

**Friends of Sausal Creek
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, June 14, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Montclair Presbyterian Church, Oakland, CA**

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, Barry Stenger, Tim Vendlinski, Mark Rauzon (Board Member Emeritus), Kristy Brady, Beth Keer, Jaden Shochet (Student Board Member)

Absent Russ Huddleston, Rob Leidy, Harry Schrauth (Board Member Emeritus), Sean Welch, Delaney Welch (Student Board Member), Shaon Bhattacharya (Student Board Member), Maria Katticaran

Staff Present Lisa Giordano, Executive Director

Remarks from President Barry Stenger

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

June 1 Board Retreat

- The Board discussed highlights from the retreat, including fundraising, division of labor among staff positions, hiring of a Development Associate, and the creation of a diagram that demonstrates priorities, proportion of expenses/staff time, and regions of the watershed. The Board agreed to move forward with the diagram but not with the Development Associate at this time. Development responsibilities will be expanded among staff and Board for now.

Committee Updates

Restoration (Lisa reporting for chair, Rob Leidy)

- A portal on our website is being built for site leaders to ask questions and to submit field data.
- Ella is working with Segora Te to help prepare for CalFire's visit. Additionally, she is mapping and monitoring rare plants across the watershed. Tim expressed appreciation for Ella's rigor.
- Trout Barrier mapping is almost finished. Trail maintenance money for Fern Ravine has been approved, a huge win. Rob inspected the Whittle Creek site.
- Tim reported there are two hills in Joaquin Miller Park with rare plants: the Blue Rock Mesa and the Blue Rock Vista. He expressed concern over the disregard for these species by bicyclers as well as by the Fire Department. He expressed admiration for the work Ella has done to meet with the Fire Department to educate them about these local treasures. He feels this is a huge step forward and feather in our cap.

Nursery (Barry reporting for Chair, Russ Huddleston)

- The Eagle Scouts will be providing us with new benches this summer. Additionally, Russ has followed up with Fish & Wildlife to secure a permit for the manzanitas. The permit should be in our hands very soon.

Education (Beth Keer, Chair)

- This year to date we have had 18 field trips and classroom visits.
- FOSC completed our pilot Spring Stream Team program in May as part of our CNRA Youth Community Access grant.

This expands our youth environmental education and green job training in the watershed.

State of the Watershed 2024

- Barry will welcome all attendees and Kate will then give an introduction to the events of the day. Our theme this year is Resilience. Speakers include Nursery and Restoration Manager Ella Matsuda, who will talk about the biodiversity of the manzanita colony; Steve Addison from CiviCorps; Vic Montana from Segora Te; and Terry Fashing from the City of Oakland. Additionally, there will be a panel discussion on the State of the Watershed, moderated by Lisa. Tim suggested Wendy Tokuda moderate the panel and speakers, and Lisa agreed to reach out to her. Each speaker will have their own table.

Spring Stream Team

- Despite a few blips, including the absence of Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) leaders to discipline and manage the youth, this program was a big success. We intend to apply what we've learned this year as lessons for next year.

2024 Plant Sale

- The in-person sale has been scheduled for October 26. Board Members offered ideas to enhance the sale, such as selling raffle tickets and giving raffle tickets to those who spend a certain amount. The raffle's prizes might include a yard consultation with Tim, or a tee-shirt. Other ideas: offering more garden kits and/or plants that are especially conducive to containers; having containers there for sale; including three or four such plants as items in the raffle.

Finances

- Lisa discussed 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.
- The FYE25 draft budget was reviewed. Tim moved to approve the 2024-2025 budget, and Eleanor seconded the motion, which was then passed unanimously.

Fundraising (Barry Stenger, Rainmaker Committee Chair)

- Mid-Year Appeal 2024 review: The Mid-Year Appeal went out a little late, but in time to bolster our '23-24 income and get us off to a good start for '24-'25. Lupe Stenger, Barry's spouse, will take charge of the end of year mailing.
- Endowment: We currently have \$210,000 in our Endowment fund. Barry recommended more visibility for planned giving. He suggested adding it to the End-of-Year appeal, perhaps reinstating our past practice of having a box to be checked on the remit envelopes, as well as a section on the website.
- Donor Dinner 2024: Lisa listed the guests the Rainmakers have chosen to be invited to the dinner. There was some discussion about which Oakland office holder to invite.

Administration

- Board Meeting Location: The Board members in attendance had a unanimously positive response to our new location (the Thornhill Room at the Montclair Presbyterian Church) for future board meetings.
- Technology transition updates: Sean and his wife Brooke have offered \$5,000 annually for FOSC over five years for tech upgrade and improvement.

- Credit/debit cards: We continue the search for a bank or credit union that will give us a credit or debit card. Staff have been using their own cards to make purchases.
- Recent Press: Tim suggested that all articles and videos about us be posted on our website, and the Board thought that was a good idea. Barry strongly urged that there be no Reply All buttons on the Google group. He moved that we moderate the Google Group. Beth seconded that motion, which then passed unanimously.
- Employee Handbook: Lisa is currently going through the updated and revised version page by page. She will then check with the Steering Committee for necessary revisions. This news was met with great enthusiasm by the Board.
- Waivers: Efforts to implement digital volunteer waivers have succeeded.

Minutes

- Eleanor moved to approve the April 8 Board meeting minutes. Kristy seconded the motion, which then passed unanimously.

Individual Board Member Check-In

- Kristy reported that Lions Pool has been draining its chlorinated pool water into the creek. Chlorine is extremely toxic to fish. Rob contacted Ben Lively at the City, who got in touch with the people in charge of the pool. They assured him this would never happen again. The Board was upset by this news and made suggestions as to who(m) else to contact and which complaints needed to be filed.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m. Barry apologized for going beyond 8:30 p.m.

Next Board meeting

- The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, August 14, 2024, in the Thornhill Room at the Montclair Presbyterian Church, 5702 Thornhill Avenue, Oakland.