

Save Our Trails!



Promoting trails in Santa Clara County for the benefit and enjoyment of all

DRAFT Minutes

Save Our Trails Meeting

Monday, January 18, 2016

Willow Glen Public Library

ADMINISTRATION

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Attendance

Directors in Attendance

Martin Delson, Heather Lerner, Jack Nadeau, Bill Rankin, Richard Silva, and Bertha Ward (making a quorum).

Directors Absent

Joan Bohnett, Domingo Candelas, Mary Ellen Petrich

Members in Attendance

Larry Ames, Helen Chapman, Nancy Kops

Visitors in Attendance

David Dearborn

Minutes

We are still missing minutes from the meetings of July 20, 2015 and November 16, 2015. Bill said he would check with the Secretary to see when these draft minutes would be distributed for review and approval.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

California Clean Money Campaign

Nancy Kops, a volunteer with the California Clean Money Campaign, spoke about the Voters Right to Know Initiative. Among other things, the initiative requires the top three funders of electoral ads to be identified by name, not by an insipid organizational cover name. We permitted her to gather signatures for the initiative while the meeting proceeded.

D6 Neighborhood Commission

David Dearborn described the San Jose Neighborhood Commissions, and said he would be resigning his position in the District 6 Commission. He is encouraging people to inform him of anyone they think might be a candidate for a vacancy on the Commission.

REPORTS

President's Report

1. Meeting with SVBC

Bill Rankin reported that he and Martin met with Shiloh Ballard, Executive Director of the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC) that morning. The SVBC has been awarded a grant from the Knight Foundation for a project to develop trails along the various feeder creeks in the valley; in particular, Canaos Creek, Sivercreek, Calabazos Creek, and Ross Creek. These creeks have been somewhat neglected, but they offer potential for trails to be placed on the service roads. Shiloh said she has made contact and is working with staff of the Water District.

Bill and Martin described SAVE OUR TRAILS to her, and indicated our interest in working together with SVBC on the project. They expressed their belief that, of the four feeder creeks she mentioned, a trail along Ross Creek is the one that appears to offer the most benefit in terms of increased connectivity.

2. Meeting with SCVWD

Bill reported that he, Heather Lerner, and Rich Silva met with Jose Villareal and Ricardo Barajas of the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD). The Water District is interested, in general, in better outreach with the community. They also expressed an interest in collaborating on creek clean-ups.

Treasurer's Report

Martin reported the successful transfer of \$1,500 from our account at the San Jose Parks Foundation to our organizational checking account. He presented an account summary for calendar year 2015, in which the income was \$1,014, the expenses were \$952, and the total in the various SAVE OUR TRAIL accounts at year's end was \$3,434. He said he anticipated approximately the same level of income and expenses in the coming year.

CURRENT ISSUES

1. Senter Road development proposal

Martin reported on a plan submitted to the Planning Department for a set of storage units on the right-of-way of the Three Creeks Trail, where the trail turns from an east-west direction to a north-south direction at Senter Road, across from Kelley Park. Martin said that he sent a letter to the Planning Department (cc the District 7 Council Member, Tam Nguyen) informing them of SAVE OUR TRAIL's interest in the proposed project and asking to be placed on the mailing list for notification of any public meetings on the project.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the best strategy for ensuring that the right-of-way for the Three Creeks Trail is preserved. Various Board Members and visitors, especially Helen Chapman, Heather Lerner, and Bertha Ward made suggestions for a series of letters they wanted SAVE OUR TRAILS to send to various individuals, departments, and organizations. Among these suggestions were the following (not inclusive):

- a. Write to the head of the Planning Department, the City Manager, the head of the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Office of Economic Development, the mayor, all council members, and the Open Space Authority.
- b. Discuss how parks and trails improve the quality of life of the city's residents, and how businesses that might want to locate in San Jose care about such amenities.
- c. Describe the importance of trails to the city's economic development.
- d. Point out the connectivity of the trail to recreation, to work, and to transportation.
- e. Remind recipients of the importance of adhering to the City's Master Plan.

