

**Piedras Blancas Light Station Association
Minutes from Board Meeting
Rabobank Conference Room, Cambria, CA
August 27, 2014**

Board Members in attendance: David Cooper (Chair), Tim Postiff (Vice Chair), Harry Thorpe (Treasurer), Ellen Stoner (board member) and Jim Boucher (Ex-Officio).

Board Members absent: Jim Harris

Others present: Holly Gant (PBLSA Program Director), Jackie Howland, Fred Apitz.

David Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Announcements: David Cooper welcomed Ellen Stoner as a new board member and introduced Jackie Howland as a possible board member. Jackie Howland introduced herself and gave background of her experience as a school principal and working with committees on fund raising. The Board discussed fundraising needs and the future of the association. The board thanked Fred Apitz for his two years of service as treasurer with a personalized prism and redwood clock.

Approval of the Agenda: Agenda was approved.

Reports:

1. Secretary Report – Holly Gant (on behalf of Jim Harris) previously emailed a copy of the minutes of July 23, 2014 for review.

M/S/P Minutes of July 23, 2014 approved.

2. Financial Status and Treasurer's Report – Harry Thorpe presented the treasurer's report (see Appendix A) and showed a loss on the P & L statement because of the pending reimbursement for Alex Covello. Report shows \$25,000 profit of which \$17,000 was from investment income managed by Fred Apitz. Harry noted that the decrease in July due to the market drop could've been worse if Fred hadn't moved money to other stocks/bonds to mitigate potential losses. Harry noted that the PBLSA monthly income is really only \$1000 profit and to keep in mind that we are doing OK, but need to decide how to increase revenue and investment profits for the future.

Updated Fidelity authorization papers were signed by David Cooper and Tim Postiff. Fred, Harry and Holly have been working together for a smooth transition since Fred's departure.

Harry's 3rd quarter report was accepted by ASAP.

\$25,000 request for funds was accepted by BLM and were transferred from ASAP to Heritage Oaks for the tower engineering study. The school outreach request will be submitted to ASAP soon. Currently there is \$170,000 in the ASAP account as of 7/31/14. After Jim Boucher's request of \$25,000 for the engineering study there will be \$155,000 to draw from this year. Jim Boucher noted that this is not a steady source of funding; he receives a set amount each year that varies year by year and there are two projects earmarked for that money- the tower engineering study and the shuttle bus pilot program. SAM was reactivated and board members can access the maritime grant through that. Harry and David will ask the current Fidelity Investments advisor about a future plan for PBLSA. Board is in consensus to have a finance subcommittee make investment recommendation to the board in the future. Harry will ask Jack Morehead if he is still interested in being part of the subcommittee.

3. Gift Shop Report- Ellen Stoner presented the summary of monthly gift shop sales (see Appendix B). Ellen stated that the GS profit seems to be about 30%, but needs to verify some numbers and then see how we can increase profit. Jim Boucher suggested talking

with Pt. Sur Association to learn their approach. Ellen suggested that changing the tour route to start at the rotunda would help sales because visitors will be toward the end of their tour. Square is still causing problems when the internet connection is down. Holly will contact Square to verify cc payments still go through while offline.

4. BLM Update- Jim Boucher presented the August 27, 2014 BLM report that was previously presented with the agenda for the meeting (see Appendix C). Communication tower support buildings/antennas are being installed. Harry asked if there are adequate funds to complete the project and Jim confirmed there are. Seismic upgrade project will go out to bid soon. Parking lot was discussed with Caltrans' Steve Price who said a lot in the dune field would be doable, but problematic due to the constraints of visibility from the highway. BLM Director Kenna was opposed to expanding the parking lot where the old Navy buildings were. David expressed concern that we are at a tipping point with public access and Jim noted he thinks we'll be able to handle guests for two more years. Harry requested that Carole/Jodie compile a tour visitation report. Issues about tour staging and shuttle bus will be implemented next summer on a trial basis. Possible contract with HC or Cambria Trolley. Fees could be collected on the bus rather than in the parking lot, staging area could be at HC or Vista Point 2 or at pick up points in San Simeon/Cambria. A grassroots campaign to make PBLSONA a national monument is in the beginning stages. Donovan Marley is spearheading the campaign to see how the public feels about it.

Jim noted that Pt. Sur and Pt San Luis nonprofits operate the tours and keep all tour profits. He asked if PBLSA would be interested in handling the tours. \$65,000 was collected in tour fees this year and that goes into a BLM account. Ellen and Jackie asked about liability issues and insurance if the association took over the tours. Jim stated that BLM would still be liable. If this agreement was started, there is no guarantee that the next park manager would abide by the agreement and could use those tour funds for other projects or not allow PBLSA to operate the tours.

Educational outreach was discussed and Jim confirmed that transportation costs are reimbursed to schools by BLM and PBLSA reimburses BLM for the amenity fee.

