

Piedras Blancas Light Station Association Minutes

Zoom Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

February 23, 2022

Present: David Cooper (Chair), Harry Thorpe (Vice-chair/Treasurer), Jim Harris, Gary O'Neill, John Hodge (BLM), Jodie Nelson (BLM), Cressant Swarts (Gift Shop Manager)

Absent: Sharon Flaherty (Secretary), John Brass, Ryan Cooper (BLM)

David Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:02.

David thanked Jim for organizing the February 18 meeting at the light station with Bruce Elster, Dan Murphy, and Rob Down; he thanked John Hodge for organizing BLM staff presence.

The motion in New Business will be addressed in full in the Tower Report. Agenda approved by consensus with this change.

Reports:

1. Secretary's Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 1. The minutes of the January 26, 2022, board meeting was approved by consensus.
2. Financial Status and Treasurer's Report (Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 2. There was a small profit last month. The name of the Tower Restoration Fund has been changed to Targeted Donation Fund, as a way to separate donations with specific requirements by the donor; they will be tracked in a separate spreadsheet. David asked if the spreadsheet will satisfy donor requirements; Harry explained that it has not been necessary to set up a specific sub-ledger or purchase dedicated software to handle donations, but that may change as fundraising efforts continue. The recent \$100,000 donation was required to be spent on "brick and mortar" but is still too general to be considered a targeted donation. The \$12,660 in existing funds in the Targeted Donation Fund are from past fundraisers for the tower.

PBLSA investments have fallen with general market trends. Harry submitted the quarterly report to BLM. David asked when the quarterly report requirement will become biannual or yearly; Harry said that will have to be clarified when a new cooperative agreement is reached.

3. Gift Shop Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 3. January's sales were good compared to previous years, and 2021 ended with the highest sales ever for the gift shop. Cressant praised the volunteers who have been working in the gift shop and thanked Jodie for staffing the gift shop. Cressant has started ordering stock for summer; she is planning to increase prices in the gift shop as most vendors have raised their prices.
4. BLM Update (Jodie Nelson) – See Appendix 4. There has been an upswing in visitation recently, even on typically slow days, and more tours have been filled. Jodie has contacted the Coastal Commission in regard to moving forward on tower work; their main concern is changing the appearance of the light station, so she anticipates no problems. The parking lot project has been pushed back to mid-summer; the restroom project is on hold until Ryan returns. Jodie commented that when she checks reviews of the light station, there are no complaints about the portable toilets but a lot of praise for the overall light station experience; she will try to find a way to pass on some of this feedback to the board. The California

Conservation Corps has been working on the trail and weeding. Jodie is trying to increase the number of volunteer days they are available through March or April.

Ryan's detail will be ending May 2; a replacement is lined up for that position. Jodie has been hired as acting manager at the light station until Ryan's return.

BLM has talked to the Coast Guard and Congressman Carbajal's office about hosting a public meeting regarding the lens. There was discussion on the role PBLSA can play in hosting the meeting; it was agreed that PBLSA should co-host and encourage area tourism and business groups to participate as well. The technical details of hosting the event would be handled by the Congressman's office. It will also be important to contact Congressman Panetta, as the redistricting process may overlap with the meeting planning. David will contact the congressional offices on behalf of the PBLSA.

The California BLM is working on a 3-year intern agreement that PBLS can be a part of; the timeline is unknown, so there may not be an intern hired yet at the beginning of summer.

There was a brief discussion about applying for the next cooperative agreement with BLM; there will be a public posting, but PBLSA can prepare the submission before the posting.

5. Tower Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 5. Discussion followed regarding the Shoreline proposal and the administrative and funding steps necessary to accept the proposal. John Hodge clarified the administrative process for BLM, which is as follows: John will review the proposal and submit it to an internal BLM team with Jodie identified as lead on the project; there will be a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review by BLM staff; the BLM archaeologist will submit the proposal to the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) for review; John anticipates a 4-6 month window for all approvals. If additional detail or changes are necessary for the proposal, it will be returned to PBLSA as the applicant, and PBLSA can work with Shoreline to make the necessary changes. Harry reminded the board that the same process applied for the Fog Signal Building.

