



Minutes of the BEC Meeting

August 11, 2025

BEC Members Attending

X	Tom DiGrande, Big Sir	X	John Vallor, Asst. Attendance Sec.
X	Dan Smith, Little Sir		Dan Casella, Assistant Treasurer
X	Carl Ludwig, Secretary	X	Mike Furtado, Asst. Membership Sec.
X	Peter Shapiro, Treasurer	X	Leo Dominguez, Asst. Secretary
X	Rich Knowles, Membership Sec.	X	Peter Jordan, Asst. Secretary
X	Manuel Dominguez, Attendance Sec.	X	Martin Simmons, Director
X	Mike Frey, Director & ACC Member	X	Terry Mason, Director
X	Terry Baldwin, Asst. Treasurer		

Guests Attending

Dan Crowley	Garland Bell	Stan Johnson
Tom Draeger	Greg Konsavage	Ken Main
Mike Loonin	Ron Cassano	Jim Sowell
Steve Schramm	Thom Watkins	

Open and Welcome: The meeting was opened at 9:03 by Tom DiGrande, who welcomed the BEC and thanked those who were wearing their red shirts.

Recognition of Visitors and Guests:

Guest - Trey Maddox (sponsored by Steven Tiller)
 Guest - Joe Caselle (sponsored by Thomas Draeger)
 Applicant - Joe Faulds (sponsored by Rich Knowles)

New Applicants for Introduction and Orientation:

Ken Moeller (sponsored by Rich Knowles)

Joe Faulds (sponsored by Rich Knowles)
Morris Angell (sponsored by Rich Knowles)
Mike Stein (sponsored by Ken Main)
(These applicants have been interviewed by Rich Knowles and are ready to join.)

Big Sir Report – Tom DiGrande:

1. Positions to fill:

IT / Data System – The absence of our two IT key staffers from today's meeting demonstrates the importance of gaining additional expertise in our systems support. Toward this goal, Tom DiGrande will organize a meeting to discuss the structure of our IT systems (databases, website, etc.), their content, ownership, support, and other issues. The meeting will take place following the September luncheon or sooner if people are available. See 4. Below for attendees.

2. Membership – Rich Knowles

Business Cards (10 members each luncheon) to activity chairmen is largely completed.

3. Director "Follow Up" program - new members

How's it working? Rich Knowles has created spreadsheets that track new members with information about who contacted them and what issues were discussed. The follow-up spreadsheet has not been put into practice as yet. Tom DiGrande asked for a copy of the tracking tool.

4. Website/Database Review Meeting

- After Sept Luncheon - 9/8/25
- Sharing information / back ups
- Assistance from membership - additional personnel.
- Training
- Organizational chart?

Attendees:

- Dan Weller - Derek Southern
- Garland Bell - John Vallor - Terry Baldwin
- Tony Klemens? - Mike Frey
- Dan Smith - Tom DiGrande
- Rich Knowles

5. Speakers: - Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano

Dawn Manley - Food & Fund Drive Coordinator

Willie Mendoza - Remote Volunteer Engagement Specialist

- Next month's speaker:
Marc Joffe - President of Contra Costa Taxpayers Association
(Special thanks was given to Leo Dominguez for suggestion.)
- Tom asked if guest speakers influence luncheon attendance and, if so, to what degree? There was general agreement that they do, but other factors included the lack of mandatory attendance, dietary restrictions, etc.
- Tom wondered to what extent members wished to attend luncheons but not eat and pay for a meal. It was determined that the overhead cost associated with attending Boundary Oaks but not paying for a meal was minimal.
- Manuel Dominguez suggested that, at the next annual Boundary Oaks contract signing, we change the minimum meal requirements to something other than the current 100 meal obligation.

6. Audio / Visual Committee -

Garland Bell has Branch 8 equipment in a newly purchased larger cabinet. He is working with other branches on organizing the area.

Little Sir Report- Dan Smith:

- Schedule of Branch Operations – Form 20, the list of new BEC officers for 2026 is due to the State Sir by September. Tom DiGrande will present the recommendations of the Nominating Committee to the BEC at its next meeting.
- Regarding speakers and attendance, Dan opined that a change to homestyle meals might be more enticing for members. In response to the suggestion for surveying our members on this issue, it was noted that surveys do not reveal much new usable information in this regard. Peter Shapero noted that the proper solution to increasing attendance is to increase membership.

Updates:

- **Hotline Format:** Changes have been made by Chris Wehling.
- **Distinguished Service Award (DSA)** – nothing to report
- **LDL - Holiday Gala** – Plans are moving forward.
- **Ocktoberfest Report** – Moving forward.
- **New / Old Activities:** 2nd Chance Magazine Exchange Table at luncheon
- **Car Enthusiasts-** vehicle display at the September luncheon.

Treasurer's Report – Peter Shapiro:

- Peter noted the expense to SirInc for our quarterly membership dues was paid. Our current membership of 222 will now match the level that we have been assessed for 2025.
- The issue of expenditures by members requiring approval was discussed. If a budget for expenses has been approved by the BEC, a member should assume that the expenditure would be reimbursed by the Treasurer. Any expenses above the budgeted amount should have approval by the BEC. The forms and procedures needed for reimbursement are available from our website.

It was moved, seconded, and approved by the BEC that the Treasurer's Report be accepted.

Secretary Report – Carl Ludwig: Carl noted that the minutes from the prior meeting had been posted to our website and thanked those offering edits to his draft. It was moved, seconded, and approved by the BEC that the July 14 BEC Minutes be accepted.

Membership – Rich Knowles: Rich Presented his previously released Membership Report. He noted the difficulty in determining the source of interest from “external” applicants who fill out applications from our website and who do not have a clear sponsor. It was suggested that motivation and interest intentions from external applicants be attained as part of the new member 30/60/90-day follow-up activity. It was moved, seconded, and approved by the BEC that the Membership Report be accepted.

Attendance – Manuel Dominguez: Manuel summarized his previously released Attendance Report. There are 5 late sign-ups and no cancellation today. It was moved, seconded, and approved by the BEC that the Attendance Report be accepted.

Committee Reports/Activities

Activities Coordinator – Mike Frey:

- We continue to experience bugs in notifying activity chairmen about new member activity preferences. Until the bugs are fixed, the ACC will notify chairmen of all new members and their application sheet which will show the new member's preferences.
- The ACC will update the Activity Data Base with information about which members are going to what activities by querying the chairmen as was done successfully last year (Activity Wellness Survey).

Member Relations – Rich Knowles: none

Publicity, Public Relations, and Community Outreach – Greg Konsavage:

- Greg gave an update to the Clayton Oktoberfest event. Tasks are on schedule. A table will be purchased for our display.
- Diggers Diners advertising will cost \$300 for a three-year run of our display.
- Steve Schramm presented his findings on using social media for general awareness of Branch 8. By necessity, most promotion will be by local (City or city area) and for individual Branch 8 events. He gave particular information from Patch which sends community notices to four locations within Branch 8 coverage areas. The cost is \$2 per notice per day by community. Steve will distribute his example/recommendation to run an event notice in Patch for four communities for two weeks.

Systems Support Team – Dan Weller: none.

Hotline – Chris Wehling: none

Member Feedback – Jim Sowell: Jim presented findings, which were fixed in nature, from the last luncheon. Sound system problems remain troublesome which now include adequate power, per Ken Main. A new amplifier from Boundary Oaks requires learning.

New Business: none.

Final Remarks – Tom DiGrande:

- We have contributed \$500 to the Boundary Oaks activities and have received rebates in like amounts.
- Meeting closed and adjourned 10:40 a.m.

Next Meeting: September 8, 2025