

Glen Ellen Forum Board of Directors Meeting - Minutes
Mayflower Hall, 4/13/19
Respectfully submitted by Jim Shere, 4/28/19

[attachments: agenda, treasurer's report, funding sources, potential speakers, nomination statements, organizational chart]

Present: Margie Foster (treasurer Steering Committee, treasurer elect BoD), Graham Hommel (member BoD), Jody Ketcham Davies (member of the community representing Projects Committee), Nancy Padian (former chair Steering Committee, member elect BoD), Melissa Dowling (president BoD), Jim Shere (secretary BoD), Angela Morgan (vice president BoD), Alice Horowitz (co-chair SDC/Eldridge Transition), Nick Brown (chair Steering Committee), Tracy Salcedo (member BoD, SDC Committee), and Larry Davis (member of the community). Rob Barnum (member BoD) appeared before the meeting to register his vote on the Bylaws and officers, but could not attend the meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Melissa at 1:06pm; Jim announced that the meeting was being recorded, and that a sound file would be kept for future reference.

Melissa distributed the agenda (attached), and made introductory remarks describing governance of the Forum, clarifying the roles of the Board of Directors as the governing body, and the Steering Committee as the managing body of the Forum. She introduced the sitting officers of the Board, and described the composition of the Steering Committee as including a chair, vice chair, secretary, and representatives of the other committees.

Jim clarified the fiduciary responsibility of the Board as being more than only financial, including the matter of trust. Angela Morgan (vice president) noted the fiscal responsibility of the members of the Board, and Margie Foster (treasurer) noted that the Board carries liability insurance for such purposes.

The minutes of the previous meeting January 17, 2019, had been distributed and corrected by email previously; Tracy moved that they be accepted and Angela seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The Bylaws and the Manual of Policies & Procedures, which had been distributed and corrected by email previously, were formally submitted to the Board. They are to be voted upon during the meeting, along with officers of the Board and the Steering Committee, for which ballots were distributed; they are to be collected and tallied at the end of the meeting and the results announced.

Margie announced that no significant changes in the treasury have taken place; she will submit a written report to be attached to these minutes. She spoke about last year's United Way grant of \$1,500 for the community meal held at the Valley the Moon

Winery, which is still unresolved and held in reserve. Four sheds of the twenty we originally purchased for victims of the wildfires are still on hand. Applications are to be sent out to those eligible for a lottery to receive them.

Melissa distributed a list of possible and current funding sources (attached), which was discussed at length. Additional sources of funds were discussed, including individual donations and donations from PayPal, Impact100, Facebook, Amazon, Craig's List, Schwab, the Jack London Yacht Club, the Community Foundation Sonoma's specific Sonoma Valley Fund, a 5K/10K fun run marathon, a scavenger hunt, and the Glen Ellen Fair.

Tracy suggested funding to help people clear weeds and brush to make their property wildfire resistant; this idea was directed to the Traffic & Safety and Projects committees.

Angela spoke about the Jack to Jack boat race to be held by the Jack London Yacht Club April 28th. Funds raised are to be disbursed as grants to local nonprofits; deadline for submitting proposals for this grant is May 15th. The Board has received grant proposals from three committees— \$400 for town cleanup from the Project Committee, \$3,000 from the SDC Committee for a visioning workshop, \$3,000 from the Engagement Committee for a community dinner, and a grant for \$600 from the Steering Committee to pay for our meeting space. Tracy will submit a proposal for the above fire preparation through Traffic & Safety.

Recruiting membership for the Development Committee for fundraising was discussed, reaching into the community for new volunteers in addition to people already involved in the Forum. Nancy may be an interim chair of the fundraising committee pending the formation of the Development Committee. Melissa attended a meeting in Oakland about a possible grant from state parks to develop a historical park site within Glen Ellen; however we don't qualify, due to barely missing the max median income requirement and the fact that the state considers the regional park to be Glen Ellen open space.

Open chair positions on various committees were announced. Stacey & Nick have stepped down as Chairs of the Traffic & Safety Committee, and Leslie Vaughn and Sheryee McCormick have stepped down as Chairs of the Engagement Committee. It is time to recruit members to take those positions.

It was asked if the Projects Committee should be combine with the Engagement Committee, since each event can be considered a project. It was agreed that their difference in focus upon community improvement and public relations requires a separation of their activities.

Discussion of past events produced by the Engagement Committee focussed upon the pros and cons of large community events such as the one held at the Valley of the

Moon Winery, and smaller and more frequent home events (up to perhaps 70 people) such as the one held at Sharyee's home. It was suggested that Doug Wilson's Moon House may be available for a special event in the future, as well as Linda Dodwell's Australia House on Warm Springs Road. The development of performance metrics was recommended to help establish guidelines for the Engagement Committee. The Engagement Committee is charged with public relations, reaching further into the community to increase inclusivity in the activities of the Forum.

