

MBCA Board Meeting APPROVED Minutes – May 14, 2026
Via 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 type="checkbox"/> Joani Tremblay-excused
<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 4:08 PM

Introduction – Board Members and Guests

Steve thanked Helen Jeong for returning, and welcomed Michelle Swoish, sitting in for Larry Fike.

Approve Minutes from April 9, 2026

Erin moved to approve the minutes. Pat seconded and all were in favor. (11-0)

Any agenda additions? Several were added.

Treasurer’s Report

Bob sent us monthly financial details prior to the meeting. In the last month we processed about 110 membership-related transactions including those from the Tour. Tour expenses are being paid quickly. Action is needed on our 13-month CD @ 3.75% interest that expires May 19. Bob discussed options with Shelley at Banc of CA. The Board discussed options related to interest and liquidity. ***Bob moved that we: 1) roll over the entire CD on Tuesday; 2) close out the US Bank checking account within the month (about \$30K); and 3) transfer \$25K into a new business money market account and the rest (about \$5K) into the existing Banc of CA checking account, subject to reasonable regulations and based on the best possibilities at the time. Steve seconded and all were in favor. (11-0)*** The Treasurer’s report was accepted by consensus.

I. Upcoming

MBCA Administrative Topics

Use of Google Drive and how to access it (tutorial)

Stacy noted the Tour Committee has been using it and a lot of online training is available. She explained that as a nonprofit we have Google space for free, how it works, and that we need policies on usage if we want it to be private rather than open. *Steve would like to set up a future tutorial.* Stacy reminded that [name@mbconservation.org](mailto:mbconservation.org) emails had been set up for everyone a while ago but now contact Nora to get one and set up your account. Stacy said she’ll help us all figure it out.

If you want new MBCA business cards with your mbconservation email, submit info to Steve by 5/15/26.

For our new plan for committee chairs to submit action summaries before the next meeting, *Erin will send out a reminder 2 weeks in advance.*

Obernolte's office is working on resolution of our organization name issue in the IRS non-profit registry.

Arch said there is more progress on setting up a Power In Nature/PIN Businesses meeting with Obernolte. Any businesses you know should be encouraged to attend. *Arch will send more info when available.*

Solar Valley Consortium Virtual Conference – May 14, 2026

Sponsored by UC Riverside; 8:30-12:30

Attendees: Laraine and Steve

Laraine will send out a summary. A main point was to push more distributed projects. Steve added there was not too much substantive content from the SB County LUS representative but the County is trying to pay more attention to noticing of projects. Brian thinks a Data Center may be on offer to the Victor Valley area.

Art Tours Catalog – new graphics and copy. Due May 15, 2026

Steve, Bob, Joani – design has been agreed on and will be sent.

Scholarship Presentation — May 20, 2026

Steve and Sarah will award the two MBCA scholarships at YVHS.

Eco-Education Summit – May 23, 2026

Harrison House 9:30 – 1:00

6881 Mt Lassen Ave, JT

Janet asks volunteers to show up at 9. Lunch is included. Pat and Eva will be interviewed on Z107.7's Friday program at 10 AM.

Grant Application (Bob)

Bob is preparing letters to the water agencies requesting their annual donation with follow-up thanks for their support. These will be sent by July 8; at current amounts this totals \$5500. A grant application for \$9500 was submitted to MWA. Decision is expected June 11 for their 26-27 budget year.

Agencies: 29 Palms, Joshua Basin Water District, Hi-Desert Water District, Mojave Water Agency, Golden State Water. *A common remarks document needs to be created for thank you presentations. (Not assigned.) Laraine will put together a Funders' Report modeled on past reports. Presenters: Pat for 29; LT for JBWD; Steve for BDVWA; Erin for HDWD; and Steve for MWA; dates TBD.*

Final Greywater Workshop TBD

Steve reported that the earlier presentation a few weeks ago hosted about 15-18 people, lower than hoped. They still need a location in the Apple Valley area for the actual Workshop in coordination with Neville. *Steve will follow up with Neville and Nicholas for location and date.*

Retreat – Saturday August 29, 2026

We agreed to have a dinner Friday evening before the Saturday retreat.

Potential Topics: Add if you have others. Pat can't attend due to traveling.

- Roles and Responsibilities for 2027 – changes in 2027
- Future of the website – what should be there and who are the admins?
- Google drive – not public facing and how do we use it?
- Future of MBCA Scholarships
- How to manage social media going forward - people are engaging with it.
- How do we manage our presence going forward to make the best use of this tool?
- What involvement should MBCA have going forward with initiatives that are related to housing? Are there other initiatives we need to think about as well?
- Subscription to ChatGPT or similar – subscription adds more functionality
- 60th Anniversary
- Mission Statement for MBCA
 - Strategic Plan
 - Facilitator for a workshop?
 - “survey” of members related to future priorities
- *Preparation for Retreat homework for board members -- homework*

II. Updates from the last meeting

Completed Events

2nd Greywater Presentation at Sustainable Learning Center – May 2 (Steve)

Landscape Tours - April 19, 2026 (Stacy)

KUDOS!!! Steve especially thanked Stacy for her great leadership this year. Stacy sent out a review of the Botanist Walk. *Laraine will call a summer debrief meeting.* We need to talk about future Tour leadership as Stacy will step down and there's a need for more volunteers. *Erin would like to be added.*

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

- MBCA Relationship to SB LUS – JT, Landers/Homestead Valley/Pioneertown. We had the Summit with the LUS folks in April. Glen Harris on behalf of Supervisor Rowe sent a response to our request for a MAC, saying they are going to rely on “community organizations” e.g. community groups like Landers Assn., and perhaps JTABC. They have no interest in recreating a MAC.