5. Website Development – Holly Gant continues researching viable web cameras and stated that there is a new internet provider for rural SLO county residents. It works through the electrical outlet rather than satellite/cell tower and it may be a way to bypass the BLM/Hearst Castle air bridge so we have our own internet connection. David thanked Holly for editing the aerial video on the homepage so it's cleaner looking. Jim Boucher stated the BLM came to look at the internet connection at PBLS, but didn't offer any solution or comment.
6. PBLSA Events – Holly noted that there is an upcoming Twilight Tour on October 25th and a reservation list has been started. The tour is listed on the website.
7. Grants/Development – Holly noted that Patagonia should be notifying us of our grant award by August, but hasn't heard yet. Michelle Roest has been working with Jim Boucher on the maritime grant that is due by 9/23/14. They are asking for funds to correct the original paint job on the tower. The original painting company has offered to donate all materials so the grant is asking for funds to cover the labor. Tim asked for the board's feedback on the progress so far and David stated he was pleased with the process and is looking at this as a test run for future projects. Tim stated Michelle would be willing to come to a board meeting to explain the process and how she finds grants.
8. Membership – Tim Postiff stated that 50 renewal notices with an appreciation booklet were mailed and 17 responded for a total of \$1325 in memberships/donations so far. Holly noted that there will be a large group of renewals due in December. The 50

reminders that were mailed went to members since January and a few from late 2013. Tim thanked Holly for suggesting mailing the accomplishment booklets with the renewal letters because renewal letters alone were not generating memberships.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

None

Discussion Items:

1. PBLSA letter to BLM- Jim Boucher said the letter got the attention of the BLM Director and they contacted Bakersfield, but did not agree to a meeting with the board. David stated that he believes it's the board's responsibility to remain cordial with the Bakersfield office and maintain good relations.
2. Endorsement for PBLSONA National Monument- David is working with Donovan Marley on feasibility study of support for NM status. Donovan is working on a grassroots effort and is looking for endorsements by PBLSA, FES and Hearst Corp. on a pamphlet to use with civic organizations to gain local support. There are two options: a stand-alone change of PBLSONA to PBLSONA NM, or as part of a CA Coastal NM. State BLM Director likes the idea of CA Coastal NM.
M/S/P Board approves endorsing a national monument campaign. Jim Boucher approves of the board's endorsement.
3. Tower replication- David met with architect Steve Puglisi who worked on the replica lighthouse tower. Cost estimate for the 4th landing and watch room in fiberglass is \$222,041. David and Jim Boucher met with Bruce Elster and Dan Murphy and decided the next step is an engineering model for stabilization and construction that would test for shear load, structural weight, etc. The study will determine if a replica is feasible based on the functions we specify and as a structurally sound stand alone structure for a top in the future. David is asking for a cost estimate for the study that will include inputting data into a structural engineering program to calculate loads and stresses of a design. He will let the board know the estimate and ask board approval to move forward. Model will include all stairs, platforms, and seismic retrofit. Will need to write a finite statement of purpose stating exactly what we would like to have (ventilation, staircase, able to hold 40 people, lighting, etc. ~8,000 pounds). Jim Boucher asked to make this replica functional not necessarily for tour access, but for cell service or transmission towers. Will have to abide by National Historic Preservation guidelines on the outside appearance. Jim B. stated that the bid may be as a design build whereas the designer and builder will submit a bid as one unit (Wellsona and Shoreline Engineering bidding as one entity). Harry asked Jim B. if the CA Coastal Commission would approve this and Jim said there should be no problem.

David Cooper adjourned the meeting at 8:29pm

Note: Minutes recorded by Holly Gant

Appendix A: Treasurer's Report

TREASURER'S REPORT for _____ July 2014 _____

1. OPERATIONS INCOME: Last Month __\$5,590.11_____
YTD __\$46,831.30_____

PROFIT:* Last Month __<\$1,033.25>_____
YTD __\$22,846.05_____

BLM SUPPORT EXPENSE: Last Month __\$9,178.77_____
YTD __\$46,996.00_____

BALANCES: H. O. Bank __\$12,778.33_____ ASAP __\$130,272.01_____

* Profit loss includes @\$3,000 reimbursable salary expense.
YTD profit includes @\$17,000 investment income.

2. INVESTMENT BALANCE – FIDELITY INVESTMENTS

Month	Beg Bal	Market Chg	Div/Int	Deposit	W/D	Ending Bal
July 14	579,401.61	<5,439.67>	949.30	---	---	574,914.24
June 14	575,020.32	2,468.79	1,941.05	---	<25.55>	579,404.61
May 14	567,757.49	6,340.70	922.14	---	---	575,020.33

3. OTHER:

- Submitted registration change to Fidelity – requested new paperwork by account.
- Continued review of accounting systems with Fred and Holly – audited accounts and corrected when necessary.
- Submitted third quarter ASAP report.
- Assisted Jim with additional BLM funding approval for engineering study/pilot.
- Completed SAM registration.

