

Valles Caldera Trust
Minutes of the Public Meeting - January 28, 2005
National Park Service Old Santa Fe Trail Building
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Board Members Present

Tracy Hephner, Chairperson
Barbara Johnson, Vice-Chairperson
Larry Icerman, Secretary
Darlene Knootz
Gilbert Zepada

Staff Members Present

Ray Powell, Executive Director
Pam Dale, Human Resources Specialist
Rich Engstrom, Business Manager
Julie Grey, Communications Manager
Dennis Hazlett, Controller
Bob Parmenter, Preserve Scientist
Dennis Trujillo, Preserve Manager

I. Review and Approve the Agenda

Larry Icerman made a motion to approve agenda subject to an agenda item dealing with an amendment to Bylaws being removed. Dr. Icerman's motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

II. Review and Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings

Tracy Hephner made a motion to approve the October 22, 2004, meeting minutes and the December 3, 2004, meeting minutes, the latter being subject to a number of amendments. The amendments involved deleting the last sentence in the paragraph on page 5 that starts with the words "Julie Grey," inserting a period after the word "budget" and striking the remainder of that sentence in the motion to approve the revised FY05 budget on page 5, and removing the footnote on the bottom of page 10 and incorporating the contents thereof into the text. **The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.**

III. Approve Future Executive Session

Darlene Koontz made a motion to approve a future executive session. Larry Icerman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

IV. Report from the Executive Director

Ray Powell informed the Board of a review of all Trust policies and procedures that he has initiated. He also updated the Board on the upcoming audit of the Trust's past operations by the General Accountability Office (GAO).

Ray Powell described a public event, hosted by and held at the Museum of Natural History in Albuquerque on the evening of January 27, 2005, that featured photographs of the Preserve taken by Don Usner. Tracy Hephner and Larry Icerman, as well as several staff members, were in attendance. This activity was an example of the Trust's efforts to enhance communication with the public.

V. Old Business

Julie Grey updated the Board on her efforts to complete the Comprehensive Management Framework (CMF). A press run of approximately 2,000 copies is planned. Barbara Johnson suggested that copies could be sent to libraries.

Tracy Hephner updated the Board regarding the efforts to finalize the Master Plan for Interpretation. She also updated the Board on the meeting with the Public Lands Interpretative Association (PLIA) that was held on January 27, 2005.

Ray Powell updated the Board on Senate Bill 1582 that addresses the geothermal issues on the Preserve. The Bill is planned for introduction in the Senate next week. A companion bill is expected to be introduced into the House of Representatives.

Dr. Powell also updated the Board on the progress of the new website. He indicated that when the website was completed the Trust will have more internal control over the site and that it would be more user-friendly. The Board was apprised of difficulties with the pay.gov feature and the Board was advised that alternatives to pay.gov were being explored.

Bob Parmenter updated the Board on the Soil Mapping Project ongoing at the Preserve, including a brief PowerPoint presentation. A report by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on the soils of the Preserve is scheduled for completion in 2006.

VI. New Business

Larry Icerman made a motion to ratify the election of new officers by the Board. The motion was seconded by Darlene Koontz and passed unanimously. The newly elected officers, Tracy Hephner as Chairperson, Barbara Johnson as Vice Chairperson, and Larry Icerman as Secretary, will serve through September 30, 2005.

Larry Icerman made a motion to abolish the existing standing committees of the Board. Gilbert Zepeda seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. This action was appropriate because the membership of the existing standing committees included Trustees whose terms have expired. Until new Trustees are appointed, there is an insufficient number of Trustees to populate the standing committees and allow the committees to be functional.

Tracy Hephner updated the Board on the process involved in new individuals being appointed as Trustees.

Tentative Board meeting dates were set for February 15th and 16th as well as March 15th and 16th. The tentative February meeting location will be in Santa Fe and the March meeting location will be either in Los Alamos or at Bandelier National Monument.

Tracy Hephner described four broad strategic goals for the Board for 2005. These goals involve the assembly of information necessary to make sound decisions regarding priority infrastructure improvements on the Preserve, the development of a long-term strategy to achieve financial self-sufficiency, policies for the transition of interim Preserve programs to regular status, and the enhancement of communications from the Board to the public.

VII. Public Discussion and Comments

A member of the public asked what sources of funds would be used to meet the self-sufficiency goals of the Trust? Larry Icerman responded that donations, congressional appropriations, access fees, and other revenues received from the public would be included.

Bill Huey noted that a friend of his inquired about making a donation. Do donations need to be made for a specific activity or project or can unrestricted donations be made? Larry Icerman responded donations could be either specific or non-specific with respect to use.

A member of the public noted that the Board should have more meetings in locations other than Santa Fe and Los Alamos, for example, meetings in Espanola or other rural communities in northern New Mexico.

Carlos Salazar voiced a concern of some ranchers relating to migration of elk off the Preserve. He suggested that possibly a game fence could be built or that a reduction in the elk population on the Preserve could be considered.

VIII. Adjournment

Darlene Koontz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Approved as amended on May 25, 2005.

Respectfully submitted by Larry Icerman, Secretary.