

CONTRA COSTA HILLS CLUB
VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
August 14, 2026

The August board meeting was held virtually through Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by President Stew.

Board members present: Stew Perlman, Jim Baranowski, Mike Branning, Connie Gee, Helen Johe, Rosemary Johnson, Suzy Mark, Cameron Mitchell, Lucy Perdichizzi

Absent: Roland Hebert

Minutes Approved: Minutes of board meeting that took place on July 10—motion to approve made by Suzy Mark; seconded by Helen Johe.

President's Report:

Sunday, July 26: As we enter August and say goodbye to July, we have hikes this month that will take us to a variety of locations in the Bay Area including San Francisco, Sausalito, Berkeley, Point Pinole, Union City, Hayward. However, there are a few open dates on August 16 and 20. A reminder that on September 17 we will be celebrating our dear Jo Anne Schultz's 90th Birthday with a potluck at Quarry Lakes. Please save the date for it will be a most enjoyable event. I hope that everyone is enjoying the summer and their travels both here at home and abroad. As usual, I want to extend my appreciation to those of you who have been hike leaders and co-leaders along with our officers who continue to keep the Club alive and well. Let's hope that August affords us with comfortable weather, especially as we venture on our hikes. Stay well and enjoy..

Wednesday, August 12: Thank you as always for your commitment to the Club as Board Members. Since the last Board Meeting, Jim, Mike and Noël have led the Club on wonderful hikes for which I and the Club are most thankful. It is always good to see Board Members either leading hikes or participating on them.

Rosemary Johnson suggested that we should repeat the hike at Hamilton Field in Novato at a time of year when the migrating shorebirds are there.

Stew had a copy of the Contra Costa County Historical Society's *Bulletin* that was sent to the CCHC mailbox. He wanted to know what to do with it. It was suggested that he should bring it to the next hike and pass it around.

Stew said that December 31st is on a Thursday this year. He will contact Jerry Ford and Frank Martin about leading their traditional end of the year hike at Coyote Hills on that date.

Vice President's Report: Jim said we need more hikes for the 4th quarter hiking schedule. Noël said she plans to lead three hikes in the 4th quarter. She needs to get in touch with Celeste Burrows about leading hikes in Emeryville which is what Celeste used to do but has not been up to doing for a while.

Lucy mentioned that a new tiled staircase has opened on Beale Street in San Francisco. It would be good to include it in a San Francisco hike.

New Business:

Overnight Outings Committee: Helen Johe spoke about the upcoming outing at Minden in Nevada (October 4–8). Club members will be staying at the Holiday Inn which includes breakfast.

Day 1: Travel day from home to Minden. The itinerary includes suggestions for possible stops on the way to Minden and back.

Day 2, morning: River Fork Ranch Nature conservancy

Day 2, afternoon: Fay Luther/Jobs Peak Ranch Trail System

Day 3: Carson Pass, two options for hikes—one moderate, one challenging

Day 4: Tahoe Rim Trail, two options for hikes—one moderate, one challenging

Group dinner at TJ's Basque Restaurant

Day 5: Travel day from Minden to home. The itinerary includes suggestions for possible stops on the way home from Minden.

Helen mentioned The Pink House restaurant in Genoa as an option for dinner. It has a very good reputation but the owner wanted \$2,000 to do a group dinner for the club!

Helen pointed out that the itinerary for this outing includes a **beta version of a CCHC Outings Hike Rating System** contributed by committee member Steve Chun. It is based on the Shenandoah Hike Ratings System.

Easy <50> Moderate <100> Challenging <150> Strenuous <200> Very Strenuous

<https://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/how-to-determine-hiking-difficulty.htm>

Shenandoah National Park uses a specific mathematical formula to calculate trail difficulty based on total distance and vertical climb. The formula is: **Square Root of [Elevation Gain (feet) × 2 × Distance (miles)]**. The final number places the hike into one of five official categories.

Difficulty Categories

- **Easiest:** Less than 50 (Good for anyone who likes to walk; minor changes in height).
- **Moderate:** 50 to 100 (Good for newer hikers wanting a small test).
- **Moderately Strenuous:** 100 to 150 (Hard for people who do not exercise often).
- **Strenuous:** 150 to 200 (Will feel hard for most regular hikers).
- **Very Strenuous:** Greater than 200 (Only for people in top physical shape).

