

**Friends of Sausal Creek  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Monday, April 8, 2024, 7:00 p.m.  
Park Blvd Presbyterian Church**

*Our mission is to conserve, restore, and enhance the Sausal Creek Watershed by educating future generations, involving the community in environmental stewardship, and collaborating with agencies and nonprofits. We support Oakland's biodiversity and are working toward a climate-resilient future.*

**Present** Richelle Jacobs, Eleanor Dunn, Russ Huddleston, Barry Stenger, Rob Leidy, Mark Rauzon (Board Member Emeritus), Kristy Brady, Beth Keer, Maria Katticaran, Jaden Shochet (Student Board Member)

**Absent** Harry Schrauth (Board Member Emeritus), Steve Ritchie, Sean Welch, Delaney Welch (Student Board Member), Shaon Bhattacharya (Student Board Member), Tim Vendlinski

**Staff Present** Lisa Giordano, Executive Director, via Zoom

**Guest** Gary McCormick of *Oakland Trails*

**Board Involvement**

- Earth Day (4/20 - 4/21)
- State of the Watershed (5/4)
- Board Retreat (6/1)

**Remarks from President Barry Stenger**

- Barry welcomed our guest and acknowledged that this meeting was taking place on unceded Huichin Ohlone territory.

**Board Committee Reports**

- **Education Committee** Beth reported that Tylor and Elena have been onboarded, and curricula are being developed. She listed several positives on the horizon, such as the CNRA grant, Youth Employment Partnership, partner Spring kick off, -- (the tongue-twister "Spring Stream Team"),-- and Title 1 Kids Focus. She appreciated volunteer Helene Moore for helping with field trips.
- **Restoration Committee** Rob reported that the restoration program is being reorganized. Mark gave a heads up about the many tasks FOSC will need to organize for Earth Day. Rob, who is chair of the Restoration Committee, reported the good news that Fern Ravine and Big Tree already have designations as Resource Conservation

Areas (RCAs). He is working with City Council member Janani Ramachandran to get them designated as Natural Areas. For now, Oakland's Tree Division doesn't have the bandwidth to work with us. Lisa mentioned that staff will develop a relationship with David Dickens to take some of the load off of David Moore's plate. Eleanor reported that the City has a shortfall of millions of dollars. Kristy suggested we invite some City folks to our volunteer appreciation event, an idea Lisa endorsed. Barry wondered about renaming Barry Place "Barry Preserve", since the word "park" sometimes scares people who associate parks with crowds and play structures. Rob thought such a rename could run into zoning issues. Designating it as an RCA might make a name change easier.

- Nursery Russ announced that monthly seed collection hikes will begin as of this Sunday. He said that Fish and Wildlife is working on the Pallid permit and that East Bay Parks is interested in doing a genetic study. Might FOSC want to join in with them? Also, FOSC needs to get the nursery air certified. At the Pallid summit he connected with the permitting folks, so that may help move the process along. He suggested we consider offering a Gardening with Native Plants workshop, and/or perhaps a garden tour. (Beth pointed out that such tours have to happen in the spring, not in the fall.) Additionally, Russ wondered about ways to broaden our volunteer demographics. There was a discussion about the diversity of species in our nursery and the availability of seeds. Barry informed the Board that we would need a permit to pour a concrete slab at the nursery, and Rob made the point that Ella has too much on her plate right now to oversee any significant changes there. Mark reported that we have lost an alarming number of alders. He said we will need to plant quite a few to stave off their disappearance. He reminded the Board of the necessity of canopy, and with the loss of alders we are therefore losing too much canopy. He also wanted to pay homage to Cathy Kramer, who midwived FOSC's Bring Back the Natives talks. Kristy added that there are many opportunities for cross pollination.
- Rainmakers Committee & Endowment Committee Barry, chair of both these committees, indicated that committee activities will be reported on in the near future.

### **Board Member Briefing & Discussion**

- State of the Watershed 2024 Lisa announced that our panel discussion will include speakers focused on topics of environmental justice and resilience. As moderators of this discussion, FOSC will connect this work to the watershed. The State of the Watershed event will take place in Dimond Park. There will be table presentations, and time will be allocated for people to mingle after the discussion.
- Board Retreat We are in search of a location for our retreat, which will take place on June 1, from 10:00 to 3:00. Kristy, Ricky, and Lisa volunteered to work on the agenda.
- Digital Waiver Staff has completed an efficient digital waiver for our volunteer events. All future waivers will be available to sign electronically.
- Donor Appreciation/Fundraising Dinner This event is being scheduled for September. John Bliss and Kim Thompson are offering their house as well as a catered meal for this fifteen-person dinner. There will be nine spots open for top donors plus one government official. She wondered whether that official should be Janani Ramachandran? Sheng Thao? The Rainmakers are in the process of considering whom to invite donor-wise, and Board suggestions are welcome. The guest list will be determined in the next few months.
- Executive Director's Report Barry informed the Board that the "Staff Report" has been replaced by the "Executive Director's Report", with the intention of supplying additional written information and news to the Board about FOSC, and thereby shortening Board meetings. Barry encouraged Board members to engage Lisa about her report and ask any questions. Rob wanted to add that there was an interesting conclave in which indigenous leaders as well as the head of *Latino Outdoors* spoke about rethinking how we talk about the environment and natural resources. Rob praised the new ED's Report.

