

Piedras Blancas Light Station Association Minutes

Zoom Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

September 22, 2021

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

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

David Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

The agenda was approved by consensus.

Reports:

1. Secretary's Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 1. The minutes of the August 25, 2021, board meeting were accepted by consensus. All previous board minutes are now updated on the website.
2. Financial Status and Treasurer's Report (Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 2. The Association continues to show a loss for September and the year to date, but this is not substantial or unexpected. The Association has been reimbursed by BLM for the expenses incurred for the Fog Signal Building; the reimbursements for the original lens evaluation by Bruce Elster have been submitted and are still pending. The next evaluation by Dan Murphy will not be submitted until after the start of BLM's new fiscal year in October. There was discussion on whether BLM would pay for further lens expenses; however, more extensive work has not been approved and would require a new submission process. The quarterly report schedule will not be reevaluated until after the annual report has been submitted to BLM at the end of September.
3. Gift Shop Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 3. Cressant reported that nearly everything has been restocked in the gift shop with the exception of a few small things.

There was a brief discussion about the light station webcam linked on the website. The cameras were replaced in September by Surflife at no charge. Board members were asked for suggestions on adjusting the webcam views to better show the light station.

4. BLM Update (Ryan Cooper) – See Appendix 4. Ryan reported that tours are still full despite the reduced schedule; there are also special tours and school groups scheduled. The Coast Guard meeting regarding the lens will not take place until October; Ryan thanked those who have gathered information in preparation for this meeting. Ryan is working with BLM engineers and biologists on the environmental requirements for the parking lot improvements and restroom installation; the goal for completion is the middle of next year. Ryan and Harry met with Chad from Acropolis Lighting regarding lighting for the Fog Signal Building; he suggested using unobtrusive strip lighting on the I-beams, which would minimize damage to the ceiling or beams from hanging lights. Other options for decorative historic lighting fixtures were also discussed, as well as the possibility of lighting in the parking lot. Zale will donate a vacuum to keep in the Fog Signal Building. National Public Lands Day events, scheduled for September 25, are cancelled due to new Department of the Interior regulations regarding events with over 50 people; a replacement event may be

scheduled in the future. This regulation also limits tour numbers to 50 people and may affect how school groups are handled. There was discussion on how to incorporate new engineering documents into the Great American Outdoors Act proposal; Ryan said nothing new can be added, as the decision has likely already been made but not announced. Ryan will ask when that decision will be announced. David will follow up with Representative Carbajal's office.

5. Tower Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 5. Jim has seen the draft of the design document prepared by Bruce Elster, which addresses the structural reinforcement of the tower. The board will meet with Bruce at Shoreline Engineering in Morro Bay on October 13 at 10 a.m. to hear his presentation and ask questions. Jim will pass on Bruce's executive summary to the board before the meeting. Harry asked about billing from Bruce; Jim said to expect approximately \$60,000.
6. Underground Utilities Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 6. The white paper presentation by Connected Energy will be deferred until November; Jim was asked to propose dates in November to meet with Connected Energy and Brian French at the light station.
7. Capital Campaign/Grants Report (Jim Harris/Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 7. Jim has contacted the Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce and the Coalition of Central Coast Chambers to arrange meetings. See the report in the Appendix 7 regarding his meeting with the Atascadero Chamber of Commerce. Harry requested that Jim suggest follow-up actions to be taken to maintain the contacts Jim has made; new information regarding the light station should be communicated regularly. David suggested inviting all the chamber presidents to a catered luncheon at the light station once all contacts have been made. Cressant is contacting the rack card company to get more information.
8. Membership Committee Report (Harry Thorpe/Sharon Flaherty) – No report.

Old Business:

1. Project Priorities Revisited – last addressed in November 2019 (Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 8. It was suggested a meeting at the light station be held in early November to discuss the project priorities document, with the benefit of new information received at the October meeting with Bruce Elster. Harry will work with Ryan to set up a date. Zale suggested there should be an annual strategic planning process.
2. Recognition for Holly Gant (David Cooper) – See Appendix 9. The board approved the proposed resolution commending Holly for her service. David will sign the resolution, which will be sent to Holly with a special framed watercolor. David and Cressant will work on an article in the next Beacon regarding Holly's service. Bricks will also be ordered for the pathway in Holly's honor; the board is welcome to submit suggestions for wording.