Discussion turned to funding the proposal. Jim read the following motion into the record: The PBLSA Board accepts the Shoreline Proposal of 19 January 2022 (Job #404-05c) for the exterior mortar testing, a task taking about three weeks and estimated not to exceed fee of \$20K, and the rehabilitation of the south ground floor window, a task that will take about four months and estimated not to exceed fee of \$120K; in addition, the Board will address the geotechnical task upon its submission for PBLSA consideration. Gary seconded. Further discussion on the proposal followed. Jim will send another copy for everyone to review.

David asked if the board is comfortable committing \$140,000 or more to a project 4-6 months down the road; Jim suggested the motion be amended to make funding contingent on approval of the proposal by BLM. Harry asked if the board was willing to commit the funding without pursuing cooperative agreement funding for the project. Discussion followed. Harry described the process of submitting projects for funding through the cooperative agreement: if the PBLSA commits to funding the project, funds cannot be requested through the cooperative agreement, because the application asks how much the PBLSA has already committed and what additional costs are not covered; reimbursement is only available for these additional costs.

John agreed with Harry that committing funds now would prevent the PBLSA from requesting reimbursement for the project through the cooperative agreement. Harry would like further insight from the grants office on whether his concerns are valid. Ryan has the information on how much money is available through the cooperative agreement, as it changes based on tour

fees collected; Harry estimated \$200,000 remaining. There was discussion on amending the motion to clarify that the first source of funding would be the cooperative agreement.

John Hodge clarified that whether PBLSA commits funds or not doesn't affect the BLM approval timeline for the project.

David suggested tabling the motion until a better understanding can be reached of how to get cooperative agreement funds for the project. If the questions above are resolved, it would be possible to vote via email or at next month's meeting. Motion tabled.

Further discussion followed on how to obtain the necessary information for the PBLSA to move forward on approving funding for the proposal or applying for cooperative agreement funds to cover the costs. John said the same procedure as previous cooperative-funded projects should be followed. Harry said he had to go through Ryan to get answers from the grants office on previous projects. Jodie will meet with Ryan to discuss how work on the previous cooperative agreements has been accomplished.

Jodie reiterated that the BLM review of the proposal is a process independent of funding; Jodie will stay in contact with the engineers and update the board as necessary.

Discussion of further reports was suspended.

6. Underground Utilities Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 6. No discussion.
7. Capital Campaign/Grants Report (Jim Harris/Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 7. No discussion.
8. Membership Committee Report (Harry Thorpe/Sharon Flaherty) – No discussion.
9. Victorian Keepers Cottages Workgroup Report (David Cooper) – No discussion.

Old Business:

1. Project Priorities Revisited (Harry Thorpe) – No discussion
2. Fresnel Lens Update – No discussion.

New Business:

1. Complete motion considered in Tower Report discussion above.

Discussion Items: None

David Cooper adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Cressant Swarts.

Minutes checked by David Cooper (Chair) and Sharon Flaherty (Secretary) on March 7, 2022.

Appendix 1: Secretary's Report 2/23/22 – Cressant Swarts

Piedras Blancas Light Station Association Minutes

Zoom Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

January 26, 2022

Present: Harry Thorpe (Vice-chair/Treasurer), Sharon Flaherty (Secretary), John Brass, Jim Harris, Gary O'Neill, John Hodge (BLM), Jodie Nelson (BLM), Cressant Swarts (Gift Shop Manager)

Absent: David Cooper (Chair), Ryan Cooper (BLM)

Guests: Ken and Patti Smith (PBLSA volunteers)

Harry Thorpe called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The agenda was approved by consensus.

