or "the top 5 things about conservation in the Morongo Basin." For kids, there could be a "junior conservationist" certificate when finished. Aimee noted that MDLT has been doing extra posting lately with great content. Our new book has good info for social media posting. We can provide website links from the scaled down content if they want to go deeper.

Marina will add \$2500 for social media expenses into the proposed budget she will send to the finance committee. While supporting the proposal, Meg suggested breaking it down into some kind of portions or segments, reminding us that the quality of MDLT's work is based

on a lot of paid staff, whereas we are all volunteer and need to balance these expenses with other necessities. *Aimee and Stacy will finish their social media funding proposal and send to Marina.* Marina suggests the finance committee meet next week and that many of the social media ideas and anything that can be tied to education can probably be covered by grant funding. She thinks some of the water companies might even donate even though we're not having the Tour. Pat said she and Deb Bollinger created a watershed curriculum for kids some years ago and *she'll also send that to Marina.*

5) *Grant status: DWL - Edison & AWAC – 2021 landscape tour SB, MW*
The Finance committee will meet next week and review our grant status.

6) *Events Committee reports:*

DWL Committee –2020 landscape tour re-schedule/ planning – No News.

7) *Ruth Denison Environmental Scholarship – LT – Annie Hilderbrand.*

Laraine reviewed the elements of Annie's excellent application. *Steve and Sarah will write and send a letter to her acknowledging her as our scholarship recipient* since there won't be a scholarship program this year. *We'll do a press release, news update and social media posting after she's notified,* and invite her to attend one of our meetings in the future, since she plans to stay local and start at CMC.

Conservation Issues

1) *Air Quality Monitoring: CARB update. Location of Purple Air units - AM, PF, BH*

Pat has again talked to the CARB community monitor. The planned meeting in Newberry Springs for places to put monitors is of course on hold. Pat is also working with Steve Mills on a 7000-acre solar project that was formerly called Aurora now called Stagecoach, planned for northern Lucerne Valley on property owned by the State Lands Commission. A letter will go out by the end of the month, and Brian is providing maps. Comments will focus on the lack of monitoring exactly where monitoring is critical, east of I-15. It's a delicate location, a sub-watershed, with lots of drainage issues.

2) *Solar projects*

Daggett – Newberry Springs appeal-PF.

The appeal is in court and discussion continues with Friends of Newberry Springs. It will probably be at least a year before there's any action.

Stagecoach (formerly Aurora Solar) State school lands – see item 1) above.

3) *Countywide Plan & Community Action Plans – SB, JJ, PF*

Sarah recently talked with Karen Watkins regarding the 247 scenic highway and during the conversation Karen indicated the Countywide Plan would probably not be implemented until 2021 and they're working on "policy." Things seem quite uncertain, but there might be more focus on the community specific plans or the so-called action plans. Brian mentioned the State Attorney General's criticism of the plan in relation to social justice. He's also heard that a lot of responsibility is being flipped back to the local communities with a message of "we might help you out."

4) *Cadiz water harvesting proposal – DF*

Nothing new.

5) *Dark Sky ordinance – update –SB*

Steve reported there's been one more draft from Andy Wingert on the light trespass ordinance, and final feedback has been sent from the Third District Dark Sky Committee. All light fixtures are to be shielded; there's a 60-day allowance for holiday lighting; it will eliminate the yardstick measurement; there's a 2-year sunset clause for meeting code.

6) CDFW Joshua Tree listing

Laraine mentioned that this listing might have ramifications for the Park, and Steve noted that Yucca Valley is probably not in favor of it. Pat commented that some think it's more a political move than a critical issue, and that the trees are not in excessive danger.

7) Eagle Mountain pumped storage NPCA conference call – SB

Steve was on a conference call hosted by NPCA that included Chris Clarke and Neal Desai. There's a new bill, [AB 2255](#), sponsored by a Stockton rep, Susan Eggman, which is sort of a placeholder for future legislation to try to make it easier for Eagle Crest to go ahead. NextEra is the major investor and they are really pushing to get state support. NPCA has a lot of data about the huge amount of water that would be needed.

Outreach & Communications

1) CMC SLR – RR, SB, LT

Steve, Laraine, and Ruth discussed approaches to finding out where CMC currently stands on the SLR legacy renewable energy project. We don't know if they've gone ahead with Schneider Electric. *Laraine will draft a letter for Steve and Ruth's review to be sent to Superintendent/President Darren Otten to ask for a status report.* We want to emphasize that an important element of the idea was using a grant to get additional resources.

2) Cindy Zacks support - RR

Ruth talked with Cindy and Marina. Marina has issued the \$300 check toward the tents, although it hasn't been cashed yet (it's made out to YVHS). Ruth will keep connected with Cindy and report to us what they may need next year.

3) Census - SB

Steve encouraged everyone to respond to the census.

4) Climate change-carbon neutrality - AM

Arch reviewed what he had suggested before, the general idea that MBCA evaluate its carbon footprint, mostly related to driving to meetings, then determine how to offset our impacts, perhaps via donations to MDLT to preserve land. Arch has talked with Geary Hund of MDLT, and it might even be possible to tie our donation/s to a particular parcel. Laraine suggested adding this to our social media education.

Steve noted that we're saving carbon by meeting via Zoom, but was interested to know if there are other similar platforms for us to use. Brian likes "Microsoft Teams," but Aimee didn't like it as much as Zoom. Pat said that "Go to Meeting" is what 29 Palms uses successfully. Marina said she's glad to allow us to use BDVWA's Zoom account, but we should know that they expended \$650 for it; the free version is probably not the best option. We expressed thanks to Marina and Bighorn!

5) OHV (added)– SK

Sarah pointed out an April 13 article in the *Hi Desert Star* about the new Sheriff, who said he plans to strengthen the off-road enforcement team. She read excerpts from the article.

The OHV team made 300 contacts last weekend. They're buying a new vehicle and hope to increase enforcement efforts. This would be a good Eblast item.

Adjourned 5:36 PM

Letters signed onto/written:

Email letter re: capabilities of local Health system re: CV-19

Letter to California Department of Fish and Wildlife in support of listing of Mountain Lion as threatened

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, May 14, 2020
5:00 – 7:00 PM - ***venue TBD stay tuned***