

MBCA APPROVED Minutes – June 11, 2026

In-person at the Mesquite Room YV Community Center and by ZOOM

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

x Steve Bardwell

x Erin Gatlin

x Arch McCulloch

x Stacy Doolittle

x Brian Hammer

x Joani Tremblay

___ David Fick (EX)

x Janet Johnston

x Laraine Turk

x Pat Flanagan

x Sarah Kennington

x Bob Wold

Legend of bullets

- a dash means a regular bullet
- **an arrow means we have to resolve something**
- ✓ a check mark means it's complete.
- ➔ **NEW**: Start of Secretary's notes for each outlined item.

Steve called the meeting to order at 4:17 PM

Introduction – Board Members and Guests

➔ Newlywed Board member David Fick and Patti briefly visited via Zoom and received the Board's congratulations. Steve welcomed guest Mike Lipsitz. Claudia Sall arrived a bit later.

Approve Minutes from May 14, 2026

➔ ***Sarah moved to approve the May minutes. Erin seconded and all were in favor. (11-0)***

Suggested Additions to the Agenda

➔ Volunteer position for communications/social media.

Treasurer's Report

➔ Bob sent data prior to the meeting and noted there were few transactions this month. He also noted that the CD rollover deadline was actually June 19 so the plan we agreed to last month will be enacted then. The Treasurer's report was accepted by consensus.

I. Upcoming

MBCA Administrative Topics

- **Bob will be retiring as treasurer. Discussion on fulfilling treasurer duties.** ➔ Bob will work with Steve and Janet in the near future as much as he can. Steve heartily thanked him for having kept our financial matters in such good shape.
- Use of Google Drive and how to access it (tutorial) – Stacy sent an email. What questions are there? ➔ We need a *namings convention for the folders – Stacy will work on this*. Erin and Joani shared some information and suggestions about navigating between personal Gmail accounts and MBCA accounts. *Nora will help with training and answering questions over email*. We're making progress, need everyone to work on this.
- MBCA email addresses – does everyone have one?
- MBCA business cards – Submit info to Steve by 6/15/26 – ➔ *Steve will order as soon as everyone has their MBCA email*.

- Have all committees submitted their purpose statements and budgets? → Yes. Erin reminded us that it's the organization that has a purpose/mission statement; committees should have goals and objectives. *We should change the language we use for this.*
- ✓ Obernolte's office has been helpful. Waiting for confirmation that our name has been updated and is correct in the non-profit registry. → Steve got word from his field assistant Heather that the name has been corrected. *Steve still is not certain it's fully correct but will double-check.*

Scholarship Committee Meeting – July 3 at 10:00 on Zoom.

Preparing for next year.

Grant Application (Bob)

- Prepare letters requesting \$ and follow-up thanks for support to water agencies will be sent by July 8 at current amounts for totals of \$5500. → *Bob has a draft of the letter that will be finalized and sent.*
 - A grant application was submitted to MWA in the amount of \$9500 has been sent and decision expected by June 11. → Haven't heard yet.
- *A common remarks document needs to be created for Thank You presentations. NEED A VOLUNTEER. → After clarification that its purpose is both for a thank-you and to demonstrate how funds were used, Laraine and Stacy volunteered.*
- *Laraine to prepare a Funders Report modeled on past reports. When do we need this?*

Final Greywater Workshop TBD

- *Need a location in the Apple Valley area – coordinating with Neville (Steve to follow up with Neville and Nicholas for location and date) → Steve continues to work on this.*

Retreat – Saturday August 29, 2026

- Board member dinner on Friday evening before the retreat.

Options – restaurant with a side room – Las Palmas? Country Club? Or order food on Erin and Mark's patio (take out or potluck). → Dinner will be at Erin & Mark's and MBCA will purchase the food. The August Retreat will also be at Erin & Mark's.

Leaders for each topic at the Retreat are to do research in advance and report at the July board meeting in more detail in preparation for Retreat.

Steve talked about the need to begin deciding on some reduction in our work. We take on too much. The mission statement is where to start evaluating. *Laraine will send out the Notes from the last several retreats.* We need to review and re-anchor ourselves, ask more questions before making commitments, and do more outreach instead of always reacting/responding. We might start new initiatives, but definitely need more volunteers, and more Board members, especially younger people.

Potential Retreat Topics:

MBCA Management

Roles and Responsibilities for 2027 – changes in 2027

Communication

Future of the website – what should be there and who are the admins?

Subscription to ChatGPT or similar – subscription adds more functionality.

→ Joani had been using it for comment letters but now is using the CLAUD AI model (personally paying). Erin – what do we need these for? (currently placeholders.)

MBCA subscription to Adobe – is it worth considering?

Google drive – not public facing and how do we use it?

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?

→ Brian noted how data centers are a new issue of concern, including in JT. He is also concerned about constraining our activities and especially supports our role in helping others.

MBCA Initiatives → [Laraine and Janet](#)

Future of MBCA Scholarships

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?

→ A general discussion about initiatives followed. Initiative topics must fit into a strategic plan. Erin suggested using a variety of forums but training others to take action rather than us taking everything on. Stacy and Laraine recommended developing a rubric for deciding what to take on. Initiatives should come from a strategic plan and its goals and objectives.

