

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

**Parks and Open Space Committee Meeting  
June 9, 2011**

FINAL MINUTES; accepted and approved July 14, 2011

ATTENDEES: Nona Dennis, Robert Eichstaedt, Jean Starkweather, David Schnapf, Susan Stompe, Tom Boss, Larry Minikes, Connie Berto, Nancy Praetzel, and Janice Barry. Greg Zitney and Dave Larsen, candidates for the Parks and Open Space Commission, also attended.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1) MCL Business-Environment Breakfast, June 10, 7:30-9:00 a.m., Embassy Suites, will feature Superintendents Frank Dean and Cicely Muldoon, of GGNRA and Pt. Reyes National Seashore; 2) Candidates for Parks and Open Space Commission have been reduced to a short list of 12 who will be interviewed by the Board of Directors (Supervisors); 3) Jared Huffman will hold an Oversight Hearing of the State Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee on State Park Closures, Friday 4:00 – 6:00p.m., Santa Rosa, at Spring Lakes Regional Park. Nona and Susan will try to attend; 4) MCL's August 27 Walk into (Conservation) History will be at Tomales Bay State Park (which will close sometime after Labor Day).

MINUTES for May 19, 2011 – Approved as submitted

ACTION ITEMS: None

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 1) MMWD “Friends of the Mt. Tamalpais Watershed.” Nona reported on a public workshop held by MMWD on the “Friends” plan on Thursday, June 2, at 7:00 p.m., at Basich School. The meeting was attended by about 12 – 14 public; four MMWD Directors and a number of staff were present. Mike Swezy reviewed the background and highlights of the proposed “Friends” organization and responded to specific concerns that were outlined in the letter from MCL, Friends of Corte Madera Creek, and Marin Audubon. The “Friends” Business Plan will be modified to reflect certain points, summarized as follows:
  - The Plan will strengthen the goals statement to reinforce primacy of protecting resources and restoration;
  - Friends projects will be subject to Board approval and will be carried out in collaboration with District staff;
  - The District Board believes that a facility (Education Center) is necessary to serve the needs of visitors and volunteers and students, and hopes that a Friends organization would seek funding for this facility;
  - The Friends cannot encompass all of Mt. Tamalpais but will focus on District lands, at least initially;
  - The Plan will clarify terms such as “covenying” and “affiliate membership”;

- The Friends' by-laws will require compliance with MMWD goals and policies; MMWD Board will be represented on Friends' Board;
- MMWD Board will provide leadership in selecting the Friends' board;
- MMWD doesn't believe that Friends fund-raising will compete with other non-profits in Marin, but will find untapped financial resources in community;
- Goals of Friends and uses of funds are consistent with the uses of the existing "Mt. Tamalpais Watershed Fund";
- Paid staff is necessary to develop capacity and sustained programs of the Friends organization; staff will build gradually, depending on success of fund-raising;
- No more than 15 – 20% of revenue will go to administrative overhead, the balance to programs.

Director Jack Gibson stated that he has been a champion of the "Friends" idea, but, at the same time, does not want to create "unintended consequences." The District staff will make some revisions to the Business Plan and make it available to the public before submitting it to the Board for final approval.

- 2) Bill's Trail, SPT State Park Trail Change in Use and Improvement DEIR. DPR has extended the public comment on the DEIR by 30 days to July 1, after receiving MCL's letter and other letters pointing out failure to give legally adequate public notice of availability of the DEIR. T.C.C. has completed a comment letter, according to Larry Minikes. There was general discussion about flaws in the DEIR – e.g., it is generic and does not contain credible support for assumptions on causes of damage to trails (by particular user groups) or reflect damage caused by numbers of users. The document is self-serving in that the "environmentally superior alternative" is the project that DPR is promoting. There was also discussion concerning source of funding for the trail work, given that SPT State Park is on the closure list. It appears that DPR may want a "shelf-ready" project if and when funds become available. It was the feeling of most on the Committee that the trail should not be touched, but that work on the adjacent Gravesite Fire Road could reduce erosion and sedimentation into Devil's Gulch Creek from that source.
- 3) MCOSD Roads and Trails Management Plan will be the subject of another public workshop on June 18, from 8:30 to 12:30 at the Wellness Center on Kerner Blvd. The agenda is posted on the MCOSD web page.
- 4) Smith Ranch Pond, San Rafael There have been no recent meetings concerning the Pond. Correspondence indicates that : (1) Aquacide will not make a long-term dent in the population of *Ludwigia* in the pond, and (2) the US Fish and Wildlife Service has particular concerns about the impacts of this herbicide on sensitive species within San Francisco Bay. We will continue pursuing solutions. . .

- 5) State Parks Trails and Greenways Conference. April 11 – 13, 2011. Connie reported on attending the conference, held in San Ramon. About 400 were in attendance, only three from Marin. It was expensive but well organized, with many informative sessions. The conference was heavily attended by mountain bikers, also by agency trail managers. Connie urges more people from Marin to attend future conferences.
  
- 6) Consideration of policy recommendations for potential renewable energy projects on MCOSD Preserves. This a subject for future discussion. It came up last year during hearings on the Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS) ordinance, when MCL testified that WECS should not be permitted on Open Space Preserves.
  
- 7) Centennials in 2012. Larry Minikes reported that T.C.C. is working with a small committee convened by Libby Pischel of MMWD to collaborate on their joint centennial for next year. Barry Spitz is on schedule to complete a history of T.C.C. The Golden Gate Bridge also will celebrate their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Larry encouraged MCL to contact Libby for a part in the planning.
  
- 8) Miscellaneous The 680 Trail has received all necessary permits and volunteers are being trained to assist in construction. Stafford Lake Bike Park is proceeding on schedule.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10  
Minutes by Nona Dennis