

Gold Country Trails Council
Minutes of the General Meeting
March 12, 2013

Golden Empire Grange
11363 Grange Court, Grass Valley

The general membership meeting was called to order by President Helen Harvey at 7:10.

Members present included:

President Helen Harvey

Vice President: Melissa Ribley

Treasurer: Kathie Southgate

Secretary: Karen Schwartz

Board Members: Don Soto, Vicki Testa

Members: Willie Brusin (Forest Service Liaison), Mary Johnson (Membership Chair), Teri Personeni (Past President)

Absent: Jeff Foltz

President Helen Harvey welcomed visitors and new members and asked them to stand and introduce themselves.

Helen inquired about approval of the February minutes. Secretary Karen Schwartz responded that the minutes of the board meeting had been distributed to the board.

Helen asked Treasurer Kathy Southgate to report on the status of GCTC finances. Kathy provided a detailed report dated 3/12/13 and announced that the current working balance is \$16,342.44. She also noted that she has decided to switch to “expensed accounting” rather than the ‘prepaid’ system used previously to track rental and insurance expenses.

Old Business:

Forest Service Liaison Willie Brusin reviewed his report dated 3/12/2013, including the following items:

Burlington Trail System Enhancement Program: Willie and Sue Brusin and Vicki Testa met with Joe Chavez of the Tahoe National Forest to add four non-motorized trails which had been omitted on the preliminary map of the area.

Lone Grave: The gravel at the GCTC trailheads needs work prior to the Lone Grave workday scheduled for 4/21/2013. A sign reading “Non-Motorized Area” should be added at the gate. David Higbee will be asked to smooth the gravel, and he will do the same for the Overlook trailhead, which needs a load of gravel.

Pioneer Trail: Following the spring snow melt, a botanist will survey the wildflowers and finish the NEPA report, and then the trail relocation will proceed. Serpentine will be installed on the trail above Chalk Bluff Road to discourage motorcyclists from traveling too fast.

Skillman Campground: Willie reviewed the changes expected to take shape over the next few years. He and Sue Brusin and Melissa and Robert Ribley met recently with Tahoe National Forest representatives to discuss various changes proposed for the campground. These include reconfiguring the 16 individual campsites to protect large trees, eliminating the \$100.00 group camp area, adding three new single pit toilets, sinking a new well to provide potable water, installing high lines rather than more corrals, improving manure control. Changes in the campsites may limit the Poker Ride to 60 trailers. The California Land Management will provide an onsite host during 2013. In addition, a free day use parking area will be created outside the gate, the Upper Burlington Road log landing will be expanded to provide overflow parking. Pull-outs will be created on various parts of the Hallelujah Trail and the Pioneer Trail going down to Bear Valley to facilitate two way traffic. The timeline for these improvements is projected to be two to three years. In June several GCTC members will survey the campground to prepare recommendations for Joe Chavez on these changes.

United Trails Day: While meeting with Joe Chavez it was confirmed that United Trails Day in October will involve work on a non-motorized trail.

Other: Helen has sent letters supporting recreational uses to the Forest Science Synthesis Study and to the TNF in support of the green sticker grant proposal which will fund more signage and law enforcement.

Helen reminded members that our first workday is scheduled at Lone Grave on April 21st.

Helen thanked members for renewing their memberships and announced that the new membership directories were available to be picked up at the meeting.

Helen introduced GCTC member Harry Werth who reported on the status of the Emigrant Trail Conservancy's efforts to make the Trail accessible to the public. He reviewed the contemporary history of the the Trail: the creation of the trail preservation easements in 1993 when Golden Oaks, Lodestar and Sunshine Valley residential areas were developed; the decision by the County Board of Supervisors to close the area to the public in 2005 by declaring the local roads private; and the upcoming Board of Supervisors' meeting on 4/23/2013 to determine if the Trail will continue to be closed to the public. Harry stated that a lawsuit is likely unless the decision to close the Trail is revoked. Donations are being accepted to help finance the legal response; details are available at the Emigrant Trail Conservancy website.

New Business:

Helen asked Lori Moniz to report on the recent day ride at Spenceville. Lori said that 14 riders enjoyed the ride on a beautiful day.

Helen asked Linda Lanzoni to provide an update on the preparations for the annual fundraiser Poker Ride scheduled for July 6th. Linda reviewed a variety of positions for which volunteers are needed, including food coordination, donation of prizes and raffle items, set-up and clean-up, staffing for card stations on the trail, poker hand readers, parking, etc. Members were encouraged to contact Linda directly to volunteer.

Helen reviewed in detail the work days and rides scheduled on the calendar of GCTC events planned through May.

Helen asked for any questions or announcements.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:54 for refreshments, followed by a presentation by GCTC member Rafe Little, a horse trainer and clinician. He spoke on horse behavior and offered insights into why horses act the way they do.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Schwartz, Secretary