

Piedras Blancas Light Station Association Minutes

Zoom Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

July 27, 2022

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

Absent: Jodie Nelson (BLM), John Hodge (BLM)

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

In Old Business item 2. Nomination of New Board Member, etc., note that a memo was previously distributed to the board via email. The agenda was approved by consensus with this addition.

Reports:

1. Secretary's Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 1. The minutes of the June 22, 2022, meeting was approved by consensus.
2. Financial Status and Treasurer's Report (Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 2. The gift shop has been doing well, though there was a small overall loss due to the six-month depreciation and slightly higher printing costs for the Beacon. The fluctuating market has had significant impact on the PBLSA's investments, though there has been some recovery.
3. Gift Shop Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 3. Net sales for the gift shop continue to be significantly higher than the same month in the previous year, as is the biannual total. The percentage profit, however, dropped from 37% in May to 31% in June. Harry explained that the historical average is around 34-35%. Cressant has identified more items where the prices can be increased to offset rising costs from vendors. The hike-in event earlier in the day resulted in \$840 net sales and \$300 in donations in the gift shop.
4. BLM Update (Ryan Cooper) – See Appendix 4. Ryan deferred to David's report on the lens; BLM is participating in meetings as an observer only.

Bids for the work on the parking lot are due on August 3. Funding for the restroom project will be requested in the new FY starting in October. Two contractors have bid on lighting for the Fog Signal Building; John Brass suggested another electrician, who Ryan will contact. When final proposals are received, the board will vote via email to approve funding.

There were an estimated 150 participants in the hike-in earlier today; attendees reported they heard about the event from many different marketing angles. A volunteer summit/end of summer celebration is scheduled for Wednesday, September 14; David will prepare a short presentation to update volunteers on the board's activities.

There have been good numbers for tours. Ryan expressed his thanks to the volunteers who have dedicated their time and energy to tours this summer, especially those who have committed extra days. Jodie's detail has been extended for 30 days; she is scheduled to return to the light station in early September. Katelyn has been a great help, and BLM employees from the Bakersfield office have also been assisting, especially for today's hike-in. Advertising

for the permanent ranger position has closed, and Ryan expects to see the list of candidates next month.

5. Tower Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 5. The proposal for the geotechnical work on the tower by Bruce Elster of Shoreline and Judd King of Yeh should be received soon; the board may hold an electronic vote if the proposal is received between meetings. The next step would be to submit the proposal to BLM; the original Shoreline proposal included the geotechnical testing, and this proposal will supply the necessary details and estimates. Bruce and Dan have suspended work on their proposal for the tower top restoration due to their work on the lens enclosure.
6. Underground Utilities Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 6. No change to the status of the project.
7. Capital Campaign/Grants Report (Jim Harris/Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 7. David Cooper applied for and received a \$5,000 grant on behalf of PBLSA from SLO County for part of the cost of Bruce and Dan's work to determine the condition and necessary repairs for the lens enclosure.
8. Membership Committee Report (Harry Thorpe/Sharon Flaherty). No report.
9. Victorian Keepers Cottages Workgroup Report (David Cooper). No report.

Old Business:

1. Fresnel Lens Update (David Cooper) – See Appendix 8. David and Scot Addis met with Bruce Elster of Shoreline and Dan Murphy of Wellsona regarding their work to determine the cost and feasibility of repairing the lens enclosure. David forwarded the proposal to the board, which voted via email to pay \$10,200 for their services. David applied and received a grant from SLO County through Supervisor Gibson's office for \$5,000; the paperwork is in progress. Bruce and Dan proposed two alternatives; the stakeholder's group will consider the options and submit their preferences to Supervisor Gibson's assistant; on reaching a consensus, a cost estimate will be prepared. There was discussion on the role of the Coast Guard and how the PBLSA can contribute toward the preservation of the lens within the limited scope of its charter to support BLM.
2. Nomination of New Board Member, the Nominating Committee (Gary O'Neill/Sharon Flaherty) – Gary O'Neill made a motion to nominate Scot Addis to be considered and voted on as a board member. Sharon Flaherty seconded. The board discussed the information received by the nominating committee. Scot Addis is a member of the stakeholder group working on the preservation of the lens; he is involved in the Lions and the Pinedorado Foundation, as well as Friends of the Elephant Seal. David Cooper called for a vote; the board voted unanimously to approve Scot Addis as a new board member.

There was additional discussion on refining the procedures to nominate new board members. Jim suggested circulating the potential new member's letter of intent for the board's review before the meeting when the vote will take place.

New Business:

1. Boundary Fence Update (Gary O'Neill) – Gary summarized the history of the boundary fence from its construction in 1876 to its replacement by barbed wire in 1950. There were plans in 2015 to restore the appearance of the original fence, but funding fell through.

