

Oracle Dark Skies Committee
Minutes 4/24/2014
Kannally House, Oracle State Park

Attending: Mike Weasner, Chair; Mary Helen Vasquez, Recorder; Jennifer Rinio, OSP Ranger; Stan Bembenek; Waldo Vasquez; Chip Parfet; Anna Lands; Peter Else

Chair Weasner introduced Anna Lands & Peter Else. Anna attended a briefing by Weasner at the 18 April 2014 COPPER CORRIDOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COALITION meeting. They are interested in drafting a letter of support. They shared their desire to expand the Dark Skies starting all the way from the Oracle State Park to Mt Graham, including some of the Reservation. They shared some of their work along the lower San Pedro Valley. The Mayor of Kearny offered a Letter of Support resulting from Weasner's briefing at the Copper Corridor meeting.

The subject of the Committee talking to The City of Mammoth about their City Lights, specifically the Dollar Store bright lights. No specific action was taken at this time.

The plan to build a casino in Dudleyville was brought up. Could be a light pollution concern, although there appears to be a responsible and public minded organization in charge.

Weasner mentioned having a possible dedicated Web Site or a Dark Skies link on the Oracle State Park web site.

Weasner talked about attending a star party at Catalina State Park on Saturday, 18 April 2014. The enthusiasm of the crowd was great. Many were there for other reasons but they stayed for the star party.

Plans of having a star gazing party at Oracle State Park are tentatively set for MAY 17TH 2014. Jennifer and Dale are handling the groups, music, Starizona, and TAAA contacts. Mike mentioned that he hopes to get commitments from the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) and the National Optical Astronomy Observatory (NOAO). Key thing...we need to have good publicity on this. It would be good to have a table with a banner (ORACLE DARK SKIES COMMITTEE/ORACLE STATE PARK) at the star party. The banner could be used at other events as well. esigns.com was recommended by Peter. Cost about \$50.00.

An upcoming event, SAN PEDRO RIVERFEST in Winkelman on Saturday, 3 May 2014, was discussed as a good public outreach opportunity. More info on their web site: <http://pinalpartnership.com/outdoor-fun-at-the-san-pedro-river-fest/>. Oracle State Park will be represented.

Mike then went through updates to some of the Nomination Package sections. Chip provided two excellent topographic maps that may be included. Mike showed some daytime panoramic photos that he took at the Kannally Ranch House parking lot, the Group Use Area, and the Arizona Trail Walk-In Parking Lot. Mike and Stan did a Park lighting inventory on Tuesday, 22 April 2014. Mike has created a table showing the 28 light fixtures, most of which will not need retrofitting due to their low usage. The post-mounted unshielded lights in the Kannally Ranch

House parking lot (12) and the Group Use Area parking lot (5) will need to be retrofitted for dark sky compliance. Mike picked up the Light Meter that is on loan to the Committee from the NOAO and IDA. He will take sky quality readings at approximately 9 PM and midnight at the three locations in the park. He will also take all-sky photos from each location. The readings and photos will be taken over several nights when the sky is clear.

Mike met with Dr. John Barentine, IDA, on Wednesday, 23 April 2014, to discuss our plans for the Nomination Package. Dr. Barentine liked what he saw.

Mike said that he plans to start building a Microsoft Word document of our Nomination Package that will include what we have collected so far, with placeholders for remaining items. We still plan to have a final draft version ready by the middle of June 2014. That version would be provided to potential writers of "Letters of Support". We will likely need to have some printed copies (high quality and bound) and so will need to decide who we choose to do the print job. Dr. Barentine told Mike that IDA does not require a printed copy for review and final submission copies; an electronic copy (PDF or Word) is totally acceptable to the IDA Board of Directors, who ultimately approve the "International Dark Sky Park" designations.

Stan suggested that we skip the next weekly meeting. After some discussion of upcoming activities (notably the potential OSP star party on 17 May), and with our outstanding progress to date, Mike concurred.

The next meeting will be Thursday, 8 May 2014, 6:30 PM, at the Kannally Ranch House.

Signed,

/signed/

Mary Helen Vasquez, Acting Recorder

Signed,

/signed/

Mike Weasner, Chair