

**MBCA Board Meeting APPROVED Minutes – March 12, 2026**  
**Yucca Valley Community Center and Zoom**

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

<input checked="" 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

**Call to Order at 4:10 pm**

**Introduction – Board Members and Guests**

No guests are present.

**Approve Minutes from February 12, 2026**

***Stacy moved to approve the minutes. Sarah seconded and all were in favor. (12-0)***

**Treasurer’s Report**

Bob reported a slight increase in donations, perhaps because of the greywater workshop offering a scholarship for members. Payments were related to expenses for Chris Carrillo’s legal advice and the Annual Meeting. *Our CD will mature in May, so we need to vote on next choices in April. Bob will come to next meeting with timeframes and options for CD renewal (including new APR if available by that date).* Bob is still working on the total accounts change from US Bank to Banc of CA, which will be completed when our NationBuilder payments are changed to Banc of CA. The Treasurer’s report was accepted by consensus.

**Acceptance of Agenda.** Steve thanked Erin for input on changing the agenda format. The goal is to streamline meetings and have more work done in committees, including committee reports submitted in advance, so that action items can be the main menu for the meeting. Erin spoke about the importance of considering things in sequence so that deadlines are met. Next month’s meeting will be Zoom only. *Pat passed a thumb drive of documents to Laraine to be added to the website.*

**I. Upcoming**

**Greywater Workshop – March 14 (Stacy)**

The workshop by Nicholas Holmes is on Saturday at Spider Fawke’s house. Bob and Stacy plan to stop by. At least 11 signed up and some of the recent online memberships are likely from participants signing up to get the free scholarship. This is actually good publicity. Another greywater presentation is scheduled for Apple Valley on May 2, with a 2-day workshop, location TBD. Neville Slade, the representative there, thinks there could be 40 people.

**Letters and related actions on current development proposals:**

MB Comm Tower 3/16/26 (Arch)

Arch reported that the Residents Against the Tower/RATT group is asking us for a sign-on to a follow-up letter for those who commented before. *Arch will*

*send details to Steve. Joani has also written a letter and will send it with Arch's help.*

#### 29 Palms City Council Meeting – E-Group Harmony Acres

*Pat will write another letter.* News has come out that they don't qualify for AB205 because they can't generate 50MW with the current plan. Pat also learned there's a \$75k non-refundable deposit to file with CEC under AB205, which may be in part why they have pressed 29 Palms. "There's no positive benefit from this project." *Pat, Erin, and maybe David will attend the March 23rd City Council meeting in person.*

#### Monday March 16 comments deadline on Pioneertown Soundstage

*Steve will put together comments on the initial study.* With a conjoining barn and covered pavilion among other elements, it becomes an event center. In combination with the Pioneertown Hotel, there's a large cumulative effect, which will be a focus of the comment letter. Also to be addressed will be water and septic issues as well as noise, lights, traffic, etc. There is a historic overlay created by Ben Loescher with Friends of Pioneertown, but it hasn't yet been accepted by the County.

#### Lear Avenue Solar

At Monday's meeting with Land Use Services leadership, Steve noted the lack of notice on this project. This is separate from the (nearby) E-Group Solar project

### **Landscape Tours - April 19, 2026 (Stacy)**

Stacy reported progress; the advertising art and the program are almost completed. Tour guides/docents are recruited. Outreach both in person and digitally are being planned. There are 2 additional events prior to the Tour this year.

#### Farmers Market Outreach/tickets:

Sat. April 11 Steve and Sarah; Sat. April 18 TBD.

This will be on Miriam's lot; tablecloths have been ordered; the old banner will be used.

Saturday Morning April 18 - Botanist Walk 8AM-1PM – There is an extra cost and it is only offered combined with Tour, no Walk-only registration available.

Saturday afternoon April 18 - Pollinator Talk 4-6PM – FREE - at Hey There in downtown JT with a registration table.

Sunday April 19 9AM-4PM - Desert-Wise Landscape Tour - \$20 members/\$25 non-members.

Other tasks the Committee is working on include distributing and erecting directional signs (and picking them up after the Tour); getting shade structures where needed; and insurance issues. There are 2 more Committee meetings before the Tour.

### **Scholarships (Laraine)**

- There was discussion about getting the information out more widely – there have been difficulties getting the information directly to teachers, especially after YVHS ecology teacher Cindy Zacks retired, and we’ve never had an advocate at TPHS. *Erin will work toward getting more 29 Palms contacts.*
- Applications due – midnight March 22, 2026
- Application Review – the Committee has traditionally reviewed and made the decision.
- YVHS’s scholarship program is May 20 at 6PM.
- Laraine suggested that a new Education Committee chair would be welcomed, to renew and expand the scholarship program.

### **Grant Application (Bob, Erin and Joani)**

Mojave Water Agency – due March 23 (What new ideas to pitch?)