Gary has received two bids from companies that install vinyl fencing, which could be put into the same holes as the existing fence and provide a good visual facsimile for a lower cost than the materials used for the original fence. Bids ranged from \$37-45k for a vinyl fence 5 boards high with 8-foot posts that would be sunk 3 feet into the ground; the appearance would match that of the white entry gate. There was discussion on the estimated 10-year lifespan of the vinyl fencing, and other potential materials, including galvanized rather than steel pipes or a composite material rather than vinyl. Gary also suggested the possibility of only installing the vinyl fence where it is visible from the road and the Boucher Trail, which would cost an estimated \$12.5k. Gary and Ryan will continue to investigate options and report back to the board with a recommendation.

2. Fall fundraiser with Harmony Cellars (Cressant Swarts) – Cressant has been working with Erin Martin of Harmony Cellars to organize another Dinner and Libations for the Station fundraiser this fall. It will be on Saturday, October 1, from 4 – 6:30 p.m. Harmony has contracted for the menu, music, and a potential beer donation. They will have staff to do the pouring at the event, while the light station will handle setup and the silent auction. The two previous events with Harmony each resulted in approximately \$5,000 for the light station. Donations for the silent auction are welcome, as is assistance connecting us to potential donors. Please let Cressant or Ryan know if you have any suggestions.

Discussion Items: No discussion.

David Cooper adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Cressant Swarts.

Minutes checked by David Cooper (Chair) and Sharon Flaherty (Secretary) on August 20, 2022.

Appendix 1: Secretary's Report 7/27/22 – Cressant Swarts

Piedras Blancas Light Station Association Minutes

Meeting at 10:00 a.m. at Piedras Blancas Light Station

June 22, 2022

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

Absent: Jodie Nelson (BLM), John Hodge (BLM)

Ryan Cooper began the planning portion of the meeting at 10:02 a.m. See Old Business for a summary.

David Cooper called the board meeting to order at 11:22 a.m.

The agenda was approved by consensus.

Reports:

1. Secretary's Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 1. The minutes of the May 25, 2022, meeting was approved by consensus.
2. Financial Status and Treasurer's Report (Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 2. The report shows a profit for the year to date.
3. Gift Shop Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 3. Sales for May were higher than any previous summer. Overall profit of 37%.
4. BLM Update (Ryan Cooper) – See Appendix 4. Tours are now five days per week. Katelyn Owings has started as summer help. We will also be getting occasional help from Ben, a BLM Bakersfield park ranger, and Jonathan, a BLM employee who has helped previously. The permanent park ranger position for the light station will be advertised in the next week or so. The parking lot plan has narrowed in scope; it will be cleaned up and the edges delineated, but there will be no parking lines. It will allow for parking for four rows of cars and the surface will be chip-sealed; the archeological survey disallowed asphalt or expanding the current footprint. Ryan and Harry are continuing to work on the lighting for the Fog Signal Building. Ryan has spoken to the BLM engineers on the progress of the tower restoration project. Funding from the Great America Outdoors Act for this year has not been announced; more progress on the approval process for the tower work will improve our chances to secure funding. Ryan will continue to communicate with the engineers and try to arrange a meeting with Bruce, the engineers, and the archaeologist. Hike-in events will be on July 27 and August 31 and will include kids' activities. Ryan asked for suggestions on special themed tours that could be offered once Jodie returns from her detail.
5. Tower Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 5. Jim and Bruce had an on-site visit with a representative of Yeh and Associates, Inc., as a potential replacement for Earth Systems, who have not responded to requests for a proposal. Jim anticipates a proposal from Yeh within a couple of weeks. Dan and Bruce will submit an unsolicited proposal for the design of the top three floors, consulting with ARG for design review. Jim distributed copies of a draft proposal

from Bruce and Dan. Their draft proposal consists of three phases, which could be funded individually. The cost of work will be included in a revised proposal for the next meeting.

6. Underground Utilities Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 6. Progress is waiting on an agreement between California State Parks and BLM regarding the access road to the light station. The microgrid itself is not on the project priority list; Jim suggested considering it independent of the undergrounding aspect.
7. Capital Campaign/Grants Report (Jim Harris/Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 7. The board discussed the best methods to take advantage of grant opportunities. Cressant will contact interested board members and schedule a time to meet and discuss Instrumentl and potential grants.
8. Membership Committee Report (Harry Thorpe/Sharon Flaherty) – No report.
9. Victorian Keepers Cottages Workgroup Report (David Cooper) – No report.

