

PACIFIC GROVE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Museum Board Meeting

MINUTES

October 8, 2008

PRESENT: David Shonman (Chair); Geva Arcanin; Sharon Blaziek; John Pearse,
Judy Wills

ABSENT: *none*

STAFF: Lori Mannel,

GUESTS: Dan Davis (City Council Liaison), Carmelita Garcia, Susan Goldbeck, Pat Hergott, Sally Hergott, Nancy McDowell (Lighthouse Docent Coordinator), Dan Miller, Esther Trosow, Lee Willoughby, Vern Yadon (Curator Emeritus)

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Chairman Shonman opened the meeting at 3:34. He asked that under **New Business** we move part “b” to be presented before part “a” because Lori Mannel had to leave by 5:00. This was so moved and seconded.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: This was not done because they were not ready. David promised to have them by the next meeting.

III. CORRESPONDENCE: *none*

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Dan Miller expressed concern about access to the Collection in the basement. He asked the Board to report back about who has access and how secure the area is kept. He recommended digital cameras be installed.

Vern Yadon thought that there had been no inventory taken of the Collection downstairs since he left, and he is also concerned about loss of the Collection.

Lee Willoughby wanted each board member to tell how long they have been on the Board.

Carmelita Garcia agreed with the need to have an inventory and that we should ask Vern Yadon for guidance.

Pat Hergott saw a draft of the Code of Ethics dated June 2008 and she would like a copy of it.

Sally Hergott had a brochure about a class being given called Monarch Migration. It is being taught by Jessica Griffiths and Sally wanted to know more about the course and how someone would sign up for it.

Nancy McDowell mentioned that there would be a Lighthouse Fun Day on Jan. 31 in honor of the P.G. Lighthouse's birthday (Feb.1, 1855).

V. BOARD COMMENTS:

We all introduced ourselves and stated how long we have been on the Board. David thanked everyone for coming and stated we can all work together to help the Museum. He wanted to make sure that everyone knew that any written information that was to be presented at a Board meeting would be sent to Deputy City Clerk Ann O'Rourke, who would make copies available to the public through her office. If that was not possible, then copies of these documents would be available at the Museum before the meeting.

VI. MUSEUM MANAGER REPORT:

Lori Mannel's official title is Directing Manager. Lori stated that Mark Walker is the curator and his hours have been increased to 14-20 hours a week. There have been two very successful events at the Museum since the last Board meeting. One was a Family Fun Day about insects and the other was put on by the Gem and Mineral Society of Carmel Valley. There have been four school visits, three of which were scheduled ahead of time. Lori mentioned that there has been access given to the Rollo Beck collection and Lighthouse log.

Lori updated us on the Museum's Collection and on Curator Mark Walker's duties. Acting on a recommendation from the AAM, Mark is re-housing the Native American pottery. The mold has been cleaned out of the bird case under the stairs. The Gem and Mineral Society is digitizing the rock collection.

The next topic was hiring of staff. There is a process started to hire an education/volunteer coordinator and a part time assistant to help Lori. The bad news is the city has put this in the bottom of the heap and is a low priority. Dan Davis was asked later in the meeting to help expedite the new hire process.

The code of ethics policy is being updated and Lori is getting each group to sign it. There are no major revisions in the update.

There is an education class being offered to 12 students, grades 8-12, that will focus on field study of the monarchs.

With regards to the AAM reaccreditation, Lori spoke with the coordinator recently and was fairly discouraged. Lori did say they would give us one more round but that our chances are slim that we would get it. The problem is based on our perennial underfunding and staff being downsized. Geva explained the process she went through to gather the 18 pounds of information she sent to the AAM. Accreditation depends on community support and fiscal responsibility. The AAM feels we have no support and our funding has been cut. This was originally due in 2006 and Paul got a one year extension.

Public Comments:

Dan Miller stated that the public needs to be aware of the reaccreditation problem and they need something in writing.

