

MBCA BOARD MEETING **APPROVED** MINUTES

Thursday, February 12, 2026 / 4:00 – 6:00 PM on Zoom

Black Bold Italics = Board vote *Blue Italics = action commitment*

<input type="checkbox"/> Steve Bardwell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pat Flanagan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arch McCulloch
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stacy Doolittle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Hammer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joani Tremblay
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Fick	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Janet Johnston	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laraine Turk
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Erin Flanagan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Kennington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Wold

Steve called the regular meeting to order at 4:03 PM

• Introduction of Guests and Board Directors

No guests present.

• Agenda approval

Steve noted that next month we will meet in person as well as Zoom, and he will do some revising of the agenda format based on suggestions from Erin. Bob asked to add an MWA item under DWL and Earth Day was also added. ***Sarah moved to approve the agenda. Erin seconded, and all were in favor. (12-0).***

• Approve Minutes from January 8, 2025, BOD meeting

Janet moved to approve the January minutes plus the record of the January 18 online vote regarding attorney advice. Erin seconded, and all were in favor. (12-0).

Treasurer's Report – Budgeting

Bob sent us the monthly reports. Discussion followed with concerns about having that information (especially account totals) publicly available. *Laraine will look into requirements of non-profit publishing of financial information online.* In checking we have about \$37K and \$51K in a CD which matures in June. We received 16 new memberships in January plus 7 donations totaling \$355. The only significant expense was \$878 to Yucca Valley for the annual meeting, including the \$500 deposit (returned) and room rental. The Treasurer's report was accepted by consensus.

Guest Steve Gjerstad joined.

Outreach and Organizational Issues

1. Recap Annual Meeting

The full meeting [video](#) is online via YouTube and Stacy reported that Cole is putting together a 12-minute video of Steve's overview of development issues. *Stacy will post it on socials to raise awareness.*

2. [Care for Big Bear](#) Dark Sky event August 2026

This group requested our involvement focused on dark sky issues. There was Board interest so Steve will request more details and schedule volunteers. Steve mentioned that the lighting demonstration that Alan Songer helped create might be good for this.

Committee Reports: Steve spoke about Erin's suggestions to streamline the agenda in the future – focus only on action items. Erin noted that as a new Board member she found the agenda rather overwhelming. *She's working on a draft format to reorganize the agenda for the March meeting.* Categories might be: Following Up; What's New; Awareness; and Action. It will be a starting point, to be developed. *Steve*

stated that each committee head should email its Committee status report in advance of the Board meeting so we can use the meeting time for decisions and discussion instead of “catching up on details.” Sarah expressed concern about providing information for guests. Stacy added that this approach reduces the heavy load that Steve takes on in developing the agenda and leading the meeting. Board members will have written content ahead of the meeting and can ask and answer questions instead of having to spend time going over details.

→Steve Gjerstad’s report (5. in Land Use Committee category)
was added here due to his schedule. ←

5. WEMO [Injunctive Relief](#) re: [WMRMP](#) (WEMO) OHV vs Tortoise-S. Gjerstad

Steve G. spoke in detail about the sequence of events in his legal actions and the latest results. His motion to intervene was unsuccessful but he got good information in front of the judge, providing extensive documentation of unlawful off route travel and incursion in sensitive habitats. He also showed about 100 photos of property damage in his submissions.

Judge Susan Illston issued the new decision: BLM is ordered to close all routes in tortoise and milkvetch protected habitat until mid-October 2029. They have to close down about 1 million acres and have to request permission to create new routes. It will be 40 days or so until the appeal deadline and we’ll see what 9th Circuit Court does. (Routes don’t have to be closed before the appeal.) Steve G suggested that once it is settled, we should do some checking in the affected areas. He has a tortoise interactive map.

Erin asked for the [link](#) to read the full decision. Steve G. will also send the tortoise map and a link to the interactive version. BLM will have to submit reports on progress every 90 days. He will continue compiling photos of incursions on private land and suggest others should as well and send such photos to the OHMVR Commission Chair. The new chair since November seems responsive.