Old Business:

1. Project Priorities Revisited (Harry Thorpe and Ryan Cooper) – See Appendix 8. Ryan reported that the last project planning meeting took place in early 2020. Ryan has the results of that prior planning meeting, where the board was asked to rank a list of the top five priorities. Scoring was based on visual elements, public interest/benefit, cost, and economic benefit. Sharon suggested establishing criteria to determine priorities: significant risk of irreparable damage, historical significance, environmental impact, and respect for the land and its inhabitants.

The ranking from the previous meeting was as follows: native plants garden; painting the tower; moving the flagpole to its historic location; making changes to the trail; updating the interpretive materials; the lens; building restrooms; replicating the Victorian keepers' houses; reconstructing the blacksmith, fuel storage, and barn buildings; creating a replica of the top three floors of the tower; restoring the tower; undergrounding the power lines; adding water collection; and stabilizing the tower, which was at the bottom of the list due to its cost and complexity.

David commented that most of these projects are in progress in some way, though some are very complex and will take a long time. BLM engineers are reviewing the proposal to replace the windows on the tower; the lens is moving forward, though it is involving more people than anticipated; the restroom and parking lot projects are progressing; work has been done on the interpretive materials, including finalizing the film in the watch room, creating a new brochure, and reconfiguring the tour format due to the pandemic.

Harry suggested showing regular progress by completing a smaller project every six months; it would be good for public perception and for grant applications. The Fog Signal Building can be completed soon, and the perimeter fence would be a relatively easy project to complete.

There was additional discussion on the perimeter fence. A white vinyl fence could be installed with minimal impact by replacing the existing t-posts. It could be done by a contractor or as a group volunteer project. The board agreed that the fence is a good short-term priority. Gary agreed to be the lead board member.

The group continued to discuss other potential short-term projects, such as a native plant garden and adding a retaining wall and finishing the trail off-shoot started by the California Conservation Corps.

There was discussion on whether painting the tower should wait until the window restoration and other stabilization work is completed; it was agreed that it would be best to proceed and touch-up painting as necessary when the windows are completed.

The board agreed to prioritize the completion of the Fog Signal lighting and the replacement of the perimeter fencing for the next six months. Short-term projects that will be considered next include moving the flagpole, the completion of the parking lot, and building the restrooms. The board will hold another planning meeting in approximately six months to decide new priorities.

2. Fresnel Lens Update (David Cooper) – David gave an update on the efforts by the stakeholders interested in preserving the lens. Bruce and Dan are working on determining whether the existing enclosure can be repaired. The Coast Guard is working with lampist Jim Woodward to see what needs to be done to preserve the lens in the short-term. The intention is to have a temporary solution in place by September. With board approval, the association would pay for Bruce and Dan's assessment and plan for the enclosure; there will be public fundraising to pay for the work to repair the enclosure. Once these immediate concerns are addressed, the stakeholders' group will continue to plan for creating a museum-quality structure to house the lens.

New Business:

1. Proposed addition of new board members (David Cooper) – In April 2019, the board established a standing nominating committee, which developed a standard practice for recruiting new board members. David distributed a procedure to the group. (See Appendix 9). The board currently has six members, but the ideal number would be nine. David charged all current board members with identifying one or two possible candidates, considering a need for diversity. David asked Sharon and Gary to reconvene the nominating committee and review submissions from possible candidates. Sharon and Gary will discuss reconvening the nominating committee and contact David with their results and thoughts on the process to officially reconvene the committee. Once the committee is reconvened, board members can submit candidates to the nominating committee.

Discussion Items:

The board briefly discussed continuing to use Zoom for meetings unless it is necessary to meet face to face.

David Cooper adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Cressant Swarts.

Minutes checked by David Cooper (Chair) and Sharon Flaherty (Secretary) on July 26, 2022.

Appendix 2: Treasurer's Report 7/27/22 – Harry Thorpe

TREASURER'S REPORT for June 2022

1. OPERATIONS INCOME:	Last Month: \$7,927.00	YTD: \$38,084.10
PROFIT:	Last Month: <\$1,064.13>*	YTD: \$2,187.52
MECHANICS BANK OPERATIONS:	\$7,190.04	
TARGETED DONATION FUND BALANCE:	\$13,660.03	
BLM SUPPORT EXPENSE:	Last Month: none	YTD: \$1,440.68
BALANCES:	P.P. Bank: \$999.00	ASAP: \$18,465.00

* Amort/Deprec: \$833.50, Beacon: \$616.61

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>
June 2022	660,771.95	<41,068.41>	5,455.40	--	--	625,158.94
May 2022	652,743.78	7,151.18	876.99	--	--	660,771.95
Apr 2022	681,678.56	<29,825.79>	891.01	--	--	652,743.78

3. OTHER:

- Reviewed transactions for May/June. Made minor adjustments.
- Met with CPA to review tax documents.