Alice and Tracy spoke about the recent agreement of the state with the county to provide about \$40,000,000 to continue the "warm shutdown" of SDC at Eldridge for another three years, ending July 1st, 2022; about \$3,500,000 will be provided for expenses of the planning phase as a specific plan for the property is developed. The property will be transferred from DDS (the Department of Developmental Services) to DGS (the Department of General Services), two entirely different California state agencies, on July 1st, 2019. The agreement is committed to keeping the open space areas open, with public access, and to taking into consideration community input during the planning phase, a unique and historic decision by the state.

It was clarified that this means we as a community are tasked with joining with the Sonoma Land Trust and the Sonoma Ecology Center (and perhaps other groups, as defined by the SDC Coalition) to create public visioning sessions that will provide information to be taken into account to ensure an appropriate development of Eldridge that we can live with, as developed by a consultant hired by the county.

It was pointed out that, having survived the fires and the closure of SDC, Glen Ellen is a strong and vigorous community that is facing an exhilarating future, and that it's time for us to be very clear about the steps we can take to organize and realize the opportunities before us.

The Eldridge for All website (<https://eldridgeforall.org>) managed by the SDC Committee (Alice is webmaster) is being updated to reflect these recent changes, and is the best and most current source of information.

The Land Art Generator Initiative (<https://landartgenerator.org>) has proposed an international competition to design (not build) a visionary public space at Eldridge, using artists, engineers, and urban planners to create an installation that would generate renewable energy. A member of their Board of Directors who lives in Sonoma drew their attention to Eldridge. While this will need approval at the county level before going further, it was generally thought this would generate international interest as well as energy. This possible initiative should be kept confidential until Susan Gorin is updated on the project.

Melissa reported on the Communications Committee, a newly formed and very effective committee within the Steering Committee that is taking over all communications for the Forum. Shannon Lee is chair, with Emily Obledo and Laura

Schermeister as experienced website designers and social media publicists (Facebook, NextDoorNeighbor, monthly newsletter, website, and anything that goes to the press).

Nick reported on the Traffic and Safety Committee, saying the ReadyGlenEllen website (<http://readyglenellen.com>) is up with useful information and resources for emergency situations in Glen Ellen. The “Love Our Town, Slow Down” signs and bumper stickers campaign has been successful, and the Committee has met with six neighborhoods for emergency planning so far. The six neighborhood meetings include the Jack London Estates homeowner group as they met with Fire Authority, the Hill Road neighborhood, two neighborhoods east of Arnold Drive, a Warm Springs Road neighborhood, and the Eastside of Sonoma Mountain neighborhood. These were good gatherings, with general Emergency Safety information shared, and various tools to organize emergency response such as phone trees, group captains and other resources. They are in the process of organizing the properties from London Ranch Rd to Grove Street for Emergency Safety. (note this section needs to be updated with Nick’s Edits).

The Traffic and Safety Committee has also been meeting with the organizers of the Bennett Ridge Homeowners Group as well as the Mayacamas Fire Safe Council, and are taking notes from their experiences. One program they became aware of during these meetings with the BRHG has been an emergency signaling system. The BRHG is building a system for Bennett Ridge, with wireless radio and a repeater system to send alarms and interactive communication in the case of emergency. The Traffic and Safety (and our Ready Glen Ellen Group) are going to meet with a representative of Precision Wireless to learn more about these systems.

Jody reported on the Projects Committee, telling of a grant that had been approved from the county to fund an improvement project outside the post office. The funds will include the creation of a new three-sided kiosk including bulletin boards, a small book lending library, new surface material, a garbage bin, and a few irrigated plants. There will be some funds for ongoing maintenance, and the installation costs are being donated; it is hoped that this project will be completed by early June. Completion of the painting of the interior of the post office will be completed soon and the committee has begun to contemplate entrance signs for village. A community clean-up is planned in celebration of Earth Day for April 20th at 9:30 am. The possibility of creating some plaques at historic sites to designate their significance is now being explored. These could be referenced on a village map displayed in the new kiosk.

A discussion developed about how to increase attendance at the monthly public meetings. Ways to better plan and manage the agenda, to solicit and schedule interesting speakers, and to more effectively advertise specific topics well in advance were explored at length. A question about guidelines for presentations was referred to our bylaws, which specify that we are to inform, educate, or benefit the community of Glen Ellen, and we cannot promote a political position.

A list of potential speakers was introduced (attached) and topics for future presentations were suggested, ranging from a focus upon local issues such as Marty Winter's planned development of the property next to Marshall's Garage and the work of the Glen Ellen Historical Society, to general interest issues such as the operations of the Sonoma County Food Bank and the option an end of life option by an anesthesiologist from Harvard practicing in Sonoma.