Many of us agreed how helpful the MAC was – it allowed community dialogue. Brian favors continuing to push for a MAC. Sarah noted MBCA doesn't have the bandwidth to take it on alone. Stacy pointed to the alleged expense of a MAC - we should get data on that. Couldn't the TOT income from our area be used? How are other MACs funded? How about LVEDA? Maybe petition to create more pressure?

Steve noted that a main MAC purpose is for awareness of development proposals across the Basin and that there is now a planner (Danny Campos) designated for JT area. He's working on building a better online template for viewing projects and status. We discussed paying someone (Chris Carrillo or Krystian LaHage?) to research the costs and legal aspects of a MAC. Stacy moved to hire someone to make an FOIA inquiry about this. (No second was voiced.) Erin pointed out we're asking the County to be committed to representation, particularly in unincorporated areas – they are in essence disregarding our communities. Steve added we also like the MAC for updates from County departments (e.g. Fire, Sheriff).

Several Board members urged us to be aggressive about this and the issues of cost and accountability were repeated, but no action was agreed upon.

- Rewrite of the Renewable Energy Element by the County – impact on hi-desert? Not discussed.
- Role – need to review the BOS and PC agendas and other notifications from SBC. – Not discussed.
- Dawn Rowe's vague reference to a MAC-like body – what is this and how would it be organized. Discussed above.
- Music Valley Mine - Arch, MDLT and NPCA are keeping an eye on it.

III. Regular Agenda Items

** The items discussed here should be committee updates not already covered in committee reports.

Operation and Program Committees

Finance Committee (Bob)

Committee Budgets - What Bob and the Committee has provided is a first cut of budget vs. actual. *Bob expects to publish it 2 or 3 times a year to do a check-up, e.g. April, August, December. He invites committee chairs to review and reply, then fine tune with him if needed.*

Desert Wise Living and Tour Committee (Stacy) – Nothing beyond the report.

Web/ Social Media / Communication (Stacy) – Nothing beyond the report.

Education (Laraine) – Nothing beyond the report.

Board and Volunteer Recruitment (Sarah) – Nothing beyond the report.

Strategic Committees

Partnership and Advocacy (Steve)

Steve has additional MAC information - see discussion above.

We also [signed on](#) against State Chamber of Commerce CEQA initiative on the November ballot. Stacy added that from her state water-related meeting, permitting reform “is huge.” There is a lot of pressure to help developers.

Land Use and Conservation (Arch)

Brian suggested MBCA consider sponsoring a program to present MWA hydrologist Tony Winkle’s PowerPoint presentation about the history of the Mojave River, perhaps with co-sponsors such as MDLT, water districts, and/or historical societies. It could be virtual or in person or both. *Steve, Arch and Brian will connect with presenter Tony Winkle to get a preview.*

Steve mentioned the request we received to provide Night Sky content for a Big Bear Visitors Bureau event August 14-16. We haven’t followed up. Steve also received email from LA County Code Enforcement who saw our presentation to the Planning Commission on the Light Trespass Ordinance. They asked for people to educate code enforcement re: dark sky issues.

Housing and Community (Janet) – They are still wrestling with County Counsel over committee charter issues in the East Desert Regional Steering Committee. The group is critical and has all the right MB entities. They had a plan but it was not accepted. Steve complimented Janet on the deep knowledge she has gained by her work on housing; it seems few others are so knowledgeable and it’s frustrating she’s not getting needed support.

Director’s Comments

Stacy spoke about the idea of a new group, JT SOS, to focus on the lack of consideration of cumulative effects of excessive development in JT. There aren’t the kind of resources needed for CEQA lawsuits. The group (“a creative commando unit”) could proactively create an effective presentation of “what JT is” and find wealthy people to fund a consultant, lawyer, and PR firm to advertise the problem. The JT brand is what draws development to the high desert communities and then ruins it. She’s working on how to best organize. David noted JBWD is hiring a lawyer because there’s no good information on future water situations in JT.

Steve brought up another development proposal in Pipes Canyon to subdivide a lot of parcels near Sand-to-Snow NM. *Brian said there’s good recent information about water availability there and he’ll share.* Comment deadline is June 13. Alta Loma deadline is May 20.

Next Board Meeting: June 11, 2026

Hopefully In-person YV Community Center, Mesquite Room. Zoom will be available.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.

**MBCA Online Vote to fund Eco-Education Summit – approved
unanimously April 30, 2026**

Janet moved that we budget \$600 in potential expense for the Eco-Education Summit. \$500 for Terri’s catering of muffins/coffee and sandwiches salad drink for lunch, along with \$100 for copies of Pat’s curriculum and the agenda and incidentals, that may be distributed. This is assuming around 30 people. Steve seconded.

		Yes	No	Abstain
Bardwell	Steve	x		
Doolittle	Stacy	x		
Fick	David	x		
Flanagan	Pat	x		
Gatlin	Erin	x		
Hammer	Brian	x		
Johnston	Janet	x		
Kennington	Sarah	x		
McCulloch	Arch	x		
Tremblay	Joani	x		
Turk	Laraine	x		
Wold	Bob	x		