Harry M. Thorpe, Jr.
Treasurer

Appendix 3: Gift Shop Report 7/27/22 – Cressant Swarts

Monthly net sales continue to increase significantly over previous years. The biannual total is also much higher. The June profit, however, is slightly lower than in May (\$2,385.73), and the profit percentage is significantly lower than in May (37%). This is only partly explained by the addition of quarterly inventory shortages (\$181.35) to the Cost of Goods Sold. It will be necessary to continue raising gift shop prices to offset increased costs from vendors.

June Gift Shop Revenue

On-site sales	\$7,518.48
Website sales	\$74.61
Total	\$7,593.09

June Gift Shop Profit

Cost of Goods Sold*	\$4,723.37
Profit	\$2,345.98
Percentage	31%

**includes cost, scrap, inventory shortages, taxes, and shipping for website sales*

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	3,290	4,410	4,404	6,384	7,593						

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

Yearly Net Sales 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	\$28,717	

Appendix 4: BLM Update 7/27/22 – Ryan Cooper

Lens

The Committee looking at the lens has met twice. BLM is more in the background right now. David and Harry will have more insight than me. After the last meeting, all parties were going to review the new report from Shoreline and recommend one of two options for temp repair of the building.

Parking Lot Redesign / Restrooms

Bids are due Aug 3, 2022, for the parking lot.

FSB Lighting

We have bids from two contractors. And a bid for the supplies.

Tower

No Updates from BLM

Priority Project Meeting

I think we were all there. We had a productive meeting. It seems like not much had changed since our last meeting. Our priority is to keep picking at the low hanging fruit while continuing the behind-the-scenes bigger projects.

Hike In Tours

Hike in tour is the day of the board meeting. I hope it went well.

Special Event:

Hike-in Tours

July 27th and August 31st

Volunteer Summit

Sept 14

Tour Numbers

Month	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
October	637	605	516	500	506	441	535	22	552
November	622	503	474	357	523	433	334	56	350
December	404	464	426	273	829	251	518	0	208
January	661	731	623	266	608	0	715	0	300
February	573	570	572	284	780	318	578	108	
March	696	754	560	502	662	784	185	160	
April	663	616	581	666	684	790	0	399	
May	432	629	352	572	362	555	0	446	452
June	658	916	521	787	732	698	0	643	661
July	1178	990	850	1125	1169	1085	0	972	600*
August	985	809	693	836	1001	819	0	834	
September	601	481	442	437	591	374	0	547	
Total	8110	8068	6610	6605	8447	6548	2865	4166	

*partial

Appendix 5: Summary of Tower Top Project 7/27/22 – Jim Harris

The proposal for the geotechnical task for the tower by Bruce Elster of Shoreline Engineering and Judd King of Yeh is nearing completion and should be ready for the Board's review at the August meeting. The proposal for the tower top restoration being prepared by Bruce Elster of Shoreline Engineering and Dan Murphy of Wellsona has been deferred due to their work for the rehabilitation planning for the Lens enclosure in Cambria.

Appendix 6: Summary of Underground Utilities Project 7/27/22 – 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 until the BLM and California State Parks come to a formal understanding of the access road to the light station along with other considerations. Connected Energy has prepared a revised version of their white paper and is willing to give a presentation to the Board as soon as the Board is meeting in person again, hopefully in the next few months. Their white paper is a proposed 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.

Appendix 7: Capital Campaign/Grants Report 7/27/22 – Jim Harris/Harry Thorpe

Effort has focused on the Lens project with David getting a SLO county grant to support the rehabilitation planning for the lens enclosure in Cambria. Associated with the Board meeting in June, there was a project priority session led by Ryan Cooper with a resulting list of projects and priorities developed.

Appendix 8: Fresnel Lens Update 7/27/22 – David Cooper

On 6/23/22, Shoreline/Wellsona submitted a proposal, scope of services, and fee schedule (\$10.2K) for on-site inspection of the lens enclosure on Main St., Cambria, including repair design concepts and construction plans. The PBLSA Board approved David's electronic motion to fund the proposal on 6/24/22. David applied for a SLO Community Project Grant (\$5K) to help offset the cost. Shoreline/Wellsona conducted on-site testing of the enclosure (6/30/22). Shoreline submitted a Preliminary Engineer's Report with two approaches for enclosure stabilization and repair. The stakeholder group met at the SLO County Board of Supervisors offices, 7/18/22, to discuss the report. The Group will vote before 7/27/22 on which approach to recommend for Shoreline's final engineering report.