



Minutes of the BEC Meeting

November 11, 2024

BEC Members Attending

X	Rich Carlston, Big Sir	X	Dennis Mierzwa, Asst. Membership Sec.
X	Tom DiGrande, Little Sir		Dan Casella, Assistant Treasurer
X	Carl Ludwig, Secretary	X	Peter Shapiro, Treasurer
X	Leo Dominguez, Asst. Secretary, a	X	Mike Frey, Director
	Manuel Dominguez, Attendance Sec.	X	Chick Lowry, ACC Member, Director
X	Dan Smith, Asst. Attendance Sec.	X	Martin Simmons, Director
X	Rich Knowles, Membership Sec.	X	Tony de Losada, Emeritus Director
	Peter Jordan, Asst. Secretary, b		

Guests Attending

John Vallor	Dan Weller	Jim Sowell
Terry Mason	Ron Cassano	Mike Loonan
Mike Furtado	Ken Main	Stan Johnson

Open and Welcome: Rich Carlston opened the meeting at 9:04, noting that this was his last time heading the BEC. Rich expressed his extraordinary pride and satisfaction having led Branch 8 during the past year and he thanked all BEC members in supporting him throughout his tenure at Branch 8. Rich characterized Branch 8 as being one of the best in the state due in part to the volunteerism exhibited by its members.

Recognition of Visitors and Guests:

- Steve Rhodes, sponsor Bruce Lechner
- Tony Morage, sponsor Tony de Losada
- Gene Voelkel, sponsor Sam Oommen

New Member Introduction & Orientation: none

Big Sir Announcements:

- Assistance for Stan Johnson in setting up our audio/visual equipment is proceeding well.

- Report on Branch Advisory Council – Rich noted that 25 branches were represented at the meeting, and he hoped more would participate in the future. Tom DiGrande will be our Branch representative next year.
- Report on Board of Director Meeting 6.24.24 – Rich noted that it was an excellent program with many useful presentations from other Branches.
- Report on Octoberfest – Leo Dominguez: Leo said that there were 85 attendees. Despite the shortfall (expected 100 attendees) the event went well; adequate volunteers, good food. An inventory of equipment needed, and food distributed will give him more precision in ordering for next year.
- Rich asked that all 2025 Branch 8 officer nominees step forward to take the oath of office, then he performed the function.
- Rich asked that the BEC formally make Dan Casella the Assistant Treasurer for 2025. The motion was made by Dennis Mierzwa, seconded by Rich Knowles, and passed unanimously by voice vote.
- Rich asked Peter Shapiro to present the 2025 budget that he had prepared and distributed to BEC members. Highlights of the budget proposal included a \$2 increase to the member charge for the monthly luncheons (except LDL). The \$1 difference between the \$38 charge to members and the \$37 per meal cost from Boundary Oak (a negotiated \$1.55 reduction from 2024 cost) will partially fund the many free lunches for speakers, guests, and raffle recipients (the extra \$1 pays for about 2.5 meals when we usually provide about 7 meals). Dues remain at \$55 per member. Funds remain available for new marketing campaigns as well as our usual printing costs in performing Branch functions. Carl Ludwig moved that we adopt Peter’s 2025 budget as presented, seconded by Rich Knowles, and passed unanimously by the BEC members.
- Rich asked that the suggestion to add a new BEC Director be adopted for managing the Constant Contact function. The motion to do so was made by Dan Smith, seconded by Dennis Mierzwa, and passed unanimously by the BEC.
- Rich asked that Branch 8 move forward with the suggestion of bestowing a Branch Distinguished Service Award to Dan Casella. He gave Tom DiGrande the task of following the established procedures and Sir Inc approvals by early next year.
- Rich presented the possibility for Sir to participate in a program called “Grouper” which seeks to make money available when individuals of the organization engage in healthy activities such as Sir functions and activities. He will track this idea as part of Sir Inc initiatives in 2025.
- Branch 8 needs to find a mechanism for adding future Big Sirs to our existing Branch 8 display plaque which is full once his name is added to it. The BEC agreed that a second plaque be initiated for future Big Sirs.

Little Sir Announcements:

- Tom DiGrande said he was looking forward to the challenges of leading Branch 8 next year and he thanked Rich Carlston for his mentorship in 2024.
- Communication will be Tom’s singular theme in his leadership style in 2025.
- Tom plans to bring Sir Inc initiatives to our Branch. He will organize our BEC members into working teams to accomplish these efforts.
- Lunch agreements with Boundary Oaks are being finalized. Sharing luncheon information among the other Sir entities which use Boundary Oaks for their venue has paid dividends in negotiating price of our lunches in 2025.

Secretary Report – Carl Ludwig: Carl thanked Peter Jordan for assembling the minutes from the last BEC meeting. Martin Simmons moved that they be adopted, seconded by Leo Dominguez, and passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report – Peter Shapiro: Peter discussed the Treasure's Report previously released to members. He moved that it be approved, seconded by Rich Knowles, and approved unanimously.

Membership – Rich Knowles: Rich discussed his previously distributed Membership Report. He thanked the Membership Relations Committee and others for contacting the 16 members identified as not having participated in a luncheon or activity in 2024. Upon motion by Carl Ludwig that the Membership Report be approved, seconded by Dan Smith, the BEC unanimously approved it.

Attendance – Dan Smith for Manuel Dominguez: Dan summarized the Attendance report previously released by Manuel. Dan made special mention of Manuel's success in recovering \$756 from luncheon "no shows" over the course of 2024. Mike Frey moved that the report be approved, seconded by Tom DiGrande, and passed unanimously by the BEC.

Member Relations – Rich Knowles: none

Marketing Report – Tony de Losada: none

Systems Support Team – Dan Weller: Dan noted that all was well with our systems.

Hotline – Dan Smith: Dan said that he was working successfully with Chris Wehling in assuming the Hotline task. One issue was encountered but successfully resolved with dropped content in the most recent publication process. Late receipt of articles resulted in a later than usual publication.

Rich Carlston thanked Dan for all his hard work in making the Hotline such a "go-to" publication under his watch.

Member Feedback – Jim Sowell: Jim summarized the comments gathered from luncheon attendees, noting again the exceptional service given by the Boundary Oaks staff.

ACC Report – Mike Frey: Mike reported on:

- Progress made in obtaining information on and costs of participating in the weekly Walnut Creek Farmer's Market.
- His plan for breakfast meetings with activity chairmen to promote participation in their functions. He is gathering costs for such from Boundary Oaks as well as developing agenda topics for the meetings. He will share his plans with the BEC early next year.
- Mike thanked Dan Weller for double-checking that the three activity interests expressed by new members are being routed to the proper activity chairs and ACC members.

Final Remarks – Rich Carlston: Meeting closed and adjourned at 10:30 after his repeated expression of thanks to all BEC members.

Next Meeting: January 9, 2025