

**Friends of Sausal Creek
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
via Zoom**

Friends of Sausal Creek works to restore, maintain, and protect the Sausal Creek Watershed. We educate future generations, involve the community in local environmental stewardship, and collaborate with agencies and other nonprofits to have a positive impact on the local ecosystem.

Present Richelle Jacobs, Tim Vendlinski, Barry Stenger, Rob Leidy, Eleanor Dunn, Beth Keer, Mark Rauzon (Board Member Emeritus).

Absent Harry Schrauth (Board Member Emeritus), Aneeshi Sandip Desai (Student Board Member), Steve Ritchie, Sean Welch.

Staff Present Anna Marie Schmidt, E.D.; Jay Cassianni, Nursery and Restoration Manager; Kate Berlin, Communications and Restoration Intern; Rosa Nelson, Outreach and Stewardship Intern.

Guest Tea Parker-Essig, Julie Bongers (Stanford Avenue Natives Garden), Paul Frank (FlowWest).

Board Involvement

State of the Watershed 2022: Global Trends, Local Responses
February 16 at 7:00 p.m. Prior Zoom registration required.

Remarks from the President, Beth Keer

Beth introduced our two new staff members: Kate Berlin, Communications and Restoration Intern, and Rosa Nelson, Outreach and Stewardship Intern. She also welcomed Tea Parker-Essig, a repeat guest to the meeting who volunteers at the nursery, and Julie Bongers of the Stanford Avenue Natives Garden, who is active in Adopt-a-Spot. Former Board Member Paul Frank, here to discuss FlowWest's proposed contract with FOSC, received a hearty welcome. The board introduced themselves to the guests.

Board Updates & Discussion

Anna Marie re-stated our commitment to Lower Watershed involvement. She noted that since we're approaching the final months of the DACTIP grant, FOSC wants to move forward with park/open space access in the Fruitvale, starting with a feasibility study. What might that look like? In response to this question, she ceded the floor to Paul Frank of FlowWest, who explained his company's intention to write a feasibility study after completing their site visits in the Lower Watershed. Teamed with

Restoration Design Group, their goal would be to ascertain implementable projects-- the opportunities and challenges -- including the projects' components such as their design and construction costs. FlowWest will provide the research and background for future grants by the City of Oakland. Paul invited the Board to become involved -- site visits will begin next week -- and responded to various Board Member questions. Anna Marie announced that the Board would vote on the contract for FlowWest later in the meeting.

Board Retreat Tour For the Board's annual retreat this year, Rob suggested an outdoor watershed tour, making several stops to talk about current issues at each site. Mark wondered about the capacity shortage given that key staff positions at FOSC are changing. Rob maintained that we could talk about anything anywhere, and hopefully we'll be solving some of those problems at Board meetings. Barry pointed out that these are not either/or propositions, but both/and. Rob said he would put together an agenda.

Restoration Committee Updates Tim reported on the affirming work being done in Joaquin Miller Park, and most particularly in the Fern Ravine area. Many of his specific recommendations have been carried out, and rare plants have been installed. He briefed the Board on the disparity in vision between FOSC and FOJMP. The bicycle groups have the ear of FOJMP so FOSC will need to do more "in-reach", including providing FOJMP with before-and-after photographs and emphasizing to them the necessity of decommissioning illegal bike trails. The great news is that protective fencing and signage have brought about a strong understory comeback in Fern Ravine despite the drought. FOSC needs to determine which sites do and don't have site leaders, and to coach them on restoration and outreach.

Alameda County Fish and Game Commission Proposal Anna Marie informed the Board that we will be submitting one proposal to Alameda County Fish and Game Commission for "green infrastructure", and another for the continued work on rare and endangered plants. Winter storms created two hot spots of erosion in the Dimond area and dismantled fence posts which are now on the verge of falling into the creek. There is a sinkhole in Dimond Park. Bob Roat is tracking the City's engineering fix.

Board Recruitment Beth raised the topic of our need to recruit more Board members. She pointed out that we're not tracking to whom we've reached out. She asked the Board for new ideas about recruitment.