Reports:

1. Secretary's Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 1. The minutes of the December 1, 2021, board meeting were approved by consensus.
2. Financial Status and Treasurer's Report (Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 2. Notable changes in November's report included the approximately \$100,000 anonymous donation discussed at the last board meeting. In December, PBLSA was reimbursed by BLM for the Wellsona study.
3. Gift Shop Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 3. There was a drop in revenue for December compared to November, but the total for the year was the highest ever at \$48,376. Revenue for each month May through November exceeded all previous years. Sharon complimented Cressant on the new online store pages.
4. BLM Update (Jodie Nelson) – See Appendix 4. Ryan is on an assignment for the Central Coast field office in Marina for up to four months. The hiring process to temporarily fill the manager position at the light station is ongoing. The BLM Public Affairs office is working on planning a public meeting to discuss the future of the lens, with the participation of the Coast Guard and PBLSA. Jodie has been working on hiring an intern for the summer. Renewal of the cooperative agreement between BLM and PBLSA needs to be discussed soon, as the current agreement expires in September. Vineyard Elementary has cancelled all field trips and presentations in January due to COVID; Jodie is working with them and other schools to reschedule. The Plein Air painting group will be at the lighthouse on Wednesday the 9th. The Eroica event is planned for May; Jodie is waiting on an application and action plan for the event. Harmony Cellars is interested in doing an event at the light station sometime this fall; Cressant has been in communication with them. There has been a lull in visitation in January. The BLM Public Affairs office has been in communication with CalTrans regarding the recent highway closure at the elephant seal vista and how that impacts visitors to the light station.
5. Tower Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 5. The board discussed the proposal submitted by Shoreline Engineering on January 19 for mortar testing, geotechnical testing, and rehabilitation of a window opening on the tower. Ryan had emailed the board before the meeting with a reminder that BLM engineer and SHPO approval is necessary before any work can proceed. Jodie spoke to the BLM archaeologist, who will look at the proposal and submit it to SHPO. John Hodge reported that he has not heard from BLM engineers regarding the Shoreline report

submitted in October but that he will follow up. John will also coordinate with Ryan to make sure the engineers see the January proposal. John said he expected that work could commence within months if the proposal is approved. Jim suggested that funding sources be pursued while waiting for BLM and SHPO approval of the proposal. Harry said he needs to investigate requirements with the co-op agreement regarding fundraising and BLM funding. The board will need to coordinate with Ryan to determine what steps can be taken while waiting on approval of the proposal. Jim suggested an on-site meeting with Bruce and Dan to ask questions regarding the proposal. John Hodge will check with Ryan and a BLM engineer on whether they are available on the proposed dates of February 9 or 16. Gary asked what would happen if a larger problem were discovered when removing the window as part of the proposal; Jim said Bruce has anticipated that possibility and is prepared to reinforce the opening to prevent further damage to the tower. Gary asked if the Coastal Commission also needs to be consulted. Jodie said the Commission won't need to be involved because the proposal doesn't dramatically change an existing structure.

6. Underground Utilities Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 6. An on-site meeting was held with Connected Energy and Simplified Electric, who will be revising their white paper with the intention of presenting it at the board's next in-person meeting.
7. Capital Campaign/Grants Report (Jim Harris/Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 7. Jim encouraged the board to renew the subscription to Instrumentl, a grant-matching website. The service costs \$902/year and renews on February 4. There was a brief discussion on how the service has been used in the past. Harry will follow up with the Cambria Chamber of Commerce regarding visiting them like the other Chambers in the county. Jim recommended the board reconsider using the Certified Folder service to distribute rack cards. Harry suggested that Jim's recommendations and fundraising in general be discussed in more detail soon.
8. Membership Committee Report (Harry Thorpe/Sharon Flaherty) – Harry and Sharon will reconvene the membership committee and work on expanding membership recruitment efforts.

Old Business:

1. Project Priorities Revisited (Harry Thorpe) – Meeting to discuss the list of priorities previously submitted to the board will have to wait until Ryan is more available. Sharon said that the lens and the tower proposal have already been identified as the most important and pressing projects.
2. Fresnel Lens Update – Addressed above. A public meeting with participation from BLM, the Coast Guard, and PBLSA is the next step.
3. Victorian Work Group Update (David Cooper) – See Appendix 8. David spoke with an architect about the project and is working on forming the committee.

