

Mission Canyon Association
Minutes of the Board of Directors
July 2, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

1. Meeting called to order by President Barbara Lindemann at 7:33pm & introductions followed.

Board Members **Present:** Dick Axilrod, Kellam de Forest, Laurie Guitteau, Alex Feldwinn, Darby Feldwinn, Barbara Lindemann, James Madison, Kevin Snow, Ray Smith, Hugh Twibell, Jean Yamamura

Board Members **Absent:** Susan Davidson, Richard Solomon, Alastair Winn

Guests: Luke Swetland

2. Minutes of the June 4, 2013 meeting – Approved after noting the need to correct Rowney property history.

3. Treasurer's report – Jean Yamamura presented the treasurer's report. Accepted and approved unanimously. It was reported that our Fire Safe Council grant is just about finished. The FSC funds have been fully spent and final accounting being prepared.

4. Old Business

4.1 Botanic Garden Update (Steve Windhager)

Steve was unable to attend this meeting and will provide an update at a later time.

4.2 Museum of Natural History Update (Luke Swetland)

Luke reported on two main items:

1) The wine festival, by all accounts, went well. He noted that 2 folk passed out with the heat and that individuals called 911, without notifying the Museum folk first. As a consequence a fire truck and ambulance arrived – probably unnecessarily. Luke also noted that “bizillions” of cabs showed up, queuing on Puesta del Sol. Museum folk redirected them to queue thru the parking lot.

Barbara asked how the shuttles worked. Apparently well.

Luke said they will do a debriefing and work to make next year's traffic conditions better. It was noted that the Women's Club had a wedding at 3 pm, while the Museum's activities were over by 5 pm.

2) Museum Master plan will be put on hold for a while. Looking to reduce the project, obtain needed support and focus on the program, science, education and visitor experience. Buildings in need of repairs will be upgraded incrementally taking into account required code upgrades, etc. Bottom line, plans are being revised and Museum folk are analyzing what will make a better visitor experience.

Kellam asked a question about the attendance count. There is a cap of 850 paid tickets for a total of 1100 folk including vendors, etc. This is viewed as too crowded and raises safety and comfort issues. Future efforts will be made to avoid a mob scene.

The issue of annexing Museum property, currently in the County, to the City will continue. The annex plan stands alone.

4.3 Meeting with Supervisor Carbajal (Barbara Lindemann)

Jean, Ray & Laurie met with Supervisor Carbajal and discussed several issues including homeless encampments and Red Flag Warning (RFW) days. With respect to the homeless encampments in Rocky Nook Park, Barbara noted that Randy's email (sent to all Board members) provided the latest update. Kevin and Dick volunteered to work with Randy on this issue.

4.4 City water rates in Mission Canyon (Ray)

Randy's letter to the Mayor and City Council – which the Board endorsed – led to an ad hoc “water committee” that met with Councilman Francisco and the Mayor. Our committee did not get very far in convincing City Hall folk the merits of Randy's arguments. In brief, Barbara, Kellam and Ray met with Dale Francisco who gave us chapter and verse on how accounting for City water is funded. He agreed that it would be a useless task to charge water customers for water service based upon the actual costs of water delivery (which would require a “zoned rate”). Hence, the simple “in” or “out” zones, and fairness was not a consideration.

Barbara, Ray and Tim Gill met with Mayor Schneider and Rebecca Bjork (City Water Resources Manager). Similar result. Indeed, they argued that the cost of servicing the 1,427 out-of-City customers was more than the additional costs they were charging. And, if we wanted a vote on this issue, they would need to include ALL 25,500+ customers in the tally. They also noted that many water districts are paying more than what the City is charging out of City customers. Furthermore, we do not have a “surcharge”, it is called a “cost of service”.

4.5 Signs at the trail head (Barbara)

Barbara, working to find a way to replace fire-destroyed signs at the Tunnel trail head, reported that she did not make much progress with the City. After

a run-a-round it is still unknown, or un admitted, just who owns the land under the gate and who is responsible for making decisions regarding signs. Ray is to take this question to the Fire Safe Council (ed note: which he forgot to do at the last meeting)

4.6 Rowny Trust (Barbara)

Barbara reported that it is time to follow up to see what county can do regarding zoning violations. And she noted that the Land Trust is laying the ground work for enforcement.

4.7 Urban Creeks Council grant awarded for Cape Ivy eradication

Ray reported that the UCC was awarded the grant, which our Board endorsed, for eradication of Cape Ivy along Mission Creek. It is a three year grant.

4.8 Surge Tank Removal

It was reported that City Water will put the project out for bid to contractors, with strict conditions for the bid. Initial part of the project will be to return the area to its “natural condition”. After the restoration work is finished (time estimated at three years) the property will be put up for sale. Only adjacent property owners will be permitted to make a bid. Conditions for the bid will be determined by City Council in August. MCA Board voted unanimously to request the following condition be put on this sale by the City:

MCA supports the proposed removal of the idle surge tank located above Mission Canyon Road adjacent to the Rowny Preserve. This structure is visually prominent and its siting has necessitated extensive grading in a geologically unstable area.

MCA requests that the City impose conditions upon this project to protect the visual, geological and ecological qualities of the site. Conditions should: 1) assure that the parcel is legally restricted to prevent its development for any purpose in the future; 2) require restoration of the topography to its pre-tank configuration, including elimination of the road and removal of all fill material; 3) require habitat restoration of plants on the site using local seed stock; and 4) stabilize the site to reduce or eliminate the potential for future erosion problems.

4.9 Red Flag Warning (RFW) days

There was a discussion concerning the need for consistency in the announcement and the enforcement of RFW days. The question was how do we deal with this issue. There needs to be a way to educate folk about high fire risk in the front country. One suggestion was to have press releases

suggesting that folk not hike the back country during RFW days. Ray agreed to request that the FSC discuss this issue. (ed note: In response to our request, this was discussed at the 18 July FSC meeting.)

4.10 Noise in the canyon

Noise from loud parties was discussed. Key question, what are the rules? Is there an amplitude limit on noise in the County? It was pointed out that 19 homes in Mission Canyon are advertised as vacation homes. It was agreed that we will seek answers from the County via Supervisor Carbajal at our next meeting with him.

5. Additional Committee Reports (as needed)

5.1 Newsletter (Jean Yamamura)

Coming soon.

5.2 Architectural Design Review (Hugh Twibell)

Hugh reported that the ADRC reviewed plans to rebuild the Koonce property. They have a good architect and plan to keep all the garden area.

5.3 Parking & Traffic (Dick Axilrod)

5.4 Land Use Committee (Kevin Snow)

5.5 Membership (Laurie Guitteau)

5.6 Fire Committee (Laurie)

Laurie reported that the grant funds have been spent and that the final match was \$111,272 for our \$67,201 grant. There is a grant writing workshop on 18 July, but we likely will not submit a grant proposal for next year. She also reported that we have been getting less brush during brush day for the past several years. We need to try and understand why this is so.

5.7 Botanic Garden Advisory Committee (Darby Feldwinn)

5.8 Garden Whys Committee (Susan Davidson)

5.9 Natural History Museum Committee (Kevin)

5.10 Safe Passage (Alastair Winn- Kellam)

Kellam reported that the plan is moving forward with help from a grant by Cal Trans for \$88K . There will be a series of meeting in the fall to further study of the situation. There will be notices for these meetings.

5.11 Web site (Alex Feldwinn)

Next regular meeting August 6, 2013
MacVeagh House, Natural History Museum

Respectively submitted,
Ray Smith
Secretary