- Worked though ME closing items – questions remain.
- Entered request for funds into ASAP for \$25,000.

Appendix B: Gift Shop Report

Sales numbers supplied by Holly Gant

Gross sales by month.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
2011	884	1,009	1,354	2,517	1,435	2,216	3,481
2012	862	922	1,497	1,812	1,366	2,121	3,718
2013	1,848	1,270	1,931	2,849	2,208	3,407	4,351
2014	1,853	3,263	3,072	2,465	2,408	2,711	4,284

	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	Subtotal Thru July
2011	2,973	1,733	1,445	1,158	1,837	\$ 22,042	\$ 12,896
2012	3,725	1,951	2,653	1,207	1,344	\$ 23,178	\$ 12,298
2013	4,121	2,314	2,048	1,872	1,965	\$ 30,184	\$ 17,864
2014						\$	\$ 20,056

Appendix C: BLM Update

BLM Update 8/27/14

Communication Tower – Modular trench system from the tower to the equipment shed has been installed. The special order air conditioning units are on site and are being installed in the equipment shed. The standoffs (antenna mounts) fabrication and installation contract was awarded to Wellsona Engineering.

Fog Signal Bldg (FSB) Shoreline Engineering is nearing completion of the seismic upgrade details.

Caltrans – Steve Price of Caltrans made a site visit to Piedras Blancas to discuss visitor access and parking. Options were discussed. Jim Harris provided a summary.

National Monument status- A grassroots effort continues to create a Piedras Blancas National Monument.

Funding- \$40,000 dollars has been transferred from BLM to the holding account to be used by the PBLSA. \$25,000 to be used for an engineering/architectural study on the lighthouse and \$15,000 to be used as a pilot program for a contracted tour shuttle bus for transporting tour participants.

Special Event – A special public tour with historical enactments took place on National Lighthouse Day, 8/9, and was followed by a luncheon with guest speakers.

Educational Outreach- Cayucos Elementary School will be the first group to participate this school year, Sept. 26.

Light Station Tours- Public tours will be conducted Tues, Thurs and Sat after Sept 1. In addition to regular scheduled public tours, group tours can be arranged at specified times.

Appendix D: BLM Response Letter to PBLSA

Bureau of Land Management.....

Over the last 12 years, the partnership between the Bureau of Land Management and the Piedras Blancas Light Station Association (PBLSA) has been extremely successful in restoring and interpreting the Piedras Blancas Light Station Outstanding Natural Area. Using the BLM's Restoration and Management Priorities 2009-2013 document as a guideline, we have seen many significant accomplishments:

- Public tours of the light station increasing from one tour a month to 20 tours a month during the peak visitation season. (And that does not include special tours, which have exceeded 10 tours a month.) The result is over 7000 visitors annually to the light station and significant revenues for the restoration efforts.
- An Educational Outreach Program that provides classroom presentations and field trips for 20 elementary school classes. The outreach program has resulted in a growing awareness and appreciation of the Piedras Blancas Light Station, the Outstanding Natural Area and the BLM.
- Five original light station buildings restored, two partially restored and four buildings/structures replicated. The resulting upgraded image of the site continues to impress our visitors.
- An Outstanding Natural Area increased from 19 acres to 476 acres. The groundwork for an integrated and expanded visitor access plan has been established.
- Non-native plants eradicated or controlled on about 65 acres. This has allowed the area to gain the public's attention to BLM's stewardship of the environment.

These impressive accomplishments have been achieved through the use of extensive volunteer hours and the support of two BLM staff employees. However, the PBLSA Board is now concerned that this record of achievement may be negatively impacted by a number of issues:

- Continued increase in visitation without adequate infrastructure
The potential for visitation growth is great due to 1) the public demand to tour Piedras Blancas Light Station, 2) increasing visitation to the ONA to view the elephant seal rookery, 3) local businesses promoting Piedras Blancas as a Central Coast destination. Presently we have reached the limit for access and parking at Piedras Blancas Light Station. Our current method for conveying visitors to the site and ad hoc parking arrangements must be addressed. A

change in how tours are conducted will be required to handle the demand for increased public visitation.

- Maintenance and restoration efforts.

Over the last few years, volunteer hours have slowly declined. The reduced number of volunteer hours and increased BLM hours needed for continuing restoration are causing ongoing maintenance support to fall behind. The Light Station is showing signs of neglect. It is very apparent that additional human resources are needed if the Light Station facilities and visitor services are to be maintained at an acceptable level to accommodate public demand and retain an exceptional reputation.

Recently the PBLSA Board authorized additional funds to cover expenses related to growing maintenance concerns. We would like the BLM management to consider allocating additional funds to this effort as part of their partnership commitment.