New Business:

1. Review 2021 Annual Board Financial Report (Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 9 for summary. Harry sent the full report to board members. He requested that if there are any questions, let Harry know in advance so he can address them at the next board meeting.

Discussion Items:

1. Discuss Shoreline Proposal of January 17, 2022 – Discussed above.

Harry Thorpe adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Cressant Swarts.

Minutes checked by Harry Thorpe (Vice-Chair) and Sharon Flaherty (Secretary) on February 10, 2022.

Appendix 2: Treasurer's Report 2/23/22 – Harry Thorpe

TREASURER'S REPORT for January 2022

1. OPERATIONS INCOME: Last Month: \$3,696.60 YTD: \$3,696.60
PROFIT: Last Month: \$22.78 YTD: \$22.78

TARGETED DONATION FUND BALANCE: \$12,660.03

BLM SUPPORT EXPENSE: Last Month: \$382.59 YTD: \$382.59
BALANCES: P.P. Bank: \$557.09 ASAP: \$19,965.18

2. INVESTMENT BALANCE – FIDELITY INVESTMENTS

<i>Month</i>	<i>Beg Bal</i>	<i>Market Chg</i>	<i>Div/Int</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>W/D</i>	<i>Ending Bal</i>
Jan 2022	704,380.86	<18,259.77>	656.22	--	--	686,777.31
Dec 2021	714,383.52	9,264.26	11,733.72	--	31,000.64	704,380.86
Nov 2021	622,982.28	<8,990.97>	714.21	99,677.80	--	714,383.52

3. OTHER:

- Reviewed transactions for Dec/Jan. Posted adjustments.
- Filed/paid 4th quarter sales tax.
- Paid all open school outreach invoices. Will submit to BLM for reimbursement.
- Submitted quarterly SF 425 financial/performance review to BLM.
- Prepared annual Board financial review and submitted to Board.

Harry M. Thorpe, Jr.
Treasurer

Attachment 3: Gift Shop Report 2/23/22 – Cressant Swarts

January Gift Shop Revenue

On-site sales	\$2,592.89
Website sales	\$43.00
Total	\$2,635.89

NET SALES COMPARISONS

Shaded month indicates lower sales than that same month last year. Figures include website as well as on-site gift shop sales starting in 2021. Excludes donations, memberships, and engraved bricks.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2016	1,798	2,609	2,830	1,988	2,142	2,586	4,861	3,410	2,716	2,647	1,930	2,103
2017	2,196	1,461	2,678	3,909	2,864	3,350	4,666	3,701	2,218	3,022	2,793	3,491
2018	3,077	3,094	3,104	3,316	3,133	3,707	6,225	4,157	3,383	2,552	1,597	1,730
2019	1,015	1,605	2,565	3,350	3,641	4,665	6,804	4,722	2,070	3,656	2,717	3,719
2020	2,202	2,764	1,653	215	164	189	524	244	136	56	220	376
2021	108	1,291	2,198	3,723	4,276	5,363	8,469	7,588	4,238	5,383	3,474	2,265
2022	2,636											

Government shutdown affected Dec 2018 and *COVID-19 affected 2020/2021 beginning on March 19, 2020.

Yearly Comparisons

	Jan - Jun	TOTAL
2016	\$13,953	\$31,620
2017	\$16,458	\$36,349
2018	\$19,431	\$39,075
2019	\$16,841	\$40,529
2020	\$7,187	\$8,743
2021	\$16,959	\$48,376
2022		

