

Museum Board Meeting June 8, 2011 Minutes

Present: Board members Tama Olver (Secretary), Sue Renz (Chair), Katie Siegler, Ken Cuneo (City Council Liaison), Tom Frutchey (City Manager), Lori Mannel (Executive Director, Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History)

Absent: John Pearse (Vice-Chair)

Members of the Public: Vern Yadon

Chair Sue Renz called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m. at the Community Center, 515 Junipero Road.

I. Approval of Agenda

Katie Sielger moved approval of the agenda as submitted and the motion was adopted.

II. Approval of Minutes of the meeting of May 11

Katie Siegler noted a typographical error in the spelling of her name. Tama moved that the minutes be approved as amended to correct the error and the motion was adopted.

III. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

IV. Correspondence

Tama Olver noted that the Board received an e-mail from Esther Trosow dated June 7, 2011 titled "Fwd: potential hazard at the sanctuary." The e-mail, which is relevant to the agenda of the special joint meeting of the Museum Board and Natural Resources Commission of June 8, is included in these minutes as Attachment 1.

V. City Council Liaison Comments

Councilman Cuneo noted receipt of an e-mail from a volunteer expressing concerns about changes at the Museum Store. Tom Frutchey agreed to arrange for Lori Mannel to receive a copy of the e-mail. Sue Renz noted that the e-mail appeared to concern a personnel matter to be addressed by Museum management.

VI. Museum Foundation Liaison Comments

Tama Olver noted that Geva Arcanin stated she is no longer available to serve as Museum Board Liaison. Lori Mannel responded that one or more members of the Museum staff would participate in Museum Board meetings depending on the meeting agenda.

VII. Museum Director's Monthly Reports

Board members had no comments related to the April report.

City Manager's Report

At City Manager Frutchey's request, Lori Mannel gave the following updates:

- Security of the Wobber jade. An additional security camera that focuses on the jade has been installed. The next step to improve security is replacement of the fence around the Native Plant Garden with a wall. That project will require raising about \$100,000. The concept is an adobe wall with a wrought iron gate and wrought iron cutouts to allow visibility into the garden from outside.
- Wildflower show. The show was very successful and received positive feedback from organizers, staff, and the public. On the first day volunteers used a clicker to track the number of people who entered the show. They counted 1,300 people during a period when the door counter logged 980. Lori indicated that this experience confirms that the door counter sometimes undercounts visitation, especially when the Museum is busy and groups of people enter the door together.

We agreed to put Collections Emergency Planning on the agenda for our next meeting.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS**A. Involvement of the Museum Board in Future Financing of the Museum**

No action is possible until the Board has the opportunity to review the capital plan that is under development by the City. The Board agreed to carry this item on our agendas pending availability of the plan.

B. Report from the Monarch Habitat Subcommittee

Sue Renz reported that both the Museum Board and the Natural Resources Commission approved the monarch habitat plan in concept. The subcommittee accepted comments and will prepare a final draft to be delivered to the City Council.

Katie Siegler asked for a summary of changes made as a result of the public meeting held May 19. Sue Renz indicated that the report was changed to reflect the following:

- Concern over easements
- Concern over closure of a path that is accessible to the public today

She noted that much of the discussion was related to Dr. Stuart Weiss's recommendations. She also noted that the vision section of the plan had been substantially rewritten for clarity.

C. Museum Naming Guidelines

Tama Olver moved to approve the Museum Naming Guidelines as revised and the motion was adopted. Sue Renz agreed to transmit the document to Lori Mannel at their meeting on June 10. Katie Siegler noted that there is a question mark in the document related to whether a specific individual was involved in the process. As that section of the document represents the best recollection of our only member who was involved at the time, we agreed that the question mark should stand.

D. 2011 Work Plan

We discussed the draft work plan and reached the following agreements;

- 1) We can complete the goal to recommend improvements in operational reporting by July 2011.
- 2) Our measurements for the goal to help restore community confidence and cohesiveness will be:
 - Open new lines of communications between the Museum Board, City leadership, and Museum staff.
 - Hold a joint public meeting with the Foundation Board to celebrate progress.

Tama Olver moved to approve the work plan as amended by our discussion and the motion was adopted. Tama will revise the document and distribute it to the Board for a final check before forwarding it to Lawrence Bangert for inclusion in an upcoming City Council agenda.

E. Museum’s “Business Plan for 2011 & 2012” and “12-Month Exhibit Plan”

Katie Siegler noted that the City contribution to the Museum is a substantial part of its funding. Given the City’s financial challenges, that funding may be at risk. Tom Frutchey noted that the funding level is committed for 3 years, after which the City is obligated to provide a percentage of the annual budget. We agreed that both the City and the Museum should be making contingency plans in case funding sources fail to materialize.