The Steering Committee will invite Marty Winter to present his project, a reiteration of a plan that had been presented originally to the Glen Ellen Association (an earlier version of the Glen Ellen Forum) by Marty's father in either 1992 or 1994. Melissa has since invited him to speak. It was recommended that a presentation on the Glen Ellen Design and Development Guidelines be made a month before, so that people would have a frame of reference when considering his project. The Guidelines were compiled in 1990, and were later incorporated into the Sonoma County General Plan; they can be downloaded from <https://eldridgeforall.org>, and should be studied.

The need to encourage inclusivity was discussed, such as those who have a second home in Glen Ellen; it was agreed that we need to examine our biases regarding who belongs in the community. It was suggested that bringing somebody new to a meeting can be rewarded with a raffle ticket. Asking people to do small tasks may be an effective way to get people involved. It was suggested that the committees publicize their individual meetings on social media such as Facebook.

An open public discussion of community ideas and concerns during the June meeting has been suggested. It's not certain that the Forum is ready for that conversation because, not having a broad representation of the community, the discussion could overlook differing but necessary input. The Sonoma Ecology Center has completed a series of visioning sessions ("Sustainable Sonoma") [could they report their results to the Forum?] There is a need for an ongoing venue to explore the issue in multiple events in a variety of formats ranging from living room discussions to town hall gatherings. The Steering Committee will be advised to not devote the June meeting to such a discussion, but acknowledge we will want to work toward doing this at some point in the future and explore how we would want to go about doing that.

The need to review our mission statement and tag line was presented and discussed at length. The complexity of our community— a vibrant, vital, vigorous village with many points of view, a consternation of opinions about an exhilarating future— is still one community. It was decided that Tracy will craft a mission statement and send it out to the Board for further discussion. Melissa so moved and Angela seconded the motion. Jim moved and Angela seconded that the existing tag line "Many Voices. One Community." be reversed to "One Community. Many Voices." The motion was carried by majority vote. By email discussion and approval after the meeting, the Board agreed that the mission statement will be: "Working together, the Glen Ellen Forum strives to build a stronger community. We are dedicated to performing good works and fostering a venue for education and information for the benefit of our village."

Statements by the people nominated for offices were read, and the distributed ballots were gathered and counted. The results are as follows: The Bylaws and Manual of Policies & Procedures were approved, Melissa Dowling is President of the Board for one year, Angela Morgan is Vice President of the Board for one year, Jim Shere is Secretary of the Board for one year, Margie Foster is Treasurer of the Board for one year, Deanna Furlong, Nancy Padian, Tracy Salcedo, Rob Schermeister, and Bettina Sichel are members at large on the Board, Nick Brown is Chair of the Steering Committee, Oz Robledo is Vice Chair of the Steering Committee, Poppy Darby is Secretary of the Steering Committee, Shannon Lee is Communications Chair of the Steering Committee, and Laura Schermeister and Emily Robledo serve on the Communications Team of the Steering Committee.

Larry Davis then addressed the Board, speaking at length about the need to upgrade the county's General Plan, and the need to prepare people in Glen Ellen that want to participate in the county's plans for their future by educating them about the County General Plan and how it shapes what changes will occur for Glen Ellen's future. He described how the Glen Ellen Development and Design Guideline (written in 1990 by a professional land use planner) had been incorporated into the county's General Plan soon afterward. However, (as Larry explained) we are caught right now, state wide and county wide, with a County General Plan that did not anticipate climate change, which he passionately recommended we need to take into consideration in making changes to our next county General Plan.

Larry presented a proposal that the GE Forum support a local community learning process to educate Glen Ellen residents to effectively participate in the up-date of the county general plan and the revision of the Glen Ellen specific area plan. He estimated that there are thousands of residents in the Glen Ellen area who will be affected by these planning changes as well as the planning of the future of Eldridge. But at present many interested residents are not engaged in or informed about how to effectively participate in these governmental planning processes.

"We have to do better marketing to get them engaged," Larry said, adding "we're not going to get them engaged in what we care about, we're going to get them engaged in what they care about". He concluded by suggesting that the Forum, in conjunction with other organizations, sponsor an educational process that can educate the people of Glen Ellen about these governmental planning processes. "Remember," he concluded, "this will all happen in the context of the 2020 election. There's not going to be a lack of attention to these issues, but there will be a lack of education to effectively participate unless we act."

His presentation was followed by a healthy conversation that returned to the open public discussion of community ideas and concerns that had been presented earlier in the meeting. No immediate decisions were made, but the subject remains of great interest to the Board.

Melissa adjourned the meeting at 4:16pm, announcing that the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors will take place at Mayflower Hall Thursday, July 18th, at 6pm