New Business:

No new business.

Discussion Items:

No discussion items.

David Cooper adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Cressant Swarts.

Minutes checked by David Cooper (Chair) and Sharon Flaherty (Secretary) on 9/30/2021.

Appendix 1: Secretary's Report 9/22/21 – Cressant Swarts

Piedras Blancas Light Station Association Minutes

Zoom Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
August 25, 2021

Present: David Cooper (Chair), Harry Thorpe (Treasurer), Jim Harris, Gary O'Neill, Ryan Cooper (BLM), Cressant Swarts (Gift Shop Manager)

Absent: Sharon Flaherty (Secretary), Zale Schuster, John Brass, John Hodges (BLM), Jodie Nelson (BLM)

David Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. He thanked Carole Addams and Cressant for the latest issue of the Beacon newsletter. Cressant will be handling the agenda and minutes for the board meetings from now on; David thanked Jim and Harry for their work organizing board meetings in recent months.

Approval of the Agenda

An addition was made to the agenda under Discussion Items to briefly discuss how to conduct board meetings in the future. The agenda with this addition was accepted by consensus.

Reports:

1. Secretary's Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 1. The minutes of the July 28, 2021, board meeting were accepted by consensus. Cressant is in the process of uploading past months' minutes to the website.
2. Financial Status and Treasurer's Report (Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 2, including the revised version of the June Treasurer's Report. In July, the Association saw a profit for the first time in a long time, despite extra payroll expenditures. There is still a loss shown for the year to date, but this is not substantial or unexpected. The BLM audit is complete, with the annual report due on September 30, at which point the quarterly report schedule can be reevaluated. Investments are performing well and will be improved by the addition of \$40,000 from the operating fund, which was approved by board consensus via email. Harry reminded the board that as much as possible of the BLM Co-Op agreement funds needs to be spent before 9/1/22 when the funds will be lost. Ryan will investigate whether the costs of the off-site lens enclosure can be paid with these funds.
3. Gift Shop Report (Cressant Swarts) – See Appendix 3. Gift Shop sales for May, June, and July have been the highest ever due to the changed tour format. A new chart was added showing the breakdown of revenue between the website sales and on-site sales. Suggestions were made to promote website gift shop sales. Cressant thanked volunteers Patti, Kerry, and new volunteer Azul for their help in the gift shop.
4. BLM Update (Ryan Cooper) – See Appendix 4. Ryan expressed thanks to the volunteers, especially those who have been consistent. Tour numbers are slowing down, and the schedule will return to three days per week after Labor Day. More school groups, in addition to the usual fourth grade groups, have expressed interest in visiting the light station, as well as homeschool groups and tour groups; the first tour will be at

the end of September. Ryan and Jodie have been working on revising the usual school group activities to be more socially distant. Ryan thanked David for being present at the visit by Representative Carbajal. The meeting to discuss options regarding the lens enclosure will be in mid-September. David reminded the board to keep the community in mind when considering options for storage or display of the lens. Ryan has been working with the BLM field office to complete the environmental work for the parking lot restroom; he hopes to see positive movement in November and the restroom complete early next year. Ryan will be contacting a lighting expert to continue work on the Fog Signal Building lights. National Public Lands Day is on September 25; BLM will be hosting activities in conjunction with State Parks and the Discovery Center, including hike-in tours. It was suggested that this would be a good day to use the underwater drone. Jesse has been working to finish the film he started last year; it will be 13-14 minutes long and could be used as an introduction or shown in the watch room as a supplement to tours.