Fundraising Updates: End-of-Year Appeal 2021, Barry Stenger & Anna Marie Schmidt

Barry shared the good news that our End-of-Year Appeal increased this year by 26%, amounting to \$69,500 in donations for 2021. This included the matching gifts which came to \$12,500. There was 100% Board participation in the campaign, and also a significant increase of donors who gave \$250 or more. The *For The Future Fund* donations (approximately \$2,050) came in about the same as last year. Barry urged that more Board members become involved in fundraising efforts.

Financial Report, Anna Marie Schmidt

Anna Marie went over the Project Timeline and Cash Flow Chart. She also reported on grant applications in progress and on the horizon.

Personnel Updates

Anna Marie was pleased to see our two new interns, Kate Berlin, Communications and Restoration Intern, and Rosa Nelson, Outreach and Stewardship Intern, at the meeting. Beth said that some excellent candidates for the new staff positions will be interviewed tomorrow. The interview team, Beth, Rob, and Anna Marie, are working quickly, hoping to onboard new hires soon so that Jay can participate in their transition. He will continue to work remotely in some capacity, including involvement in the rare plant survey and data. There will be "Jay Day" on Wednesday, February 23, from 1:30-5:30 -- a drop-in gathering (including food) at the Nursery to celebrate Jay and to give him a send-off.

Endowment Update, Barry Stenger

Barry reported that we currently have approximately \$220,000 in the *For the Future Fund*. Because there has been a change in the number of people on the Endowment Committee, legally we need new Resolutions supporting those changes. He read the proposed Resolutions to the Board, one detailing the number of people authorized to sit on that Committee, and the other authorizing Signatories. Barry moved sequentially that each of these Resolutions be approved, and Eleanor seconded each. Both were passed unanimously.

T-Shirt Update, Beth Keer & Ricky Jacobs

Beth and Ricky reported on the 25th Anniversary t-shirt response and sales. This project was spearheaded by Ricky, with Beth overseeing Square sales and inventory, and volunteer Mary Wakely providing mail-order fulfillment. Customers were very happy, we netted a little over \$300, and the shirts and design are beautiful. There is still some inventory remaining.

Various options were discussed about what it would require to extend or expand this merchandise project. Ricky advocated that we do so, expressing the belief that t-shirts and other merchandise promote a sense of affiliation among organization members, and that such merchandise attracts people to booths at community events. Various Board Members argued that merchandise not only is not a part of our mission, but in fact antithetical to it. Tim made a motion that we not invest any more time, energy, or money in merchandise at this time. Barry seconded the motion, which was passed with one opposing vote and one abstention.

Minutes Eleanor moved to pass acceptance of the Minutes from the December, 2021, meeting. Beth seconded the motion, which was then passed unanimously.

Commitments Review Anna Marie announced that 2021 taxes have been prepared and the Board has until February 16 to comment before they are filed.

Staff Report, Anna Marie Schmidt

Anna Maria noted that even as our environmental education program continues to be scaled down, we are working with many high school and college groups.

St. Mary's video project: In late January, two students from Saint Mary's College created a short film for FOSC as a promotional tool, advertising the mission and purpose of FOSC and recruitment of volunteers. Our intern, Rosa Nelson, was interviewed, and B-roll was taken at Dimond Canyon.

U.C. Berkeley's Fung Fellowship: One of the Fung Fellowship teams chose the Joaquin Miller Park project to be the focus of their innovation project. U.C. Berkeley students will identify, research, and develop new implementation methodologies and community engagement techniques for protecting the soil, clean water sources, and native species. Tim will be the FOSC point person for the five-student team, which will be working on the project from February through April.

FlowWest Contract: After Paul Frank departed the meeting, Beth moved to approve the contract with FlowWest for a feasibility study of the lower watershed park/open space for the DACTIP grant. Eleanor seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Watershed Maps: Our current supply of maps is down to three boxes, so it is time to reprint. Mark suggested that since these were funded by an outside source before, we should return to outside sources for this next

supply as well. Additionally, the map boxes are in need of repair, which Tim thought could be an excellent scout project. Tim also suggested a technological upgrade on the maps is in order, including the use of a QR system. Rob urged that the maps acknowledge that this is Ohlone land.

Adjournment The meeting ended at 8:36 p.m.

Next board meeting: April 13, 2022, 7:00 p.m. Location TBA.