

MBCA APPROVED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday February 11, 2021 / 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Via Zoom

Black Bold Italics = Board vote *Blue Italics = action commitment*

Regular Meeting Call to Order: 5:04 pm

<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"/> Cathy Zarakov

Social media consultants: ☐ Aimee Buyea ☒ Stacy Doolittle

Introduction of Guests and Board Directors

No guests

Agenda approval

Steve proposed an additional item #8 to Outreach & Communications, a request to support a grant for Section 6. There was consensus on the adjusted agenda.

Minutes from January 14, 2021 BOD meeting

Ruth moved to accept the January minutes. Sarah seconded, and all were in favor. (12-0)

Treasurer's Report

Cathy reported that we started the new year with a number of new memberships and donations, including \$5500 from the Sall's, a \$500 donation and several \$100 donations. Cathy will meet with Marina next month to learn the technical Treasurer functions. *Cathy will write confirmation letters to donors who donated over \$250 in 2020 to meet the IRS requirement.* Laraine reported a check from Great Non-Profits for about \$90 (\$94.38). We're not sure of the source. *Laraine has sent the check to Marina and will check with her about the source.* Cathy reported that as of January 31, there is \$55,848.88 in the checking account and \$22,757.72 in our CD. There was consensus to accept the Treasurer's report.

Capacity Building & Organizational Issues

1) 50th book: - pdf on website distribution list – LT, ML

Laraine will provide an updated list to Steve and Sarah of the latest new members who should receive a book. Mike reported that Melissa is working on creating a PDF of the book that can be used on the website. Mike has not heard back from Issuu about whether we can get a non-profit fee reduction; *he'll follow up.* Viewing the book via Issuu is free but comes with advertising. Steve feels the PDF on the website and the free version of Issuu is preferably to paying \$43/month. Steve noted that he mailed a book to Annmarie Eldering.

2) mbconservation.org /

Social Media update– Stacy provided a summary of some trends indicated by Google Analytics.

Website appearance – LT, SK

Stacy, Nora and Laraine are working on improvements decided at a Web Team meeting earlier this week.

Comment letter history – LT, ML, SK

Nothing new.

3) Events Committee reports:

2021 Annual Meeting –recap All

Stacy reported it appeared we had increased website traffic that probably was related to our annual meeting broadcast. *Stacy will research and report next month on how many people viewed the annual meeting video after the meeting.*

Additional virtual programs.

Ideas for future virtual programs included native plant transplanting, the new/temporary Joshua tree regulations, and “welcome” information to newcomers (via realtors) about what you can and can’t do, e.g. lighting and dark night skies. These could be produced as a follow-up to the Virtual Tour.

2021 virtual landscape tour

Ruth reported we’re closing in on possible sites and she suggests six sites is ideal.

Solicit proposals from videographers

Now that we’ve committed to doing the tour virtually and have funding available (\$5000 MWA, \$1000 TPWD, \$500 BDVWA, \$1000 HDWD, \$500 JBWD, \$500 Golden State = \$8500), we need to find the right videographer. Ruth has communicated with Scott Behrens, and Lisa Burford was mentioned as another possibility. *We should solicit proposals in a professional way with a written RFP.* Meg gave us some advice from her experience. We discussed possible RFP parameters including:

- Should there be several short videos set up sequentially over time or just one production? Stacy pointed out that short clips work well for social media and there’s potentially much more exposure that way.
- Is about 3 minutes each a good timeframe?
- We don’t have a deadline but need to set a timeline for production.
- Should we set a cost cap, that is, a “not to exceed” amount? Ruth noted that most RFP’s for public art have a cap.
- Last year we had a significant discount as a non-profit; the total cost was about \$3600. Cathy emphasized that we want a high quality version.
- Stacy thinks the cost would be about \$1000-\$1200 per garden, half for the shoot and half for editing.
- Add soundtrack costs.

4) Denison Scholarship – SB, LT, PF

Laraine reported that the scholarship page that includes the application has been published and an announcement sent out. Steve asked her to be sure Happy Kanuch (Counseling representative at YVHS) receives it. This is the 5th and last year we planned to offer it under the current structure. We discussed changing it to a larger amount and Arch suggested offering it to college students instead of high school students. Meg noted that in her experience even \$500 can be a real life changer. *The finance committee will review the financial status of the Denison bequest. Meg, Laraine, and Janet will act as a committee to consider changes, with a basis to encourage students into science.*

CA Indian Nations College <https://cincollege.org/>

Pat brought this to our attention. The college is connected with COD for accredited classes and the 29 Palms Band of Mission Indians is involved. Scholarships could be provided for CIN students to be tour guides for middle schoolers on field trips, and video the field trips.

(Training of the guides would of course be important.) Pat noted we could raise money to increase the Denison scholarship fund.

Conservation Issues

1) JT listing as candidacy for threatened – SB, PF, LT

Steve received an email from Jessica Dacey at MDLT that provided a comprehensive guide to the new regulations; we posted it as a [News Update](#). David mentioned that Christina Sanchez, Geary Hund, and Suzy Boyd had been involved a few weeks ago in trying to report 20 trees in YV that were destroyed. Apparently that was in part a catalyst that caused MDLT to take the lead in creating a comprehensive summary of the guidelines and reporting protocols.