5. Tower Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 5. Jim met with Bruce Elster on August 5 regarding the draft design document. Jim encouraged the board to consider an in-person meeting in September to see Bruce's presentation of the completed document. There was discussion on the possibility of including funding for the tower project in the submission for the Great American Outdoor Act. Ryan will find out if it's possible to get the design document attached to the initial proposal; it will also have to be approved by state engineers.
6. Underground Utilities Report (Jim Harris) – See Appendix 6. The white paper from Connected Energy will be available to the board in September, with a meeting to follow in October.
7. Capital Campaign/Grants Report (Jim Harris/Harry Thorpe) – See Appendix 7. Jim met with members of the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce, who are willing to include our information in their mailings. Harry complimented Jim for moving forward, even though Harry has been too busy to help. Harry also emphasized the importance of following up on the contacts Jim has made. Jim said the board will need to decide if it's best to wait on promotions until tour numbers can be increased. Jim will next visit the Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce. Jim will forward information on the company who provides information racks in the local area to Cressant, who will investigate the options.

Old Business:

1. Fresnel Lens Update (Zale Schuster) – See Appendix 8 and discussion above in BLM report. Zale was absent, but he forwarded his correspondence with Jim Woodward to the board (Appendix 8).
2. Recognition for Holly Gant (David Cooper) – David will draft a resolution by the September meeting. Cressant will find a frame shop to get an engraved matte for a print of the watercolor that Holly commissioned.

New Business:

None

Discussion Items:

1. Brief discussion on whether the board should continue to conduct meetings via Zoom or go back to in-person meetings. Several board members shared examples of other

organizations who have adopted a hybrid method, with some participants using Zoom for monthly meetings and holding quarterly or yearly in-person meetings. Some organizations have been meeting outside. It is not known if the board room at Mechanics Bank is currently available; Zale has the contact information. Ryan said there are no restrictions on meeting at the light station except the current mandate to wear masks in all federal facilities. Jim reminded the board that it would be best to hold the meeting with Bruce Elster in person; he will talk to David about setting a meeting date when Bruce is ready to present. David will check the by-laws to see if there are any restrictions on meeting format. The board will continue to hold meetings via Zoom and will continue to discuss options.

David Cooper adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Cressant Swarts.

Minutes checked by David Cooper (Chair) and Sharon Flaherty (Secretary) on 8/31/21.

Appendix 2: Treasurer's Report 9/22/21 – Harry Thorpe

TREASURER'S REPORT for August 2021

1. OPERATIONS INCOME: Last Month: \$8,730.20 YTD: \$43,105.15
PROFIT: Last Month: <\$551.81>* YTD: <\$5,604.62>**

TOWER RESTORATION FUND BALANCE: \$12,662.03

BLM SUPPORT EXPENSE: Last Month: \$31,832.46*** YTD: \$31,832.46
BALANCES: P.P. Bank: \$2,439.68 ASAP: \$24,375.86

* Payroll: \$3,803.60, excludes BLM restoration

** Payroll: \$16,855.01, excludes BLM restoration

***FSB: \$31,348.00

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>
Aug 2021	582,804.03	4,747.73	736.68	40,000	--	628,288.44
July 2021	578,900.20	3,235.49	668.34	--	--	582,804.03
June 2021	572,188.25	5,961.23	750.72	--	--	578,900.20

3. OTHER:

- Reviewed transactions for July/August. Posted adjustments.
- Reimbursed PBLSA for FSB expense from ASAP funds.
- Transferred \$40,000 to Fidelity Reserve account.
- Submitted SF 270-10 to BLM for 11/20 lens report – request was approved.
- Completed Workman's Compensation audit.
- Paid Wellsona Engineering invoice (\$1,500) for lens enclosure repair estimate/proposal.

Harry M. Thorpe, Jr.
Treasurer

Attachment 3: Gift Shop Report 9/22/21 – Cressant Swarts

August Gift Shop Revenue

On-site sales	\$7,555.76
Website sales	\$32.34
Total	\$7,588.10

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 and memberships.

	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				

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	

Appendix 4: BLM Update 9/22/21 – Ryan Cooper

Tour Status

We are on 3 day a week tours now, but tours are still full.

Future Projects

Lens

The meeting with the Coast Guard has been pushed until October due to Coast Guard schedule. Thank you to those who put together information for this future meeting.

Coast Guard Roofs

Complete

Parking Lot Redesign / Restrooms

My goal is to get this completed early next fiscal year.