Appendix 4: BLM Update 2/23/22 – Jodie Nelson

BLM Updates Feb 2022

- Meeting Fri, 2/18, regarding rehab of lighthouse window. BLM engineers were able to attend. Description of the project and need were communicated well and everyone seems to be on the same page. Need to get project submitted to the Bakersfield Resources team for NEPA and SHPO review.
- Coastal Commission - emailed the CA Coastal Commission federal consistency coordinator to get more information about their determination process/what, if anything we need to do
- Parking lot project has been pushed out to mid-summer due to BLM staff illness, but still on the radar.
- Bathroom improvements are on hold. Ryan had been in discussions regarding sole sourcing for the bathrooms. Hopefully recommence that project when he returns.
- CA Conservation Corps - Friday volunteer workdays every 2 weeks. Came out Fri, 2/18, and did some trail work and weeding. Trying to increase C's volunteer days in the future. Also requested a brick to acknowledge and honor their hard work this year.
- Whale count late March to late May confirmed. UAS (drone) will probably be flying this year. Due to Covid protocols and staff needed to operate UAS, whale team will probably be using both units D and A. Parking will need to be adjusted to accommodate everyone.
- Ryan's return will be May 2 (latest). Potentially earlier depending on hiring process at the Central Coast Field Office.
- Backfilling Ryan's position at Piedras Blancas - unsure of the status at this point
- Continued interest in the lens. BLM has had conversations with both Carbajal's office and the US Coast Guard about hosting a public meeting. Interested people should be encouraged to contact their representatives and/or local groups to host a public meeting. BLM and USCG would be participants but can't host the event.
- Working towards hiring interns for this summer (BLM's current agreement expires 6/22)
- Process has begun for a statewide 3-year Internship Agreement that Piedras will be a part of. Not sure if Statewide Agreement will be ready to use by this summer.
- BLM/PBLSA Agreement (currently expires September)

Events:

- 4th Grade Outreach Program - two definite presentations/field trips for Baywood and Del Mar. Possible rescheduling or alternate programming for Winifred Pifer and Vineyard Elementary
- Eroica Cycling Event (possibly) 5/1
- Potential whale team presentation for Piedras volunteers
- Potential Sierra Foothill Conservancy presentation for Piedras volunteers
- Harmony Wines - potential event this fall

Appendix 5: Summary of Tower Top Project 2/23/22 – Jim Harris

The Shoreline Engineering proposal to the PBLSA on 19 January 2022 (Job #404-05c) was discussed at the January Board meeting. On Friday February 18 a site meeting at Piedras Blancas was held with twelve attendees including BLM representatives from Bakersfield and Sacramento, and Ryan Cooper and Jody Nelson from Piedras Blancas, members of the PBLSA, as well as a representative of Earth Systems Pacific, Geotechnical Engineers. Bruce Elster and Dan Murphy presented their proposal for restoring the south ground floor window as well as discussing their plans for the external mortar testing of the tower. Also discussed were the proposed plans for geotechnical testing of the foundation of the tower. There are a number of issues related to archeological and SHPO oversight that need to be addressed before the window and geotechnical work can be commenced on site. Because of these requirements it is expected that the work cannot begin from one to four months from now until the project has completed its preparatory oversight. In addition, Earth Systems has yet to submit its proposal to Shoreline and PBLSA and will have to address some of the concerns raised in its proposal. Cressant Swarts has taken notes of the on-site discussion, and more detail can be provided in her report (see below). Based upon the previous discussion and the Shoreline proposal, the following motion is presented to the PBLSA Board:

MOTION: The PBLSA Board accepts the Shoreline Proposal of 19 January 2022 (Job #404-05c) for the exterior mortar testing, a task taking about three weeks and estimated not to exceed fee of \$20K, and the rehabilitation of the south ground floor window, a task that will take about four months and estimated not to exceed fee of \$120K; in addition, the Board will address the geotechnical task upon its submission for PBLSA consideration.

Notes on Meeting with Shoreline, BLM, PBLSA on February 18, 2022, 10 a.m. Regarding the Shoreline Proposal of January 19, 2022

Attendees: Bruce Elster, Shoreline Engineering; Dan Murphy, Wellsona Iron; Rob Down, Earth Systems Pacific, Geotechnical Engineers; Ryan Cooper, BLM; Jodie Nelson, BLM; Zach Day, BLM archaeologist; Will Birmingham, BLM engineer; Suong Chong, BLM engineer; David Cooper, PBLSA chair; Jim Harris, PBLSA; Gary O'Neill, PBLSA; Cressant Swarts, PBLSA

Bruce Elster and Dan Murphy began their presentation by showing the damage caused by rust-jacking to the brickwork around the south-facing ground-floor window of the lighthouse. Cracks running up the side of the building from the window can be seen through the paint. There was discussion on whether some of the rust on the southwest corner ironwork is new since the last painting.