60th Anniversary → [Erin to lead this.](#)

Mission Statement for MBCA

Strategic Plan

-Facilitator for a workshop?

-"survey" of members related to future priorities

→ Sarah suggested that even just to focus on capacity and initiatives would take a full day! Erin agreed that a 2nd round of discussion might be needed after the retreat. The Retreat is preparation for a strategic planning session which will be in the fall. The 60th anniversary planning is part of strategic plan. For some historic and recent overview of our planning, [Laraine will provide several past retreat notes and other documents.](#) The [50th booklet](#) is on the website. *Everyone*

should review these and bring ideas and goals for the Retreat to discuss at the July Board meeting.

Further discussion topics included:

- the benefits of brainstorming
- a need to focus on “hard decisions”
- understanding and handling what the community asks of us and not being all things to all people
- consider limiting our geographical scope
- where does climate change come in?
- change to emphasis on training/teaching other informal groups, possibly hiring someone to help with this
- hiring a volunteer manager
- the MAC issue

Claudia recommended looking into matching grants from the [Rose Foundation](#) and [Conservation Lands Foundation](#).

Erin summarized that at the Retreat we will review our current mission and goals and prepare for strategic planning and the 60th anniversary. This will be a thoughtful pause and then we'll get back to action.

NEXT STEPS → These were not specifically addressed but it seems the champions would be the Committee Chairs.

1. Identify champions for each of the Retreat topics.
2. Champions prepare at least a detailed outline of the workshop session for review by the Board by **July 6**. Potential topics listed are a starting point and can be expanded by the champions for consideration by the Board.
3. Champions complete preparation of materials in advance of the retreat by **August 13**.

II. Updates from the last meeting

Completed Events

Solar Valley Consortium Virtual Conference – May 14, 2026

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

Attendees: Laraine and Steve → Laraine's summary notes were sent to Board members on 5/28.

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

Scholarship Presentation — May 20, 2026

Eco-Summit May 23, 2026

Here's our [website post](#) summarizing the meeting, including Hilary Sloane's Substack post about it. Janet also reports that Pat, Janet, Caroline, Eva, and Ellen have all met to run through an

EcoMaps analysis of the environmental education of the Morongo Basin. There is ongoing activity and intention to engage the group over time.

III. Items that require discussion / decision – including requests (new)- have not been resolved

- MBCA Relationship to SB LUS – JT, Landers/Homestead Valley/Pioneertown
- Rewrite of the Renewable Energy Element by the County – impact on hi-desert?
- Role – need to review the BOS and PC agendas and other notifications from SBC
- Dawn Rowe’s vague reference to a MAC-like body – what is this and how would it be organized.

→These topics were not discussed.

IV. 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

Desert Wise Living and Tour Committee (Stacy) →[*Steve reached out to Bighorn-Desert View and the thank-you presentation is scheduled for September 8.*](#) Board members were assigned last month for the other agencies. Stacy reported that Miriam won’t be on the committee going forward but will continue working on videos. Stacy is stepping down so a new chair is needed and perhaps additional committee members. She noted we might pause the Tour for a year and go to videos only. Next year’s suggested Tour date is Sunday, April 18, 2027.

Web/ Social Media / Communication (Stacy) →The Committee met yesterday and also needs a new Chair and Stacy also needs help with social media. Joani will help to some extent. If we ask for a volunteer, they’ll still need Board oversight.

Education (Laraine)

Board and Volunteer Recruitment (Sarah) → The procedure exists for Board recruitment but needs review, and maybe changes. Perhaps recruitment of volunteers should become a higher priority, in order to “test them” and some could eventually move into a Board position. We might hire a temporary Executive Director or at least a staff member. Bob feels strongly we need to do more fundraising. That involves creating the right story and building relationships with potential big funders. Claudia commented that MBCA has a trusted voice and reputation for good information, which is so important for legislators, funders, and followers.

Strategic Committees

Partnership and Advocacy (Steve)

Land Use and Conservation (Arch) →The BOS wants to revise RECE 4.10, the section prohibiting big solar in rural living areas. “We need to be at the table or we’ll be on the menu.” Steve emailed Bernadette del Chiaro for guidance or suggestions. They’re assuming federal land will become available. Brian urged us to visit all 5 supervisors. Get help from Krystian La Hage at MDLT, and develop relationships with people who have lobbyists with the same message.

Housing and Community (Janet)

Steve described an article he read that indicated we're past droughts and into "aridification of the West." Brian noted that an El Nino condition this year is quite likely and usually means "some" rain, but it could also mean extreme heat.

Director's Comments

→Pat urged us to consider MDLT's WISDOM women students for scholarships. *Laraine will add that to the Scholarship meeting discussion.* Pat also noted that Margaret in WV is sharing extreme concern about the OMB denying science grants for biased reasons, keeping science out of budget decisions. There's also a great NY Times article about mycorrhizal fungi.

→Janet reported that Yucca Valley is hiring a housing and homeless coordinator.

Next Board Meeting: July 9, 2026 – Zoom

Adjourned at 6:17 PM