

Friends of Banner Mountain

Board Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2024, 2:00 pm

Attendees: Ed Sylvester, Susan Sanders, Chip Wilder, Mo Graber, Jeff Peach

Action items in **red**
Motions are **bolded**

1. President & Vice President Vision for 2024

- Susan suggested we set a goal of augmenting our board with at least 2 new members and completing the webpage revisions to better communicate with our members. Ed agreed.

2. Approval of FBM Minutes from January 17 Board Meeting

- The only correction was to add that Andrew Wilkinson was present at the last meeting.
- **Mo will revise the minutes from the January 17 meeting to reflect Andrew's participation at the January 17 meeting (done).**
- **With that correction, Chip made a motion to approve the minutes, Mo seconded, all approved.**

3. Treasurer's Report

- Chip reported FBM account totals: Checking \$2,489.82, Savings \$9,388.64, CD \$7,335.21.
- Chip suggested that since this CD term is ending soon, we should roll the \$7,335.21 to a new CD at 4.25%, 11-month term, and that we leave the savings of \$9388.63 to cover expenses associated with the website transition and possibly more chipping.
- **Mo moved that we transfer to the new 4.25% CD; Jeff seconded, all approved.**
- The group thanked Chip for his good work in managing the accounts.

4. Membership

- Jeff said that membership is now at 323, thanks to our earlier solicitation letter and direct mail rather than using the mailing service. This is getting close to our all-time membership high at one time of 340.
- The \$20 annual fee for FBM membership has not changed in many years.
- **Jeff moved that we raise the cost of annual membership from \$20 to \$25, Chip seconded, all approved.**

5. Communications

- Mo said we got several comments, including compliments, from members. Member Christine Nelson asked for more information about evacuation.
- Lots of interest in evacuation on Banner Lava Cap and that was the topic of the Nevada County Community Forum held at Sierra College's Grass Valley campus in August 2023 ([sierra college foundation nevada county evacuation forum](#)).
- Sarah Rohde (former secretary for FBM) requested Green Waste bins in front of her house and assistance filling them. Mo will let her know that there will be more free Green Waste bins available sometime this year, but that FBM could not help with filling them.
- Craig Griesbach, Nevada County's Director of Office of Emergency Services, is working on supplying free Green Waste bins; we will hear more about this by the end of the week. We will need more volunteers to assist monitoring when the bins become available (last year Mo and Jeff did most of the shifts).

6. Promotions

- Mo suggested some promotions that would raise FBM's profile in the community, including participating in the July 4th parade (\$50 to participate, it will be in Nevada City this year) and a Holiday Decorations contest on Banner Mountain.
- Everyone was enthusiastic about the Holiday Decoration contest. Mo will give this some more thought – we discussed prizes (gift certificates?) and a map to help find the winning decorated houses.

7. Revised Website

- Jeff reported that Quietech Associates Inc has revised the website; it is not yet live, still needs review and revisions. Jeff will send the link to the draft to other board members
- **Mo, Jeff and Susan will meet, review and provide feedback to Quietech** (done on 4/20 – still a work in progress).
- Webpage will move to GoDaddy; we will have to pay for each email (\$100 /email) and need to communicate that Jeff's old email will no longer be active. We will see if we can cancel Constant Contact if GoDaddy can supply emails.
- New communications email will be News@bannermountain.org. Mo will monitor and review these and send to appropriate person. All agreed we don't each need individual emails. We will also keep paypal@bannermountain.org.
- PayPal charges a 3% fee but we will put a message on the webpage suggesting the donors increase their donation slightly to cover the PayPal \$0.99 fee.
- **Once the FBM Website is finalized Mo will send an announcement to the Union, Yubanet, and KNCO.**

8. FireWise Report

- Jeff said that the Banner Mountain Firewise Steering Committee met to discuss plans for this year with a goal of recruiting more Neighborhood Captains.

- Bob Hannah, Ric Cameron, Ann Westling, Arnold Forman, Mo Graber, Jeff and Gale Peach conducted a field excursion to assess areas on Banner most in need of defensible space work. Identified problem areas (e.g., Lower Idaho Maryland and Tranquility Lane).
- Have not yet scheduled a Firewise Meeting, but Jeff will do so soon.

9. Buckeye Microgrant

- Mo applied for and won a \$3600 MicroGrant (Buckeye Road) from the Office of Emergency Services and Nevada County, one of 26 applications awarded a grant. Grant guidelines were for defensible space improvements on a private road in a Firewise Community.
- The funds will go to limbing up trees, removing ladder fuels, gravelling the road. Mo is working with volunteers in the neighborhood to implement the work.

10. Chipping Program –

- The group discussed whether to hire someone other than the Fire Safe Council of Nevada City (FSCNC) to conduct the chipping, and also discussed the controversy surrounding the FSC and the recent Grand Jury report on FSC mismanagement.
- When FBM was conducting the free chipping program last year the FSCNC was very challenging to coordinate with. We will not be able to use them this year given their current status. Ed noted that we must be very sensitive to maintaining FBM's independence from FSCNC and preserving our 501c3 status.
- The group agreed to wait before scheduling another free FBM chipping program this year.

11. Chuck's Memorial Plaque

- Susan showed the group Chuck's plaque which was produced by All-Seasons Awards.
- Jeff will coordinate with Susan for a date to install the plaque on the bench in the Bear Yuba Land Trust's Woodpecker Preserve.
- We will take photos during the installation and will publicize it locally with KNCO, YubaNet, and the Union.

12. Annual Meeting

- Susan reserved Seaman's Lodge on October 5 for the Annual Meeting. She will ask Supervisor Heidi Hall to give a 15-minute "state of the county" address at the meeting.
- Other possible speakers include Patrick Mason, Fire Marshal for Nevada County Consolidated, and CalFire – Mickey Chizek.
- Chip noted that we will need to recruit volunteers to work the morning of the annual meeting to set up tables, chairs etc.
- Jeff will ask Andrew if he is willing to serve as moderator at the meeting.
- Chip will send Susan a list of tasks, food and other items that were needed for past annual meetings (done).

13. Position Statements for Board Members, Neighborhood Leader

- Mo had circulated the draft Duty or Position Statements describing the responsibilities for each position and for the Neighborhood Leaders. These statements will provide useful information for recruiting new board members and Neighborhood Leaders. We still need a leader for Membership, Secretary, and the Adhoc #2 position.
- **Susan moved to approve the Duty Statements and Neighborhood Leader positions, Chip seconded, all approved.**
- Mo volunteered to lead the effort for member-only discounts with local merchants. Once the FBM website is ready for primetime we can start recruiting for new board members and Neighborhood Leaders.
- Mo suggested we create a Members Only list to ensure we can offer member-only benefits and reward members for joining.
- **Jeff will work on creating and maintaining a Members Only list. –**

14. Yuba Watershed/Little Deer Creek Update

- Mo said that Ann Westling is leading the Yuba Watershed/Little Deer Creek Update and is coordinating with Chris Freidel. They are waiting for confirmation on budget. FBM has been participating in this effort as one of their projects.

15. Adjournment - meeting closed at 3:36

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Sanders, Interim Secretary