

Morongo Basin Conservation Association Board APPROVED Minutes
Sunday, August 23, 2020
11:15 AM – NOON
Regular Meeting

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Bardwell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Hammer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arch McCulloch
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Fick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Janet Johnston	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruth Rieman
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pat Flanagan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Kennington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laraine Turk
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meg Foley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Lipsitz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marina West

Also Stacy Doolittle.

Agenda approval – By consensus, we added two items that had been on the Retreat General Discussion agenda: Decisions about the \$25K donation and the Denison Scholarship fund.

Capacity Building & Organizational Issues

1) Events Committee reports:

DWL Committee –2020 virtual landscape tour update

- Presentations to sponsors.
- Desert Wise Living: Social media response.
- MBCA possession of all video from virtual DWL tour.
- Stitch together videos into one film. Needed/useful?

Summary of discussion:

- There are many possible uses for a stitched-together Landscape Tour video: showing to past and potential sponsors; displaying on the website and via social media; and possibly entering film festivals (such as the recent Rose Foundation event and maybe the Yucca Valley Virtual Film Festival this fall).
- Steve has talked with Virtual Tour creator Heather Sommerfield and she is interested in editing the segments into a single video for us. There was a question about video quality but Stacy explained that while the Facebook video isn't sharpest because it's compressed, the main video is of high enough quality for projection.
- Heather is agreeable to a fee amount of our choice to combine the videos and we would own all the video; we will give her production credit when we use either the completed version or the "outtakes" or stills.
- We will need a 2 TB hard drive to receive the video data.
- We will create a written document to confirm agreements with Heather about the project.

We discussed budget options to make this purchase. **Steve moved that we pay Heather \$750 from our general fund for this project and spend \$150 to purchase a 2-TB hard drive to receive the video data. Laraine seconded and all were in favor. (12-0)**

Steve added thanks and “kudos” to the Virtual Tour team of Marina, Stacy, and Heather (*and others?*), and “big thanks” to Marina for her much-appreciated service as chair of the DWL Tour Committee the past several years.

- Chair of DWL Committee – need a new one.

As Marina has resigned from the DWL Tour Committee Chair position, we agreed to think about a new chair over the next few months and decide by November 1. (*FYI, our meetings before and after that date would be October 8 and November 12.*)

Present fall DWL event???

- Virtual presentations climate change, James Hansen ? JPL ? (Ann Marie Elderling, Josh Willis)

Steve thanked Ruth for contacting James Hansen, who declined. Steve is still seeking to contact JPL employee Ann Marie Elderling.

We discussed other possible video presentations for our fall DWL event:

- Sarah repeated Janet’s earlier suggestion to interview Mike Branning of Unique Nursery in action on some actual sites, sharing his wealth of desert-wise landscape knowledge.
- Stacy mentioned Cole Gibson, a local rock climber, who does professional video; she’ll be working on the watershed project with him. Stacy will invite him to our next meeting.
- David noted that local artist Casey Kiernan has already been involved in a number of local videos including the recent Joshua tree issue. Stacy agreed that he’s a high quality videographer who we could work with.
- Meg suggested we ask several videographers for bids rather than asking just one. We’ll need to write up a specific scope of work.

- Political Ecology-Gustavo de L.T. Oliveira UC Irvine

This person spoke eloquently at the virtual CF&G meeting about Joshua tree listing and is a professor at UC Irvine.

Recent large donation (wishes to be anonymous). How to allocate the \$25k?

We discussed how the funds were originally intended for legal support against one of the area’s solar projects, so we might choose to hold it for future potential legal advice expenditure. Using it for field trips or video production was also discussed. Pat noted that **\$4000 (corrected)** of it has already been allocated to NACL. Legal issues might come up as we hold Yucca Valley’s feet to the fire on the destruction of Joshua trees. Pat added that when we really need legal advice it is likely to relate to CEQA. ***Pat moved that the remaining \$20,000 of the donation be utilized toward land use advocacy (including environmental justice) as issues come up and as funds are needed, such as legal consultation and support for legislative advocacy in the spirit of our mission. Laraine seconded, and all were in favor. (10-0)***

Steve sent a letter of thanks to the donor, and will send a copy of our book and the text of our motion. We'll call it the "environmental advocacy fund." We discussed if/how to announce the new fund publicly but preserving the donor's privacy. The choice is to describe it as an unexpected donation to be used to advance our mission. Laraine will check for any publication of the donor's name in prior published minutes and redact it.

Ruth Denison scholarship. Fund for additional time?

Marina confirmed that the 2021 award would be the fifth of our five planned awards. Marina provided fund details: the original Denison bequest was \$10,392 and we've allocated \$5000 for the anniversary book and \$2500 for the scholarships, leaving \$2892. Pat suggested spending the remaining funds to support MDLT's Women in Science Discovering Our Mojave (WISDOM) internship program, which includes a focus on minority women interested in environmental science. Further ideas included tying in MDLT with CMC and younger students, e.g. with the field trips suggested earlier.

Conservation Issues

1) Recap CDFG hearing of August 20 re: Joshua Tree listing.

- Comments on terms for take (FGC Section 2084).
- Monitoring of JT removals in the interim.
- Holding jurisdictions to task

These issues were discussed during Saturday's Retreat session; Laraine sent summary notes on Saturday evening.

2) Web site / communications

- Comment letter history and effectiveness -LT, ML, SK
- Accessibility to web site dash board -LT

While all directors received an email from Nora to set up access to the administrative website, Laraine emphasized that the Web Team is working on several projects. (The Web Team now includes Nora, Cathy Zarakov, Sarah, Mike, and Laraine.) Laraine announced that Nora is preparing a video to share with the Web Team illustrating possible improvements to the appearance of our website by using some alternative "themes" provided by Nationbuilder. This wouldn't be a technical upgrade, but could modernize our "look." The "comment letter project" (which may evolve to a different name) could be launched along with a new look website within a month or two. Laraine also asked that anyone who finds outdated information, errors, or broken links on the website please let her know. We'd like to "clean things up."

Steve noted that Marina has sent us financial documents that we'll review at the next regular meeting.

Adjourned at 12:08 PM.

<p>Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, September 10, 2020 5:00 – 7:00 PM Hopefully at Town of Yucca Valley stay tuned!</p>
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