

Minutes of the 2016 FORCA Annual Meeting

Saturday April 9, 2016

The 2016 FORCA annual meeting was called to order by Chair Debra Slaybaugh at 10:10am Saturday, April 9, 2016. By the time we needed to vote on anything, a quorum was present. Parcels with owners present or represented by proxy were: Bergman (22), Cheadle (12), Davis (7), Hughes (2), Ireland (4), Johnson (20), Rappaport (24), Sadler (30), Slaybaugh/Glass (19), Slocum (29 and 32), Sprinkel (3), Stone (18), Tichner (31), Wagner (6 and 8) and Wipff (26). Debra noted that it had been raining all night, the pond was full, and the wildflowers were all blooming. There was much rejoicing.

Minutes: The minutes of the 2015 annual meeting were approved without change.

Welcome to new owners: Dylan Stone (Bob's son) was warmly welcomed to the meeting. We also learned that Alvin and Fiona Chen closed escrow on the Franks' home yesterday. We understand that the Chen's permanent home is in Southern California and that they have two teen-aged daughters. We look forward to welcoming them in person when they are at the ranch!

Elections: We had three Board openings: Lane Wipff and Debra Slaybaugh ran for re-election and Deb Sprinkel joined the slate. They were all unanimously elected. Liz Cheadle and Karen Sadler each have another year on their two year terms, so we are stuck with them, as well. Thanks to Susie Rappaport for serving as Elections Supervisor and administering the process!

President's Year in Review: It has been a very good and smooth year, notwithstanding the drought. Clayton has done an excellent job as ranch manager. He's been very forward thinking and frequently anticipates what needs to be done without direction. We are grateful for his service and presence.

Debra, as Chair, sought outside legal counsel with Board approval on two issues from attorney Tom Isaac, who had previously provided legal advice to FORCA on our bylaws and CC&R's. Mr. Isaac provided a written legal opinion that the Board's decision to offer a discount (10%) to owners who pay annual dues in a lump sum in January is legal. The request for an opinion was made in response to an owner's assertion that the Board action was not legal. Mr. Isaac is also advising the Board on issues related to road/gate ownership and liability around the south entrance as we research options and plan for security upgrades that will require additional electrical power for the south gate. At this point, we have spent \$1,800 in legal fees in 2016.

Thank you, Debra!

Treasurer's Report:

John Hughes reported that, overall, 2015 was a good year. Expenses were well under budget. Our net income was \$14,054, approximately \$10K more than we usually bring in. This year, we will likely spend more than we take in (see below re projects in the works), but our reserves are fully funded (\$80K) and we have plenty of money. We may also buy another CD from savings.

A majority of owners have opted for the HOA dues discount by paying in full in January. In 2015, 19 of 33 parcels did so; in 2016, it was up to 20 of 33. As of last month, we had collected 65% of our dues for the year. We had a handful of late payers, but John has diligently pursued them and almost everyone is fully

paid up now. The Board decided to maintain dues at the current level for 2016, but will look at the issue again at the end of the year and consider whether a reduction is possible for 2017.

Roads, trash and insurance remain our three largest expenditures. With all the rain, we will be spending more on road work this year, and have already bought two loads of gravel. Trash expenses will also go up as we come into compliance with the new Madera County ordinance requiring a recycling bin (which will likely be located on the south side with the other bins).

One other area where we were under budget last year was in "social," so we clearly need to have more parties and fun this year!

All of our taxes are already completed and filed on time! Thank you, John!

The consensus is that it is time to hire a bookkeeper, but with continued close oversight by the Treasurer. This may involve a change of address for mailing dues, so owners should watch the invoices and be diligent about paying on time.

John also asked for volunteers to get our website up again. The prior site was hacked and turned into a spam farm and was ultimately shut down by our host. Jonathan Franks had been webmaster, but with his illness and death, we have made no progress getting it back up. John's request for a volunteer for this project was met with blank stares and an awkward silence. Chair Slaybaugh will therefore investigate the costs of hiring a web design consultant to get it back up and maintained.

John also talked about our need for HR help, since Clayton was hired as an employee, rather than as an independent contractor.

After that, the 2016 budget was approved unanimously.

Lane's update on upcoming projects:

We are still waiting for a date for the road/asphalt clean-up project just outside the north gate. Lane will provide as much notice to us as he is able.

He also provided an update on what the Board is thinking about for gate upgrades. The technology has evolved significantly in recent years. Several companies now manufacture sophisticated systems that can provide different codes for different users and track when those codes are used, providing data by smart phone, giving us far better capability to monitor use and detect trespassers. Each set-up could cost \$3,200-\$4,000, possibly more for cameras. We will also need to figure out how to increase power to the south gate because our current small solar system won't provide enough.

Thank you, Lane!

Fire preparedness report:

Mark Glass gave a highly informative report on issues related to fire. We are not out of the woods (so to speak) with the drought, despite the good rains this year. Owners were reminded to keep their gutters cleaned out and cautioned that they will need to do multiple weed eatings this year because of all the continued rain and growth. He directed us all to www.calfire.gov for further information. Inspectors will definitely be on the ranch this year checking brush clearance.

>

Mark showed a video on tree mortality. Bark beetles have now destroyed 29 million trees in California. The beetles are not at the ranch's relatively lower elevation yet, but our pine trees are nonetheless dying from lack of water. It takes a good long freeze to get rid of the beetles and we didn't have that this year. Many think that pine trees will ultimately vanish from lower elevations because of the beetles.

Joe Middleton recently did an excellent job of dead tree removal for the Wipffs. He is fully booked for the rest of the season, but Mark will work to get him back on the ranch in the fall or winter. If there are multiple owners interested in having Joe do work, there will be economies in having him only bring his crew and equipment onto the ranch once for the various projects. Mark will keep us posted. Meanwhile, the Wipffs also have a contact for hand pruning and mistletoe removal that they are willing to share.

Madera County recently received an emergency grant for tree mortality projects. As a result, three engines will be dedicated full time to dead tree removal. Steve Wyle mentioned that he has additional information on funding for tree removal; Deb Slaybaugh will follow up with him.

Station 8 (Chukchansi) will be funded for the year, with a truck staffed with three firefighters. It will also have a ladder, which is essential for fighting fires in multi-story structures.

Mark is in conversation with Cal Fire to do a project on the ranch to create a "shaded fuel break," removing dead trees for 200 feet on either side of the road. The ranch could be used as a training facility for the firefighters, who would then also get to know their way around the ranch. This project could possibly happen in the next 4-6 weeks; Mark will be in touch with owners for access and permission.

Thank you, Mark!

Report on potential off road vehicle park:

Mickey Rappaport advised us that Madera County is bidding to purchase 2,000 acres off the 41, between Road 200 and the entrance to YLP. The County is interested in acquiring it to build an off-road vehicle park, with an entrance near the high school. Supervisor Tom Wheeler supports it and thinks it would bring good revenue to the County. Apparently, there are also two quarry companies interested in the property. (Yuck.) Barbara Bigelow is organizing opposition to the ORV park, raising concerns about light pollution, sound and fire issues. Mickey will keep us informed.

On that happy note, the meeting adjourned at 12:25 so we could admire our full pond, catch up with our neighbors and eat tri-tip and delicious sides.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Cheadle
Secretary