FSB Lighting

Harry and I met with Chad from Acropolis Lighting. He had some cool ideas and will be sending us some design ideas hopefully before our meeting.

Special Events:

National Public Lands Day

-Cancelled due to federal policy on events over 50 people.

2021/2022 School tours

-First classroom presentation went well last Friday. They come to the LH for a field trip Friday, September 24th

Tour Numbers

Vol Hours since April 20th: 2364 Hours

Month	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
October	637	605	516	500	506	441	535	22
November	622	503	474	357	523	433	334	56
December	404	464	426	273	829	251	518	0
January	661	731	623	266	608	0	715	0
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
June	658	916	521	787	732	698	0	643
July	1178	990	850	1125	1169	1085	0	972
August	985	809	693	836	1001	819	0	834
September	601	481	442	437	591	374	0	286*
Total	8110	8068	6610	6605	8447	6548	2865	3926

*partial

Appendix 5: Summary of Tower Top Project 9/22/21 – Jim Harris

Bruce Elster provided me a copy of his draft design document, and we have discussed my comments. Based upon the direction of David Cooper, the plan is for the PBLSA Board to meet at Shoreline Engineering in Morro Bay before the October meeting to discuss the document with Bruce in person; it is expected that the Board will endorse this plan. Bruce will be available for the Shoreline meeting between October 5 and 21, which will be prior to the October board meeting.

Bruce stated that the document should be available then for review by the Board, and to start the external review process. Dan Murphy will review the completed design draft prior to its final completion to provide the construction cost estimates.

Appendix 6: Summary of Underground Utilities Project 9/22/21 – Jim Harris

The status of this project remains the same as last time. The undergrounding of the PG&E electrical supply lines project remains on hold. Based upon the discussion at the June Board meeting, the planned meeting with Maxwell Muscarella and Sean Cassidy of Connected Energy along with Brian French will occur in the October timeframe. They will present their work on the 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. In preparation for that meeting with Connected Energy, their white paper will be sent out via email after the September meeting to the PBLSA board members, including Ryan and John.

Appendix 7: Capital Campaign/Grants Report 9/22/21 – Jim Harris/Harry Thorpe

Work continues on the project to meet with 11 chambers of commerce in the San Luis Obispo County to inform their members of the restoration progress at the light station. Jim met with Josh Cross, CEO/President of the Atascadero Chamber of Commerce on the afternoon of August 24; the contact report is provided below. Requests for meetings have been submitted to the Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce and the Coalition of Central Coast Chambers; meetings will be scheduled upon their response. While Harry and Jim have committed to meet with the chambers, they are willing to share with others who wish to participate in the project.

Contact Report with Atascadero Chamber of Commerce

Josh Cross, CEO/President

Tuesday, August 24, 2021, 3:00-3:20 p.m.

By Jim Harris

I made an appointment with Josh Cross to meet at his office at 6907 El Camino Real Suite A in Atascadero. I presented to him the bag of material prepared by the PBLSA. Before my visit I had sent the letter of transmittal from David Cooper to Josh, and so we went over each item in the bag, including the model of the light station tower. I also mentioned the fourth grade class visitations and some of the special events that the light station has hosted. Emphasis was on the fact that we are in the process of restoring the light station, and our purpose for the meeting was to introduce ourselves and explore areas of mutual interest in the tourism industry. He said that while he was familiar with the San Luis Lighthouse that he really didn't know much about Piedras Blancas. He said that he was also a Cub Scout master and we agreed that it would be good for the boys to visit the light

station. I mentioned the Wednesday hike-ins, and suggested he look on the website for more information. Josh said that they would be willing to include our tour cards in their rack. It was noted that the display rack was maintained by a company for a fee, but he could display the cards in another location.

Appendix 8: Project Priorities Revisited 9/22/21 – Harry Thorpe

(see inserted pdf below)

Project Priority

Short term

Paint Tower

Put a coat of paint on the Lighthouse. It would include pressure washing and painting the tower.