Finance Committee BW

1. 2026 Budget – A budget will be presented next month, as the committee hasn’t been able to meet. *Bob still needs specific budgets from some committee chairs*, but understands that some committees don’t regularly spend money.

Land Use Conservation AM

1. [Renewable Energy](#)
 - a. Sienna Solar project appeal – Recap.
We lost the appeal. Discussion focused on whether what we presented actually effectively addressed “substantive issues and actions.” There were mixed opinions, but there was consensus that we should seek legal review early in the future, via our on-call attorney Chris Carrillo or a CEQA attorney if needed.
 - b. Soda Mountain Report on 2-5-26 Barstow meeting
CEC is the sponsoring agency with the purpose to restart the project, presenting the Draft EIR for public comment. Those attending felt it was hard to see a clear result. The County was previously against it, related to

water issues, but now the company is trucking in water from a property owner. A unique issue is the Brightline Train and required wildlife overpasses. There is proven presence of tortoise, kit foxes, badgers, and burrowing owls. *Arch is working on creating our comment by the February 27 deadline. Pat is doing dust comments.*

c. E Group PS (Harmony Acres)

Pat stated that dust is a main issue. The developer is offering the City \$100K per year while in operation and threatens going to the CEC if the city doesn't pass it. We don't believe they can generate 50 MW on 184 acres. The 29 Palms Planning Commission will hear it on February 17 and if approved, goes to City Council. The company has a site in Serbia with no history of sites in California. *Laraine will put related meetings on the MBCA calendar.*

d. [SB 868](#) Plug and Play Solar Act [support](#)

Solar Rights Alliance is urging the state to approve easy and inexpensive plug-in modules to run household appliances.

2. Development Proposals

a. Joshua Tree Sewer

Stacy reported that the JBWD General Manager Sarah Johnson had a kickoff meeting with the County on the sewer project (here are the [minutes](#) of that meeting). *Stacy as President of the JBWD Board is asking for a meeting to review sewer issues in depth.*

3. Water

- a. MWA – Brian: there were about 38 inches of rain in mountains.
- b. JBWD – above.

4. Wildlife – Crossing vs item #18 [Mountain Lion listing](#)

There is a genetic isolation issue. Fish and Game Commission meeting on this topic was today – no one present watched it.

5. WEMO [Injunctive Relief](#) re: [WMRMP](#) (WEMO) OHV vs Tortoise (**Reported above at the start of Committee Reports.**)

ADDED by Arch:

6. St. Cloud Mine in the Amargosa Basin was approved by BLM but CBD and the Timbisha Shoshone have [filed an appeal](#).

7. Regarding CA 30x30: Meghan Hertel was promoted to Director of CA Department of Fish and Wildlife. The accomplishments toward 30x30 goals have been significant, up to 26.1% of land and over 21.9% of coastal waters.

8. IDWG is now called “Desert Regional Group.” There is a committee trying to put together a business roundtable with Obernolte, to get businesses to tell him how much they depend on undisturbed public lands. *Give any suggestions for business owners to Arch and he'll pass to the committee.*

Board/Volunteer Recruitment SK No update today.

Housing and Community JJ

1. Report on letter from Carrillo to CoC
A letter was sent to Supervisor Baca who is chair of Continuum of Care (CoC) at the County level. We're saying County Counsel advised incorrectly about the appropriateness of current County involvement and that an independent CoC counsel is needed, illustrating how they lost funding possibly due to the power configuration. An independent counsel would help with power balance issues as well as Brown Act issues that have been problematic at times.
2. Working Solutions Working Group update
3. Point in Time Recap

DWL SD

1. Greywater presentation at the [Sustainable Learning Center](#)
The Greywater follow-up workshops are being planned, one locally and one in the Apple/Lucerne Valley area.
2. ADA accessibility (Chat GPT [link](#))
(see next item)
3. Spring Landscape Tour planning update SD, SK, BW
Sites are chosen, deadlines for creating media for advertising are approaching. In addition to the information Stacy provided on ADA, Steve talked with someone from the Art Tours. We will provide in the program a statement asking anyone who needs assistance to contact us and we will make reasonable accommodations. *Steve will provide the specific language.*
4. Additional MWA question from Bob.
Our application for the 2026-27 MWA grant is due March 23. He suggests we start fresh on writing it this year as for the last several years it has been only copied and minimally changed. Brian agreed that would be wise and *he offered to help with graphics.*