- Outstanding Natural Area (ONA) planning.

With the expansion of the ONA to incorporate State Park lands, the future of the Piedras Blancas Light Station and the BLM will be closely linked to the success of integrating complementary plans. The Piedras Blancas Light Station Outstanding Natural Area is a jewel in the crown of BLM managed lands. Visitors have positive feelings for the light station, the outstanding natural area and the BLM. Volunteer guides of the public tours stress BLM's stewardship of both the cultural history and natural history at Piedras Blancas. It would be counterproductive to see positive progress diminish because basic visitor services and maintenance are not staffed at an adequate level.

The PBLSA Board would like to request an opportunity to meet with key BLM management personnel to begin to formulate our joint plans to ensure the ongoing success of the Piedras Blancas Light Station Outstanding Natural Area. Together we have seen a rebirth of the PBLS under BLM's management direction and PBLSA's committed support. We would like to work together to build on our success.

We look forward to your response and hope that a meeting between the BLM and the PBLSA Board can be scheduled in the very near future.



**United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

CenCal District Office
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1623
Sacramento, California 95825



Refer Reply to
CA-160 (N)
1400-735

Jack Morehead, Chair
Piedras Blancas Light Station Association
P.O. Box 127
15950 Cabrillo Hwy
San Simeon, CA 93452-0127

July 23, 2014

This letter is in response to your May 12, 2014 letter regarding management of the Piedras Blancas Light Station Association (PBLSA). First of all, we cannot express enough gratitude for all the work and support your organization has provided to the Piedras Blancas Light Station over the past 12 years. With your support, the BLM has been able to better manage the light station and we look forward in continuing our wonderful working relationship.

I agree there is a critical need to develop a new vision for visitor access and management as laid out in the existing business plan. With realignment of State Highway 1 in close proximity to Piedras Blancas and the construction of the proposed California Coastal Trail in the same location, access for accommodating additional visitors will continue to be a major issue. We have been in contact with Cal-Trans to discuss the possibility of improving vehicle access to the light station, as well as constructing a parking facility adjacent to the entrance road of the Piedras Blancas Light Station which is an existing Public Conservation Easement. Also, a feasibility proposal is being developed to provide a suitable parking facility on light station property to accommodate visitors along Highway 1. If this proposal is approved, we will request funding to implement this plan internally and with other agencies, such as the Federal Highway Commission.

Furthermore, we will contact California State Parks about providing a dual ticket package where one ticket will provide visitors a bus trip daily to both the light station and Hearst Castle. We will also explore working with Castle bus service in providing a shuttle from the old Piedras Blancas Motel parking lot.

I have been made aware that volunteers have slowly declined and so has the maintenance of facilities. We appreciate all the volunteer and funding support that the PBLSA Board has provided in helping cover some of the maintenance expenses and we certainly do not want this to become a permanent method for managing the Piedras Blancas Light Station. We are currently in the budget allocation process for identifying Fiscal Year 2015 funding

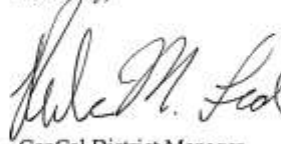
needs and we will keep the light station's requests in mind. In addition, the Bakersfield Field Office will provide additional maintenance assistance to the light station.

We would like to continue bringing back the light to the tower a common goal, and would like to encourage the PBLSA in helping us fund this endeavor. Any funding secured by the association "to bring back the light" would be beneficial because most funding opportunities require matching funds.

Our employees working along the California Coast have told me that Piedras Blancas provides an anchor to the management of the California Coastal National Monument. This is where the public can get the closest to some of the prominent rocks and witness the abundant wildlife, which in turn provides them an understanding of why these offshore rocks along with the pinnacles and islands have gained monument status. It also provides an understanding on how it fits into the California BLM's "Discover the Coast" initiative. Also, we hope to balance carrying capacity with management of the native plant and wildlife populations.

With your help, the BLM has come a long way in making the Piedras Blancas Outstanding Natural Area a popular destination; and together, we can develop a new vision that will make the light station a continued success for the future. Thank you.

Sincerely,


for CenCal District Manager

Bureau of Land Management
Central California District
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1623
Sacramento, CA 95825
Phone: (916) 978-4400
Fax: (916) 978-4416
District Manager: Este Stifel
Associate District Manager: Ruben Leal

"Visit us on the Internet at www.ca.blm.gov/bakersfield

Addendum

On Thu, Aug 28, 2014 at 3:39 PM, David Cooper <cooperd@msu.edu> wrote:

Dear Jackie,

The current members of the PBLSA Board of Directors have unanimously elected you to the board. Congratulations. On behalf of the entire Piedras Blancas Light Station community, please accept my thanks for your willingness to serve.

My best,
David Cooper, Chair