Sally Hergott wanted clarification of the new positions. Lori explained that one is an education coordinator/ volunteer coordinator and the other position is an administrative assistant to Lori and will be half time.

Susan Goldbeck shared that she is shocked that we may not get accreditation and that we need to have a public meeting.

Carmelita Garcia remembers Paul Finnegan going before the City Council and telling about problems with the AAM reaccreditation and asked that maybe Dan Davis could get us some help with the staffing delay. She asked that the web site be updated with the numbers of visitors – it only goes until May 2007 now. Carmelita also mentioned that she wants to see care in handling and access of the books in the conference room and the collections.

Vern Yadon expressed that the Board has the responsibility to make sure the new hires are qualified. Lori Mannel then made it clear that this is just now the beginning of the public input stage.

Pat Hergott was shocked to hear about the accreditation problems and wanted to know who was on the executive team. This was later answered. Esther Trosow read parts of a letter from AAM to Paul Finnegan dated May 1, 2007. Sharon Blaziek shared that Paul Finnegan's relationship with the City Manager had deteriorated and that by that time Paul was doing everything in the Museum. Geva stated that going through the AAM process provided a roadway to how to proceed when it looked like the museum might close for good.

VII. Liaison/Committee Reports

City Council: Councilmember Dan Davis is concerned that the P.G. Fire Department merger with the Monterey Fire Department will increase costs and thus give the library and museum even less money for operations. He also stated that the PERS system is costing the city a lot of money.

Museum Association: Sharon Blaziek stated that the Association meeting was not held and there was no news to report. Association Board Elections will be in Nov.

Strategic Planning Committee: John and Geva told us that with the ending of the planning stage the Strategic Planning Committee has now evolved into the Executive Team. The members are now John, Geva, Lori, and two Association members. They are hoping to bring all the pieces of information to the next board meeting.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Progress Report on Strategic Planning

Lori stated that the backyard is not ADA compliant and the City Council has already approved the plan last year. She is rebuilding on the previous design to use conservation materials. For example, she is planning to use recycled materials such as decomposed granite instead of the previous plan's use of cement walkways. She intends to use native California central coast plants. She would like to have an area for small group talks and provide space for education, and possibly an educational play area for children. Lori plans to have volunteers help do the work and some have already offered to help. Cost of redoing the site plan is \$5, 000 and this will come from the Museum Improvement Fund. She will bring this plan to the Council and Museum Board for approval.

Public Comments:

Carmelita Garcia stated that the original design plan was done by Joe Rock (architect).

Vern Yadon inquired about the 'vernal pool.' This concerns him because of water problems and mosquitoes. Water is being pumped out of the building now, he doesn't want to see new water problems develop. Lori answered that the 'vernal pool' is a symbolic virtual pool, not real water. Vern hopes that it will all be educational.

Motion to support the plan brought by John Pearse and seconded by Judy Wills. All voted to support – passed.

b. Museum Monarch Butterfly Programs

Butterfly Docent Jack Biegel and Sharon Blaziek gave a lengthy and informative report about the history of the Monarch Sanctuary. Jack has 20 years experience with butterflies in the Pismo Beach area. When he retired to PG he wanted to get involved with our butterflies. Jack met with Paul Finnegan and discussed clearing, updating, and watering the Sanctuary trees. The City approved and paid for the drip irrigation and they worked with the City arborist Rick Caton to decide which trees needed cutting back and what new trees to plant. Jack explained the need for a good wind break because that is why the monarchs have picked this area and these trees. They decided to plant redwoods and found a property owner who was getting rid of many redwoods. Beth Cort got a grant for the City for more trees and pipes. In all volunteers planted 90 trees and now the drip irrigation is installed and they are learning to adjust the amount of water needed.

Sharon spoke about the history of Friends of the Monarchs. We spoke about the need for more volunteers and a coordinated between the three groups - Monarchs, Lighthouse and Hosts – to strengthen the docent program.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Wills