Dan described the process required to remove the rusted iron by cutting into the brickwork approximately 3 inches on either side of the iron. Parts of the upper molding and lower windowsill will be removed whole to provide a mold for a concrete replica. The rest of the iron will be cut into pieces in the removal process. The window itself will be preserved, though it is not known if it is the original. The process for the interior will be similar, including the preservation of the iron shelf below the window, which can be remounted with supports to prevent it from further affecting the brickwork. A dust-containment shelter will be put in place, enclosing part of the stairway and the entire window. It would be possible to continue tours inside the lighthouse while this structure is in place. Dan estimated the project would take 4 months to complete.

The mortar testing phase of the proposal doesn't have to be completed before work can begin on the openings but needs to be completed before overall stabilization work begins on the tower.

Bruce and Rob Down discussed the proposed subsurface geotechnical testing, which will need to be coordinated with a BLM archeologist on site. BLM will submit a proposal on the necessary work to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Zach Day recommended framing the proposal of the surface testing as a way to avoid more invasive subsurface testing if possible; he also recommended all proposals to SHPO emphasize the importance of the work as necessary to the preservation of the deteriorating tower. SHPO is also concerned with preserving the historic context and feel of the tower and its surroundings.

In preparation for the stabilization work described in Bruce's "Preliminary Retrofit Evaluation, Lighthouse tower Piedras Blancas Light Station Tower Report", he recommended digging down at the base of the tower to ascertain the true depth of the foundation, as there some deviations from the original blueprints at the base of the tower.

There was further discussion about creating an access point to the level of the tower on the northeast side by moving some of the surface soil down to create a ramp. The alternative is installing a temporary deadman and a winch to move materials and equipment. The topsoil surrounding the lighthouse is post-construction, and a plan to remove it was part of the original BLM plan for the light station; SHPO approval will be necessary for this step as well.

Next steps include getting BLM approval and submitting a proposal that BLM will pass on to SHPO regarding the work to be done on the window and the geotechnical testing. Response time from SHPO is estimated at 1 – 4 months. The PBLSA board also needs to approve the funding for the project.

Notes taken by Cressant Swarts

Appendix 6: Summary of Underground Utilities Project 2/23/22 – Jim Harris

The status of this project remains the same as last time: the under-grounding of the PG&E electrical supply lines project remains on hold. Based upon their site visit in January, Connected Energy is revising their white paper design of a sustainable option to allow electric power for the light station to be provided with or without grid input using a microgrid system with solar and motor generator input and battery storage. It is proposed that Connected Energy present the white paper and give a presentation to the Board as soon as the Board is meeting in person again, hopefully in the next few months.

Appendix 7: Capital Campaign/Grants Report 2/23/22 – Jim Harris/Harry Thorpe

The PBLSA subscribes to the Instrumentl website on an annual basis to support finding funding opportunities for supporting the restoration of the light station. It is recommended to continue the service for 2022 and then review. With the planned initiation of the tower work and possible initiation of the restoration of the two Victorian structures, it is recommended that the PBLSA use Instrumentl to prepare proposals to support the work for the tower and for the restoration of the Victorians (including their possible use as the future home for the Fresnel Lens).

Appendix 8: Victorian Keepers Cottages Workgroup Report 2/23/22 – David Cooper

The workgroup met on February 21, 2022. We discussed preliminary questions about the PBLSA Board's interest and capability for planning and pursuing reconstruction of the historic Victorian Keepers Cottages. Is our board, as presently constituted, equipped and willing to manage a project of this scale and scope? Will our other current projects spread us too thin to handle this project? To what extent can we count on BLM to partner with us? Are we financially prepared and able to follow through? What roadblocks and challenges lie in the way? How do we meet and overcome them? How do we proceed?

We decided to draft a case statement to share with the rest of the board. The workgroup members will conduct necessary research and draft sections of the statement. We will reconvene on April 18th.