2) Air Quality Monitoring: Location of Purple Air units – SK, AM

JBWD has installed a monitor. *Pat will continue to communicate with CMC to install one, especially on the northern side due to the windblown sand that occurs there. Steve will check with Marina, who was going to encourage HDWD to install one.* Arch noted that it really makes a difference to have higher density of units, especially to detect fire. More units would also provide baseline data if there's a big construction project planned. We've discussed the possibility of donating some or units or partially funding them.

3) Dark Sky ordinance update –SB

Steve talked about our disappointment in LUS poorly defending the ordinance to the Planning Commission. MBCA was mentioned in yesterday's *Hi Desert Star* article about the issue that expressed some of our viewpoint. The Planning Commission is seeking more information in a "workshop" to be led by LUS. Laraine noted that LUS staff weren't nearly as familiar with the issues as Andy Wingert was, and that his death is in great part why the defense was so weak. Luke Sabala, retired JNTP Physical Sciences lead and member of the various dark skies committees, would like to help. We need to present missing information to LUS staff. Dawn Rowe's support may help. Brian suggested meeting with Dawn and LUS. Claire Cozad, Dawn's aide, has been kept in the loop, so *Steve will reach out to Claire to start.* Arch suggested we get someone from another community that has a good ordinance (e.g. Borrego Springs).

4) Utility scale solar review of 2-11-21 UCR CERT conference - BH, PF, RR

Pat, Steve, and Laraine attended. It was generally a good presentation focused on local and distributed solar; people "knew their stuff." There was information about "virtual power plants" to be created by community solar and batteries. Net metering is a constant issue. There needs to be more local, distributed solar; create as much power as possible and pass it into the grid. This will be especially effective on warehouse roofs if/when net metering changes.

Pat spoke about the Daggett project which is scheduled for 3500 acres. Currently they are using 1321 acres of ag land and 787 vacant land for 2108 acres total, paying top price for the land. Most was purchased from a Daggett land holding company that doesn't want to continue in the ag business. Pat and Brian will do more research.

5) Virtual CA Desert Conservancy meeting recap – AM, PF, SK, BH, LT.

The intent was to develop a shared vision to create a resilient desert landscape with equitable access and to expand stakeholders, especially tribal. Arch spoke about the broad spectrum of groups represented. He added that there were more good things happening than he thought. Karen Douglas (CEC) spoke about large-scale solar and reasons against warehouse rooftops, which was discouraging. Arch will try to consolidate and share his notes. *(Steve noted that Karen Douglas will be making a presentation at CE-CERT and he'll*

get that information to us.) Arch felt there wasn't any clear conclusion to the meeting except that there are lots of groups out there doing things. Sarah noted that a Washington lobbyist said the administration's focus on climate issues probably won't happen until summer. There were comments on new Congressman Obernolte, suggesting possible support for public lands for him might be gained through connections with veterans and/or science, as he's "big on technology."

Discussion about the DRECP amendment was mixed, with a former BLM employee (Russell Scofield) saying he thought improvements on the proposed changes are possible, whereas others recommended the entire set of revisions be scrapped. *We should check with Chris Clarke for guidance on whether and how to comment by the April deadline.* Sarah reported that Frazier Haney (Wildlands) suggested we take the message to County Supervisors that DRECP gives the County predictability and consistency and should be retained as it was.

Outreach & Communications

1) NALC update from Columba Quintero
Not present.

2) Countywide Plan Housing Element update, CAGs, - SB, JJ, PF
Janet viewed a Governor's planning office webinar and learned that the housing element is a matrix of housing, safety and justice, and is controlled at the state level. There are 500 different jurisdictions and each one is doing it differently. Community groups have to intrude to get action. Locally there's the huge issue of reduction in affordable long-term rentals due to vacation rentals. *Janet will check with the local housing non-profit ARCH and ask for specific data from them and from rental agents. She'll also check with Rowe's aide Claire Cozad about the public engagement process for SB County's housing element.*

Pat, Steve, and Janet will work on analyzing the Community Plan situation and try to get it on the MAC agenda, maybe in March.

3) YVTV interview / milesforclimate.org ; Hannah Bacon – SB
Steve did an interview with Matt Beurois on YVTV; it may be aired next Monday. Matt inquired via our website after seeing the Virtual Tour.

4) MBCA participation in Micro grant for Arts Connection – SB
We received a request to join other local donors for a ¼ share toward a \$500 micro grant for local artists through the Arts Council of San Bernardino. **Steve moved to spend \$125 in support of this grant. Arch seconded and all were in favor. (12-0)**

5) UCR Climate activist report – LT
Defer to the next meeting.

6) Monuments 5-year celebration – MF, SB
There is a Nature Hunt in Sand to Snow NM tomorrow.

7) Request from Jen Kolm of JTNP for possible assistance – SB
Grants, stipends or volunteers are needed to help with constructing exhibits for Project Phoenix; an example was creating audio recordings for exhibits for the visually impaired. *Pat and Steve will pursue more information.*

8) (added) Tami at Joshua Tree Community Center is asking for a letter in support of their application for a grant to improve Section 6. Janet supports this, noting that what they're proposing isn't too overly developed and it is good community networking. *Janet will draft*

the letter when she gets additional information, then send it around for confirmation of support.

David noted the passing of desert historian Dennis Casebier, and Arch and Pat commented on his extensive publications and being a “good voice for the desert.”.

Adjournment: 7:11 PM

Letters signed onto:

MBCA letter re: Desert Conservancy Bill – Ramos; 30 Million Solar Homes

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, March 11, 2021 5:00 – 7:00 PM ZOOM **stay tuned!**