Lens

This could include many different phases. Everything from repairing the enclosure in Cambria to moving the Lens back to the Light Station. This is all contingent on the Coast Guard loaning the Lens to BLM.

Flagpole

Moving the flagpole from its current location to its historic location to the south of the Lighthouse.

Update Interpretive Material

Another very broad category. This could include, but not be limited to: updating trail signs, adding new signs, flier updated, updating museum in gift shop and anything that is related to the interpretive information we distribute.

Restrooms

Replacing porta-potties with "real" restrooms.

Parking Lot

Reconfigure the parking lot so it is as efficient as possible.

Trail

Rerouting the trail to get a better look at the small cove and the wharf area. This could enhance the tour experience for visitors.

On Going

Stabilize Tower

Reinforce the tower itself so it will be stable for years to come.

Windows and Openings

Repair window openings to eliminate rust jacking and to stop damage that may be happening to the tower.

Replicate Top

Replicate the top 3 levels of the tower. This project would be the last of the tower projects and would bring the tower back to what it looked like in the early 1900s.

Victorian / Keepers Cottages

Replicate the Victorian Duplex along with the Head Keepers Cottage. The exteriors of these buildings will be exact replicas of the historic buildings, but the interiors will be reconfigured to best fit our needs. The interiors will include museum space, possible space for the lens, office space, meeting space and much more.

Native Garden

A garden that would focus on rare native plants and plants used by Native Americans.

Long Term

Barn

Reconstructing the Barn that was located on the north end of the property. This building could be used for storage and interpretation.

Power Lines

Bury the power lines from Highway 1 to the Light Station. This would improve the visual landscape as well as eliminate the interaction between birds and the power lines.

Fuel Storage Building

Replicating the Fuel Storage building that used to sit south of the light house. This could be used for storage or could be used as a shell for a restroom.

Blacksmith Shop

This would be a replica of the blacksmith shop that was on the south side of the property outlined by rope. This building could be used for storage or interpretation.

Appendix 9: Recognition for Holly Gant 9/22/21 – David Cooper

Piedras Blancas Light Station Board of Directors Resolution Commending Holly Gant for Her Exemplary Service to the PBLS

We, being directors of this corporation, consent and agree that the following resolution was made on September 22, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. PST.

WE DO HEREBY CONSENT TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING as it was approved during a regularly called meeting of the Board of Directors of this corporation. In accordance with State law and the bylaws of this corporation, by unanimous consent, the Board of Directors decided that:

WHEREAS Holly Gant served this corporation and the Piedras Blancas Light Station with diligence and distinction as Administrative and Project Associate for ten years;

WHEREAS Holly Gant, during her long tenure, used her knowledge, skills, and demonstrated dedication and love of public lands conservation in her exemplary service to the light station, a Unit of the California Coastal National Monument;

WHEREAS, Holly Gant provided outstanding administrative support, office management, and clerical support for the PBLSA Board of Directors;

WHEREAS Holly Gant managed and developed the PBLSA Gift Shop with consummate skills, including maintaining inventories, researching and ordering popular items, and conducting weekly and monthly accounting reconciliation and data entry;

WHEREAS Holly Gant maintained and grew the PBLSA membership database, assisted in volunteer coordination and development, and facilitated fundraising strategies as well as special events funding and grant support;

WHEREAS Holly Gant performed the important duties of recording secretary for PBLSA Board meetings; and

WHEREAS Holly Gant edited, produced, and distributed the quarterly newsletter *The Beacon*, and designed and maintained the PBLSA website, social media, and online presence.

THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that the Piedras Blancas Light Station Association Board of Directors commends Holly Gant for her outstanding legacy of service to this corporation.

The officers of this corporation are authorized to perform the acts to carry out this corporate resolution. The Chair of the Board of Directors signs on their behalf and certifies that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted at the dated meeting of the Board.

David Cooper, Chair PBLSA

David D. Cooper
Printed Name

Date

Harry Thorpe, Vice Chair and Treasurer
Sharon Flaherty, Secretary
Jim Harris
Gary O'Neill
Zale Schuster
John Brass
Ryan Cooper (BLM)