### **Finances**

- Lisa went over the Project Timeline and Cash Flow Chart with the Board and spoke about grant applications in progress and on the

horizon, as well as grant delays. Beth updated the figures on Budget to Actual, saying that individual contributions were at 115%.

### **Fundraising Updates, Barry Stenger**

- Barry reported that a letter is being planned for the Midyear Appeal 2024. It will focus on young people and the environment.

### **Endowment Fund**

- As of today, we have \$208,750.70 in the Endowment Fund. The Endowment Committee will be making its annual motion to take a draw on the *For the Future Fund* and contribute that amount to the operation funds for FY24-25. Ricky moved that the Board of *Friends of Sausal Creek* approve a 5% annual draw on the average balance of the last 12 quarters of the *For the Future (FTF) Fund* -- a sum of \$9,282.33 -- to contribute as income to the 2024-25 organizational budget. Eleanor seconded the motion, which was then passed unanimously.

### **Administration**

- Board Meeting Location Ricky and Kristy think the Thornhill Room at the Montclair Presbyterian Church may serve as a new venue for our bi-monthly Board meetings. Kristy will negotiate the terms of our trying it out before signing a lease.
- By-Laws Revision Barry reported that a review of the current by-laws revealed that they are in fairly good shape. The introduction should be reworked to be consistent with our revised Mission Statement. Barry offered a proposal for possible inclusion of term limits for Board members. After a thought-provoking discussion, the consensus of the Board was that they were not comfortable with term limits for Board members because that would involve asking Board members to resign simply because of the amount of time they had served. Barry withdrew his proposal and no motion was made.
- Credit/Debit Cards Barry reported that all of our attempts to procure credit cards have fallen short of success. We often make large purchases and are seeking such cards because continuing to use staff members' personal cards is frowned upon by the IRS and is inconsistent with acceptable accounting procedures. He reported that the organization has a debit card, and Lisa will continue to work with our bank to establish the use of credit cards. He will report

more on this dilemma and any possible progress at the next meeting.

- Recent Press *Oaklandside* reporter Callie Rhodes wrote some very positive articles about FOSC and our grant from the EPA. Lisa asked the Board to let her know of anyone else who might be interested in writing articles about us.

### Minutes

- Eleanor moved to approve the Minutes from the February 14, 2024, meeting. Russ seconded the motion, which was then passed unanimously.

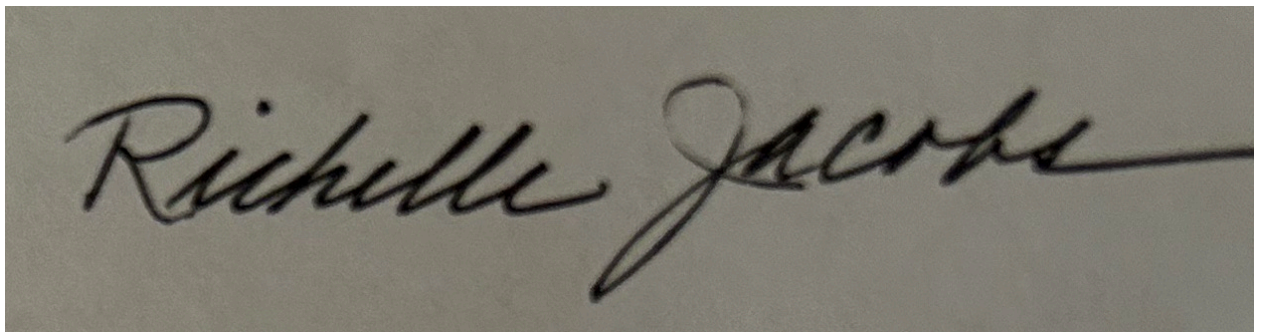
### Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

### Next Board meeting

- The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, in the Thornhill Room at the Montclair Presbyterian Church, 5702 Thornhill Avenue, Oakland, 94611. This will be a trial run in this new location to see if it serves our purposes.

Respectfully submitted June 12, 2024

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style and reads "Richelle Jacobs". The signature is positioned horizontally and occupies most of the width of the image.