The individuals who made the suggestions promised that they would send Martin a copy of their suggestions for topics to emphasize in our letters to these various recipients.

The motion was made to authorize the Secretary or Treasurer to write letters as described above, then for Bill Rankin to review and revise them, and to sign and send them without further approval by the Board. The motion passed by a vote of 6 to 0.

2. Guadalupe River Trail Community Meeting

Martin reminded the group that the third and final community meeting on the master plan for the upper reach of the Guadalupe River Trail (from Willow Street to Chynoweth Avenue) would be held Wednesday evening, January 20th, at the Gardner Community Center (520 W. Virginia St.) from 6 pm to 8 pm.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

Nominating Committee

Larry Ames and Helen Chapman started their preparations for the election of the new Board and the officers (President and Secretary) whose terms expire this year.

Larry stated he thought that the feature of the By-Laws that sets overlapping two-year terms for President and Vice-President, and for Secretary and Treasurer, made for unnecessary complexity. He recommended that we change our By-Laws so that all four officers are elected at the same time for concurrent terms.

Larry asked if any Board Members did not want to be considered for re-election. All indicated their willingness to continue serving. Regarding the office of the president, Bill felt that it was time for him to step down as president. He said he would be glad to serve as vice-president. But he conceded, if there were no alternative, he would reluctantly allow himself to be placed on the ballot for president.

Martin indicated the same, but only under the condition that the organization has someone else to fill the role of Secretary and of Treasurer.

NEW ISSUE – SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING

1. Formation of a Subcommittee to prepare for the meeting

Bill, Jack, and Bertha volunteered to serve on a committee to prepare for the Annual Meeting. Bill reported that Joan Bohnett said that the committee could meet at her house. The planning meeting will take place on Monday, February 15th, at 7 pm.

2. Donation to Westminster Church

Bill moved that the organization donate \$100 to Westminster Church as a token of our appreciation for the use of their auditorium for the Annual meeting. The motion was adopted unanimously.

3. Speakers at the meeting

Martin said that he had spoken with Greg Bringelson, Roads & Trails Manager of the Santa Clara County Department of Parks and Recreation, and with Laura Ledbetter, Senior Transportation Planner at VTA, and both had agreed to make presentations at the Annual Meeting. Martin said he would contact them again to remind them of the date and to confirm the place.

We discussed who we should invite as a third speaker. Bill favored again asking Yves Zsutty to present, but many members felt we should ask someone new. Heather suggested we ask Angel Rios, Director of San Jose Dept of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS). This suggestion received the support of the majority of the Board. Heather said she would follow up and contact Mr. Rios.

NEW ISSUE – BAY AREA TRAILS COLLABORATION

Martin reported that he and Bill had attended a meeting in Oakland the previous week. The meeting was organized and sponsored by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and had some fifteen or more trail advocates from across the Bay Area, from Sonoma and Napa Counties to the South Bay, and including governmental entities, nonprofits, and private companies, all interested in promoting trails. Martin reported that what he found most interesting at the meeting were three trail projects: (a) a trial test of a bike-ped lane across the upper deck of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge; (b) progress on the Vines Trail in Napa County, specifically, a segment between Calistoga and St. Helena; and (c) closing the gap in the Bay Trail in East Palo Alto, enabling a continuous trail experience from downtown San Jose through Palo Alto across the Dumbarton Bridge to Newark.

NEW ISSUE – BAY AREA TRAILS COLLABORATION

Richard brought to the Board's attention that Mollie Tobias, volunteer coordinator for San Jose, received a grant to buy tools that can be used for trail clean-ups. Bill said we should remember to invite her to the Annual Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm. The next meeting will be the Sixth Annual Meeting on Monday, March 21st, at the Westminster Church, 1120 Shasta Ave., San Jose 95126, at 7:00 pm..