MWA has a video series in which they like to feature strategic partners and might be interested in MBCA for a future video. *Stacy, Bob, Brian, Erin, and maybe Joani will work on this.*
5. Earth Day at YV
They requested we participate through Janet (they are involved in the Field Trips). *Laraine offered to oversee planning for this. Janet will work on purchasing an EZ Up shelter. Arch will share information on getting a tablecloth.* Erin suggested we need easels, more versions of the Top Ten Tips stickers, & business cards. Stacy said that it would be very expensive to print all 10 sticker designs (we have 3).

Web, Social Media Communications SD

1. Video re: developments in Morongo Basin
After our online vote on February 5 (recorded below), Stacy arranged for Cole to create a YouTube [video](#) of Steve's Annual Meeting presentation on

developments in the Morongo Basin.

Education

1. Scholarships LT

The Press Release has been sent, and the application is available on the website [scholarship page](#).

2. Field Trip JJ

The District has approved it, permission slips have been sent out, and plans are almost complete except for final volunteers and bus details. The Desert View Conservation Area trip is Thursday, Feb. 26, and the CMC/Jobs/Harrison House trip on Friday, March 6.

Partnership Advocacy SB

Oppose Steven Pearce BLM director, Bonanza Peak require EIR

[JTABC](#) membership for MBCA? David described a recent meeting. Membership would be \$200.

Director's Comments

Laraine, Erin, and Stacy have recently talked about improving MBCA and setting up for future success. We all have passion but are working less with common direction and in sync than we might for best outcomes and to build our membership and reputation. They have several suggestions:

- Start planning our 60th anniversary (2029 is only 2 ¾ years away!).
- Develop a strategic plan with a consultant.
- Revisit our 3 goals* that have been in place (with minor changes) for 8 years but haven't really been expanded on with detailed actions & desired outcomes. (Part of a strategic plan.)
- Advertise more regularly and strongly, maybe even get a long-term billboard.
- Do a survey of members and supporters; what are their issues and expectations?

Adjourned at 4:14 PM.

Next *Regular* Meeting: Thursday, March 12, 2026, 4:00 – 6:00 PM

**IN-PERSON Yucca Valley Community Center –
The Mesquite Room and Via Zoom**

*GENERAL BOARD GOALS, ADOPTED IN 2018, Revised 2021, [Revised 2025](#).

[Goal 1](#): Engage in issues impacting [land use and](#) natural resources, quality of life, and human health [and welfare](#).

Goal 2: Maintain active community involvement through education in issues such as climate change, clean air, energy and water use.

Goal 3: Highlight the value of the natural environment for the arts, tourism and other segments of our local economy.

Record of MBCA Online Vote on \$1000 to Carrillo Law January 2026

Steve moved to allocate up to \$1,000 to Chris Carrillo Law for legal services to write a letter to the San Bernardino City and County Continuum of Care (CoC) requesting a re-hearing of agenda item #6 of the October 22, 2025 CoC board meeting.

David seconded.

Online votes completed on January 18, 2026

Bardwell	YES	Johnston	YES
Doolittle	YES	Kennington	YES
Fick	YES	McCulloch	YES
E. Flanagan	YES	Tremblay	YES
P. Flanagan	YES	Turk	YES
Hammer	YES	Wold	YES

Record of Motion and online vote for Cole Gibson development video 02 05 26

David moved to approve payment of up to \$250 to Cole Gibson for the production of a video based on the “development” presentation by Steve Bardwell at the January 24, 2026 Annual Meeting. Brian seconded the motion. All Board members voted in favor via email on February 5, 2026.

Bardwell	YES	Johnston	YES
Doolittle	YES	Kennington	YES
Fick	YES	McCulloch	YES
E. Flanagan	YES	Tremblay	YES
P. Flanagan	YES	Turk	YES
Hammer	YES	Wold	YES