

PACIFIC GROVE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Museum Board Meeting

MINUTES

8 April 2009

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

ABSENT: *none*

STAFF: Lori Mannel, Annie Holdren

GUESTS: Deborah Lindsay (Council Liaison), Nancy McDowell (Lighthouse Docent Coordinator), Harriet Mitteldorf, Bruce Obbink, Judd Perry

Chair Shonman called the meeting to order at 3:35pm

- I. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Approved as presented.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes of the March 11, 2009 Board meeting were approved unanimously.
- III. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Shonman presented a letter from Sally Aberg addressed to him, Mannel, Frank Penner (President of the Museum Association Board), and Chief of Police Engles about the Museum door being left open after 5pm the past Saturday. Aberg entered the Museum and was unhappy about how she had been treated by a Museum staff member. Both Shonman and Mannel responded to Aberg, apologizing and thanking her for her concern. Mannel said two members of her staff were working late; she has now set up a checklist for closing the Museum. She also reassured the Board that security cameras are now in place monitoring the Museum continuously. Arcanin said more than a checklist is needed, and the door should not be left open when staff is not nearby. Shonman commented on how pleased he is with the staff, and Mannel's management.
- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No comments were received from the public attending the meeting.
- V. **CITY COUNCIL LIAISON COMMENTS [Lindsay]:** Council Liaison Deborah Lindsay congratulated the Museum on the Marine Protected Area (MPA) exhibit and the opening reception, which she said was a "tremendous job."
Lindsay also reported that the City Council will look at the City's budget options at the next Council meeting.

- VI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** Arcanin recommended that the Museum join the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) to improve our relationships with the local business community. Mannel responded that her staff was already stretched, and she was concerned about having one of them attend more meetings. Obbink suggested she get in touch with the President of BID to see how the Museum might work with them.
- Wills mentioned how pleased she was with the opening of the MPA exhibit.
- Shonman thanked Mannel for all she has done and reported how pleased he was with the exhibits and talks presented in conjunction with the Darwin exhibit. He also requested that Mannel look further into Pat Herrgott's query at last month's meeting about whether the Code of Ethics policies applied to outside groups that use the Museum's facilities. Mannel agreed to inquire with the City's legal counsel.
- Pearse brought up the "Science Cafe" that was held after the MPA opening to provide perspective on the issues surrounding marine reserves. About 25 people attended and the vender, Goodies, which provided food was satisfied. Those who attended seemed very positive, as did the three panelists. It was the Museum's first foray into science cafes, and seemed a good start.
- VII. MANAGER/STAFF REPORT [Mannel]:** Mannel presented a 5-page monthly report, which would be posted on the Museum Board webpage. She said it was a very good month all around, including a wonderful, well-attended opening of the MPA exhibit with Fred Keeley giving a few words. She also commented on the strong participation with the Museum's education programs by school groups.
- Arcanin asked about the tour given to the Contemporary Historical Vehicle Association, which generated a lot of discussion.
- Lindsay asked that the report be included in the City Council packet so all council members become aware of Museum activities.
- Arcanin requested that with respect to volunteer time, the time put in by Association Board and Museum Board members be included in the report. Mannel said she would be glad to do so if a mechanism could be found to get the figures without infringing on staff time.
- With respect to the developing Foundation, Mannel said they have contacted the Mayor, some council members, and the interim City Manager. However, the interim City Manager is on emergency leave and so far there has been no response. It is important, however, to get a proposal to the City Council before their 29 April meeting.
- VIII. LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS**
- A. Museum Association [Blaziek]:** No report because Association Board meets next week. However, Blaziek reported that all is going well with the 48th Annual Wildflower show coming up (volunteers are needed to welcome people). Also there is Science Saturday, the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, and the benefit luncheon in Emile Norman's home in Big Sur. The new issue of *Horizons* is out, and she passed a copy around. Blaziek also commented on how well the new shop manager is doing.
- B. Monarchs [Blaziek]:** Blaziek said that Tama Olver is launching a search to replace Jessica Griffiths. Obbink commented on how good it is to have Tama volunteering her talents to the Museum.
- IX. OLD BUSINESS:** None.
- X. NEW BUSINESS.**
- A. Museum Education Programs [Holdren].** Holdren gave an enthusiastic report about how well the education programs are developing. Numerous school groups have called in and visited the museum since she has arrived. They meet in the education room where

they can touch things before the docents take them for a tour. Because some schools do not have buses, Holdren is going to the schools. She also has prepared kits that teachers can use. Science Saturdays are related to themes; the first was comparing bird beaks and how they are used, the second on animal coloration, and the third will be on marine life, including a trip to the intertidal. She is planning two 1-week summer camps, the first ever. She is also training the hosts/docents about the exhibits.

Shonman complimented Holdren for all she is doing, but asked about reaching out to high school students. Holdren said she is working on developing programs for high school students, and is looking for high school volunteers to work with the younger children.

B. Museum Board Function and Responsibilities [Shonman]. Arcanin recused herself from this discussion due to her membership on the Board of the Museum Foundation of Pacific Grove. Shonman asked that the Board consider what its role would be if and when the proposed Foundation takes over operating the Museum. The Museum would still remain the property of the City, but the Foundation would report directly to the City Council. Board members had an extensive discussion about how the Board, Foundation, and City could best operate together. Foundation Board member Perry stated that the Foundation is still working out the details of how it will operate. It was pointed out that any change in duties of the Museum Board would likely require a public vote to modify the City Charter. Board members agreed that these issues will clearly need more discussion before they are resolved.

Shonman said he would attend the next City Council meeting, 15 April, and give a report.

Adjournment: 5:45pm

Respectively submitted,
John Pearse
Member, Museum Board, City of Pacific Grove