After discussion and consideration within the group, we stayed with our more “incremental” approach toward MWA in our proposal for ’26-’27. We mentioned new greywater education efforts but just one new feature rather than a new direction. Last year we asked for \$9000 and received \$8500; this year we’ll ask for \$9500 and see what happens. *Bob will talk with Brian before sending.* Steve suggested we add a video of one of the greywater workshops and possibly a fall event.

*Bob will check with Cathy about the process for requesting renewal of the local water district grants for next year, which are usually received by June 30.*

### **Retreat (July or August 2026)**

After discussion, the dates available for all Board members are currently August 29-30. We’ll discuss potential topics at the April meeting, with a focus on roles and responsibilities for 2027, the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2029, and a Strategic Plan.

## **II. Updates from the last meeting**

### **Completed Events**

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Field Trips (Janet) Janet reported on both events, including a social media-shared video of the event done by Melissa Sabol. Janet reviewed all the activities completed at both trips.

### SB LUS Meeting and Field Trip (Steve)

Those of us attending felt good about the meeting and the field trip in the Panorama Heights area. Each LUS staff member received an envelope with our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary book and all the hand-out literature we use at outreach tables. We are encouraged that their commitment to better communication seems sincere. They listened with focus to comments from all 17 community members. They asked Steve for contact information. They are all quite new in their jobs, between 2 years and just 2 months. Communication was the big issue, especially lack of same for years. *Erin suggests we give them feedback and communicate with Dawn Rowe.* Director Miguel Figueroa said he is going out to visit communities and that the Planning Commissioners also said they’d be interested. *Erin will write up a summary of the meeting and Laraine has sent her a summary of the driving tour/field trip to include.*

Janet brought up the local issue of potentially closing several (4) schools and how it relates to our issues.

### III. Items that require discussion / decision – including requests (new)

Art Tours Catalog – should we purchase an advertisement in the catalog? Steve is investigating cost and timing. Deadline will probably be in May. *Stacy suggested we add more content in the ad about our mission instead of just “congratulations.” Joani offered to help.*

Should MBCA support the Monument Manor Neighborhood Association? Stacy sent an email from them, with content about dark night skies along with additional issues including rodenticides. *We should leverage this by distributing to other groups and use some of their points on our website with credit to their creators.*

Should MBCA subscribe to an AI account to assist with our work? *Discuss next time.*

What are MBCA questions for JBWD re: new sewer district for the April 1 meeting?

- County Special Districts will speak to the Board on April 1 about sewer planning for Joshua Tree. Stacy has developed critical questions to ask.
- One key point is that in the Environmental Impact section of the Countywide Plan, they projected low growth in the Morongo Basin, yet they’re adding infrastructure to encourage growth. An MWA study projected the area to increase only 15% in 40 years. The County sewer planning seems political rather than to serve the community, creating an environment to add more corporate businesses.
- They haven’t asked important and legitimate questions like “Does the community want to grow?” “What does the community want?”
- Brian reported that a State Groundwater Management plan was just released, which affects us at least in part. The Ames/Reche agreement and Warren Basin are covered by that plan, but outside those areas, it’s not clear.

New business cards will cost \$250 for re-design and printing of 500 cards, 100 each for 5 people who requested them. **Steve moved to spend the \$250 on these cards. Erin seconded and all were in favor. (12-0)**

### IV. Regular Agenda Items

\*\* Committee updates not already covered, and all should assume that board members have ready submittal provided.

Confirm members of each Committee: What Steve sent recently is correct.

Have all committees prepared their purpose statements?

We discussed everyone using Google Drive or the NationBuilder website rather than communicating through extensive emails and email threads that can become hard to keep track of and confusing. *Stacy will send the Google Drive link to everyone and everyone should do the training to make us more efficient.* We might also have everyone use an MBCA email. *Stacy, Joani, and Erin will help with Google Drive and*

*using the mbconservation.org emails.*

## **Operation and Program Committees**

### Finance Committee (Bob)

Bob handed out a consolidated budget document containing profit and loss statements for 2023, actuals for 2024 and 2025, and a 2026 suggested budget. The Board expressed thanks for a lot of work and great information!

### Committee Budgets

*Desert Wise Living and Tour Committee (Stacy)*

*Web/ Social Media / Communication (Stacy)*

Stacy shared a data summary of our Facebook posts from December to now, showing thousands of engagements not only to our FB members but sharing with other groups' sites as well. *Analyzing this should be used to help us understand in which issues and events people are most interested.*

*Education (Laraine)*

*Board and Volunteer Recruitment (Sarah)*

## **Strategic Committees**

*Partnership and Advocacy (Steve)*

*Land Use and Conservation (Arch)*

*Housing and Community (Janet)*

*Steve suggests everyone review their budgets as presented in Bob's document and give feedback, especially if numbers need to be changed. Janet needs to submit an invoice for some of her costs on housing and field trips.*

## **Director's Comments**

- David reported that information about the JT Village Neighbors lawsuit is out today.
- Arch asked for more input to the wide array of Land Use topics within his committee. *Please submit any information you come across to him for the monthly report.*

**Next Board Meeting: April 9, 2026**

Zoom only.

**Adjourned at 6:15 pm.**