We agreed that the Museum Board found the Business and Exhibit Plans to be illuminating and well defined. Sue will convey this assessment to Lori Mannel at their meeting on June 10.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Collection Curator’s Report on Restoration of the Bird Collection

Lori Mannel reported for Paul vanDeCarr. She outlined the following highlights of current plans for the Bird Restoration project:

- 1) The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History undertook a successful mounted bird restoration project two years ago.
- 2) The expert who did the Santa Barbara project is a leading candidate for the Pacific Grove project, though other candidates are being considered.
- 3) Initial project steps will be:
 - a. An assessment of the collection and detailed estimate of what needs to be done
 - b. Fund raising

If the assessment can be done for free, it would take place first. If not, the fund-raiser would come first to raise money for both the assessment and the project. Any funds raised that are not used for bird restoration would be used for collection care.
- 4) Fund raising would include an option for donors to “adopt a bird.” The names of adopters would appear with their bird in the exhibit for a limited period of time. Fund raising would also include one or more auctions.
- 5) Bird restoration would take place in a public area of the Museum where visitors could observe the work.
- 6) The fund-raiser is tentatively targeted for November, 2011.
- 7) The restoration work would take about 12 weeks.

8) The estimated minimum cost for the project is \$30,000.

Vern Yadon commented on some of the challenges presented by a bird restoration project and noted one specimen that will require particular care because of its history.

B. Report from the Monarch Habitat Subcommittee – Consider approval of the Habitat Management Plan

The plan was approved at a special joint meeting of the Board with the Natural Resources Commission held at 3:30 p.m., June 8, 2011.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Tama H. Olver, Secretary

Attachment 1

From: Esther Trosow <etrosow@93950.com>
Subject: **Fwd: potential hazard at the sanctuary**
Date: June 7, 2011 9:45:36 AM PDT
To: Frances Grate <fgrate@pacbell.net>, barb thomas <fishtaless@sbcglobal.net>, Sue Renz <suerenz@sbcglobal.net>, Lawrence Bangert <lbangert@ci.pg.ca.us>
Cc: John Pearse <pearsester@gmail.com>, Katie Siegler <80katie80@att.net>, Tama Olver <tamaolver@comcast.net>, Jim Becklenberg <jbecklenberg@ci.pg.ca.us>, Mike Zimmer <mzimmer@ci.pg.ca.us>

NRC & MAB Members:

(I do not have the email addresses of the balance of the NRC members, so please forward as appropriate and add this to the correspondence portion of the Wednesday afternoon agenda)

I sent this email below last February pointing out a very real hazard. Now the plan in question at your meeting is suggesting building a viewing platform there.

Other impediments stand in the way of this being a feasible plan:

- (1) The area in question is owned by the motel, not the city.
- (2) the butterflies are only visible at or from that spot in the later part of the overwintering season, not during the Fall months.
- (3) building such a platform would add unnecessary expense to implementing Dr. Weiss' plan.
- (4) If any of the proposed platform impinges on the city-owned portion of the property, it will need to comply with the State Wildlife Easement CC&Rs. No new structures are allowed under those rules.

Making the Weiss plan work was the original charge of the Monarch subcommittee. How has it gotten to the point of suggesting telescopes, video cameras, narrower trails (which will set in motion enhanced ADA compliance requirements), and a viewing deck? Dr. Weiss pointed out the "unnatural" state of the property. Why is the word "natural" still being used to describe it?

Much of the revised subcommittee plan is folly, like earlier suggestions for eliminating public access to the area below the proposed platform and acquiring more property to enlarge the sanctuary. Please eliminate all of these extraneous provisions before the plan goes to city council. Please focus on what the city already owns and work within that.

Thanks!

Esther Trosow

----- Original Message -----

Subject: potential hazard at the sanctuary
Date: Sat, 19 Feb 2011 09:08:41 -0800
From: Esther Trosow <etrosow@93950.com>
To: jim becklenberg <jbecklenberg@ci.pg.ca.us>, mike zimmer <mzimmer@ci.pg.ca.us>, rick katen <rkaten@ci.pg.ca.us>
CC: stuart weiss <stu@creeksidescience.com>, Sue Renz <suerenz@sbcglobal.net>, Tama Olver <tamaolver@comcast.net>

Hi Jim & Mike & Rick:

Last Sunday, Snick & I went out to the sanctuary. There was a very large eucalyptus branch laying on the driveway near the large multi-unit multi-floor building on the motel property, that must have fallen out of the towering euc(s) near that building. I assume it fell without incident. And I assume you have seen it yourself or had it reported earlier, and maybe you've already taken steps to protect the public (or have determined it is not as great a threat as I perceive it).

I am a bit unclear whether that tree is on city or motel property. That area is where visitors pull up in their cars occasionally, and if I understand the latest postings about the monarchs whereabouts, it is where the last monarch clusters were forming.

I understand the city has no control over the maintenance of the motel side of the property. As you know, visitors continue to come to the combined motel/city monarch property whether the monarchs are there or not.

With the rough weather, I am concerned that those towering trees pose a threat to the safety and well-being of the public. I am NOT proposing that the trees be trimmed right now. Of course, you have to follow the sanctuary protocols in place (that were ignored to great disadvantage in fall of 09). And I acknowledge that the city may have its hands tied because that is private property--though the motel owners/operators have been very good neighbors in the past.

I am suggesting that the sanctuary, particularly the area near where the limb fell, may have been compromised by the series of storms passing through currently, and it might be prudent to consider cutting that area off to visitors or at the very least posting a clear warning of potential danger (stronger than the everyday warning that is posted there currently).

Thanks for listening,
Esther