



Minutes of the BEC Meeting

May 12, 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
	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

Chick Lowry	Ron Cassano	Ken Main
Dan Weller	Greg Konsavage	Steve Schramm
Mike Loonan	Jim Sowell	Stan Johnson

Open and Welcome: The meeting was opened at 9:04 by Tom DiGrande, who welcomed the BEC.

Recognition of Visitors and Guests: Bob Neary (sponsored by Mike Furtado)

New Applicants for Introduction & Orientation:

Pete Larson (sponsored by Rich Knowles)

Ron Luttringer (sponsored by Rich Knowles)

Big Sir Report – Tom DiGrande:

1. Positions to fill: UPDATE

Public Relations / Image / Marketing Chairman

Greg Konsavage, Dan Crowley, George Vogt & Steve Schramm - need additional members!

Greg will report on the amount of paperwork involved in the application process for event participation.

2. Membership -

"Let's give it a try."

Business Cards (10 members each luncheon) - announce list at lunch.

Cards to Activity Chairmen - First!

Mike Furtado to check our website Roster to build a recipient list.

Director "Follow Up" program - new members – should be happening at 3, 6, and 9 months after becoming member.

3. June LDL - Monday, June 9th, 2025

BEC meeting 9 am, Social Hour 10:30 am, Lunch 11:30 am, Member Meeting 12:15pm

Need greeters; Need menu & RSVP / Email; Need activity tables; Need speaker or activity.

(Our contract with Boundary Oaks requires that we hold a luncheon)

Tom is working with Boundary Oaks to turn the December luncheon into an evening event.

4. First Aid / Evacuation Plan / CPR Training -

Friday, May 23rd - Ygnacio Valley Library, Walnut Creek; still two openings

5. Website - Total review of contents & updates!

A total review of our website has been completed. Some marketing material has been borrowed from the State SirInc website.

Pete Shapiro recommended that the Branch 8 website not lead on the front page with the ELP story. He also wondered how many people clicked on the ELP information. Is it being accessed as anticipated? Query will go to Derek Southern to get number of clicks.

6. Speaker - Sue Novack (Mayor Pleasant Hill)

Subject: Affordable Housing

7. Audio / Visual Committee -

Garland Bell has equipment -possible larger cabinet. Garland has exhibited confidence in the setup protocol.

Boundary Oaks staff are available to troubleshoot Bluetooth issues.

Little Sir Report- Dan Smith:

Schedule of Branch Operations – task: submit 2026 Branch 8 officers.

Speakers list update - we will have more member participation in luncheons. Ice breaker questions are needed to facilitate this plan. Work with Thom Watkins to develop material. The first several speakers for 2026 have been identified.

sirinc.org - Password change! Expires June 30th! Tom DiGrande will send out new passwords to members at that time.

New / Old Activities: with other groups and / or facilities - The legal issue of liability and insurance coverage of the Sir member for shared activities and venues (e.g. chess events at senior centers) are being researched at the State Sir level.

Ken Main recommended that his proposed "Drop-In Folk Music Group" event be voted a Sir activity. Ken will be chairman with Rick Laskey as co-chair. The BEC unanimously approved it be designated a Sir Branch 8 activity. Ken will work with Mike Frey to develop website material.

Treasurer's Report – Peter Shapiro: Peter presented his summary of financial and cash balance reports. Nothing unusual was noted. Carl Ludwig moved it to be accepted, seconded by Mike Frey, and unanimously approved by the BEC.

Secretary Report – Carl Ludwig: Carl noted that he will be working on a list of Branch 8 volunteer groups and their constituents (e.g. set-up committee, nominating committee, etc.). It was noted that the list need not be placed on the Branch 8 website. Dan Weller said that the information about who participates in these committees could be kept on the Membership Database. Carl will discuss with Rich Knowles when Rich returns from his travels.

Upon motion to accept the minutes by Manuel Dominguez, John Vallor seconded it, and the motion was unanimously passed by the BEC.

Membership – Rich Knowles: Mike Furtado summarized the report from Rich Knowles; one new member, one resignation, and two new applicants. John Vallor moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Manuel Dominguez, and unanimously passed by the BEC.

Attendance – Manuel Dominguez: Manuel noted that there were a record number of members attending the last luncheon (108) and that number dropped to 98 signups with three absences. Manuel was skeptical of attaining a similar number for the June luncheon as it was a late replacement for the smaller LDL which had been cancelled.

On motion by Carl Ludwig, seconded by Mike Frey, the report was unanimously approved by the BEC.

Committee Reports/Activities

Activities Coordinator – Mike Frey: Mike noted that the luncheon video presentation today would be Meng Horng and his photography activity. The June video presentation is scheduled to be Ron Rizzo and the Book Group activity. Mike also announced that Ron Maciak would be chairing the poker group in the future. Upon motion to accept his report by Manuel Dominguez, seconded by Mike Furtado, the BEC unanimously approved it.

Member Relations – Rich Knowles: In lieu of a report by Rich Knowles, Tom Di/Grande showed a graph of Branch 8 membership for each of the past 25 years. The visualization dramatically demonstrated the inverted “V” shape that characterized the pre-Covid and post-Covid total membership of Branch 8. Peter Shapiro suggested that we focus on growing the membership and fretting less about the impact of Covid on our organization.

Publicity, Public Relations, and Community Outreach – Greg Konsavage and Steve Schram gave a summary of the difficulties in obtaining information about the process and procedures for gaining representation at various community events:

- Difficulties are large because there is a stream of hurdles to attain approval, each with their own deadline for filing. There is at least a two-month built-in lag time between starting an application and final approval for an event. Decisions about the promotional materials needed may be different for each venue. Each venue has its own decisions for layout (tables, tents, chairs, etc.)
- Seemingly same jurisdiction events may have different requirements for participation (e.g. Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce has a different process than Pleasant Hill Parks and Recreation).

- Vetting of applicants also takes time and is not in our control.
- Multi-date venues such as farmers' markets present their own challenges as a day of attendance must be designated well ahead of time of the event.
- Some suggested venues previously used by other Branches may not accept Branch 8 due to location issues (e.g. Pioneer Newspaper does not cover the Walnut Creek area). Patch and Nutshell will need to be researched.
- Relative costs of each event must also weigh on the decision process of various events being considered. Sponsorship costs by non-profits should be researched.

In short, the 2025 season of marketing prospects has largely gone by. A thorough survey of marketing venues and budgets needs to be developed for 2026 and presented to the BEC.

Member Feedback – Jim Sowell: Jim summarized his findings from the previous luncheon; 7 cards with 9 comments in total. Small lunch portions were the main theme. Tom DiGrande noted that comments would be shared with Boundary Oaks staff.

Systems Support Team – Dan Weller: Dan noted some gaps in the new member/activity chairman/ACC chain of emails that he would be working on.

Hotline – Chris Wehling: It was confirmed that Chris's desire would be fulfilled to have Hotline features of upcoming luncheon presentations by members who had authored books.

New Business: Executive Session for Approval of DSA Award Recommendation

Vote Results

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

Final Remarks – Tom DiGrande: Meeting closed and adjourned 10:20 AM

Next Meeting: June 9, 2025