This formula does not always account for rough ground, rock scrambles, or short, very steep climbs.

Lucy commented that descriptions of hikes on CCHC outings do not contain enough detail. They lack detailed descriptions of what the terrain is like. Helen agreed with Lucy. She feels that the Outings Committee should include more detailed descriptions. Both Jim and Noël requested more information about the Shenandoah hike ratings system. After the meeting, Noël found more information on the internet. See above.

Helen told the Board that members of the Overnight Outings Committee will be leaving for Bend, Oregon on August 22 to scout an outing that will take place in September 2027.

Membership: Five new members so we are up to 172 (165 paid and 7 honorary). Connie has been having a problem with her computer so when she tried to send attachments consisting of names of new members, the updated membership roster, and names of members who have resigned from CCHC, none of the recipients were able to open them. Update, August 18: Connie was eventually able to send the attachments.

Conservation Committee Requests (from Conservation Committee chair Beryl Vonderheid via treasurer Cameron Mitchell):

Friends of Sausal Creek	\$100
National Parks Conservation Association	200
Solano Land Trust	200

Bills:

Connie Gee, Knapsack postage \$ 24.96

A motion was made to pay the bills by Mike Branning and seconded by Jim Baranowski and Helen Johe. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report:

On August 4th, xxxx was transferred from Large CD at Fremont to Mechanics General Fund. No penalty.

Status will be updated on September report.

Jim Baranowski mentioned that Conservation Committee chairperson Beryl should be advised to be careful when sending CCHC donations to any national parks association. Upon verification, it would appear that the National Park Foundation does not align with the values of CCHC. On the other hand, the National Parks Conservation Association is an independent, nonpartisan advocacy and watchdog organization that lobbies Congress, educates the public, and uses legal action to protect park lands. It would therefore be appropriate to donate to this organization.

Cameron has received the annual **bill for the club's insurance** from agent Russ Honeyman. The amount is \$xxxx—an increase of \$xx from last year—due on August 25. Motion made by Rosemary and Mike to pay the bill; seconded by Lucy. The motion passed.

Update, August 24: Cameron notified members of the board that she has received a revised quote from CCHC's insurance agent Russ Honeyman. The club owes an additional \$xxx. Cameron suggests that unless someone wishes to research other insurance options, we should pay the additional amount. Of the 11 board members, 9 approved paying the revised amount. There were 2 abstentions.

Corresponding Secretary: Helen sent 2 cards to Sylvia Kwan at an address in San Francisco but they were returned to her. Noël mentioned that Sylvia, who lives in Concord, gave this alternative address because the mailbox at her house in Concord has been tampered with. Helen sent a "Thinking of You" card to Sharon Wang. Helen will also send a "Thinking of You" card to Celeste Burrows.

Old Business:

CCHC Archives: Suzy Mark and Noël Siver went to Yvonne Moss' house in Concord on Tuesday, August 11 to continue transferring the CCHC archives into acid-free Manila folders and archival quality document boxes. They emptied more of the three-ring binders. This required spending some time identifying from which pages some items had become detached and re-gluing some photos, hike descriptions, and newspaper articles back onto their backing sheets. Yvonne will be returning from Indiana around September 15th.

Hike Guidelines: Some hike leaders on occasion have not adhered to the Hike Guidelines regarding sign-ups as are stated on the Hike Schedule. How do we want to address the situation?

After discussion, the Board decided to confirm that hike sign-ups are not required unless a headcount is needed for carpools, restaurant reservations, museum visits or similar, but that hike leaders may have flexibility in that regard.

Holiday Luncheon: Lucy presented the results of her recent meeting with the owner of Mona Lisa Monte e Mare restaurant in San Francisco where we will be having the club's Holiday Luncheon on Wednesday, December 9. The menu they worked out will be an upgrade from last year, with four different pastas, plus salmon, chicken, and eggplant parmigiana. The price we pay the restaurant will be \$xx per person all inclusive. We currently have \$xxxx in the combined spring and holiday luncheon funds. The member price, agreed by the Board, will be \$xx. That's a subsidy of \$xx per person, the highest we've been able to offer to date. Assuming 60 members attend, that will leave an available subsidy of \$xxxx for future luncheons.

Adjournment: 11:09 Lucy moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Helen.

Next Virtual Meeting: September 11, 2026

Respectfully submitted:

Noël Siver, Recording Secretary