

## BEACON BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES FOR

**DATE:** Friday, January 23, 2026

**TIME:** 9:00 AM

**PLACE:** IN-PERSON IN CARPINTERIA & TELECONFERENCE

<b>Item</b>	<b>1A</b>	<b>Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introductions –Chair, Eric Friedman</b>
<b>Minutes/ Actions:</b>		<p><b>Members Present:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vianey Lopez (County of Ventura)</li> <li>• Matt LaVere (County of Ventura)</li> <li>• Laura Capps (County of Santa Barbara)</li> <li>• Eric Friedman (City of Santa Barbara)</li> <li>• Jennifer Smith (City of Goleta)</li> <li>• Julie Mayer (City of Carpinteria)</li> <li>• Doug Halter (City of Ventura)</li> <li>• Steven Gama (City of Port Hueneme)</li> </ul> <p><b>Members Not Present:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gabe Teran, (City of Oxnard)</li> <li>• James Kyriaco (City of Goleta)</li> <li>• Roy Lee (County of Santa Barbara)</li> </ul>
<b>Item</b>	<b>1B - C</b>	<p><b>Approval of Administrative Items</b></p> <p><b>B. Approval of Agenda and Filing of Certificate of Agenda Posting.</b></p> <p><b>C. Consideration and Approval of Minutes of the BEACON Meeting held on January 23, 2026.</b></p>
<b>Minutes/ Actions:</b>		<p><b>Board Members Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul> <p><b>Public Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul> <p><b>Item 1B and 1C: Motion to approve as set forth in the agenda. Moved by Lopez / Second by Gama. Unanimously approved.</b></p>
<b>Item</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Public Comment and Other Matters not on the agenda</b> <b>Receive public comments.</b>
<b>Minutes/ Actions:</b>		<p><b>Board Members Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul> <p><b>Public Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul>
<b>Item</b>	<b>3</b>	<p><b>Presentations -</b></p> <p><b>Presentation on the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS)</b></p> <p>Receive a BEACON staff report and a presentation on the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS) from Paul Michel, Senior Advisor, NOAA West Coast Region.</p>
<b>Minutes/</b>		Executive Director Marc Beyeler introduced presenter Paul Michel, Senior Advisor,

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<b>Actions:</b>	<p>NOAA West Coast Regional Office, Monterey, CA, as well as Carolina Behe, Acting Superintendent, Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary.</p> <p>Paul Michel made a presentation of an overview and status update on the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS), noting he had previously presented to the BEACON Board in 2022. The presentation is available on the BEACON Website.</p> <p><b>Board Members Comments:</b></p> <p><b>Member Gama:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Member Meyer</b> asked if there is a location where the public can find more information about the CHNMS.</li> <li>• <b>Paul Mechel</b> responded that the public website is <a href="http://chumashheritage.noaa.gov">chumashheritage.noaa.gov</a> and will be updated with Advisory Council information. Community announcements will also be distributed through local media.</li> <li>• <b>Marc Beyeler</b> confirmed they would post the link on the BEACON website.</li> <li>• <b>Member Gama</b> asked about shipping risks in the Channel and how they are managed.</li> <li>• <b>Paul Michel</b> described NOAA's process of working with the Coast Guard to monitor shipping lane compliance, enforce penalties for sinking incidents (citing a precedent involving a football-field-sized dry dock that sank in Monterey Bay), and the planned whale slow-speed zone rulemaking.</li> <li>• <b>Chair Friedman</b> asked how the sanctuary will deal with the potential issuance of new offshore oil and gas leases?</li> <li>• <b>Paul Michel</b> responded that any new oil and gas activities within the sanctuary would require a sanctuary permit or authorization. NOAA has a "seat at the table" through consultation requirements under Section 304(d) of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. Existing permitted operations are grandfathered with "donut hole" exemptions, similar to treatment in the Gulf of Mexico's Flower Garden Banks Sanctuary. Decommissioning activities would also involve NOAA.</li> <li>• <b>Chair Friedman</b> thanked Paul Michel and Carolina Behe and suggested making the CHNMS update an annual report to the BEACON Board.</li> <li>• <b>Paul Michel</b> expressed willingness to return in approximately one year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Public Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul>
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<b>Item</b>	4	<p><b>BEACON Project Update on Surfers Point Project, Phase 1 Ten Year Monitoring and Phase 2 Completion</b></p> <p><b>Receive a staff report update and a presentation from BEACON Staff on the latest status of the Surfers Point Project, including Phase 1 project performance and completion of Phase 2. (Attachment 1, 2, and 3)</b></p>
<b>Minutes/</b>		Executive Director Marc Beyeler made a PowerPoint presentation of the Surfers Point

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<b>Actions:</b>	<p>Project, history and current status followed by a presentation by Matt Maechler, Principal Civil Engineer at the City of Ventura.</p> <p><b>Board Members Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Member Smith</b> asked if the Public Art elements of the project were voluntary or through a City policy?</li><li>• <b>Marc Beyeler</b> responded that it was through City policy.</li><li>• <b>Member Halter</b> applauded the report and indicated he walks the project site every Friday with a representative of the Land Trust, and he sees that there are lot of people enjoying the area. He also added that regarding public art, the City of Ventura is very serious about installing art in all CIP projects.</li><li>• <b>Member LaVere</b> indicated that Phase 1 of the project is great and that Phase 2 looks very good too. He asked when there would be a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony?</li><li>• <b>Mat Maechler</b> indicated that they were potentially looking for a date in March 2026.</li><li>• <b>Member Lopez</b> asked about parking fee issues.</li><li>• <b>Matt Maechler</b> indicated that there have been some problems but that the City is working with Fairground regarding parking fees.</li><li>• <b>Member Gama</b> indicated that he spent a lot of time at Surfers Point in the 1970's. He asked that when the Matilija Dam comes down, would the huge amount of sediment benefit the Surfers Point site?</li><li>• <b>Matt Maechler</b> indicated that it would definitely be a benefit to the beach at Surfers Point.</li><li>• <b>Member Gama</b> asked if Surfers get special treatment at the Surfers Point Parking Lot?</li><li>• <b>Matt Maechler</b> indicated that Surfers Point serves a multitude of activities and the parking is certainly greatly improved compared to pre-project.</li><li>• Marc Beyeler indicated that the Fairgrounds are trying to come up with a reasonable cost for parking, especially as an annual pass and parking for special events is additional.</li><li>• <b>Member Gama</b> asked if there is a process for Surfers to do a surf check without having to park?</li><li>• <b>Matt Maechler</b> indicated that most Surfers do their check before they reach the parking kiosk.</li></ul> <p><b>Public Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paul Jenkins from Surf Riders thanked BEACON for its involvement in both the Surfers Point Project and the Matilija Dam Project. The project has taken 30 years to implement but we are now at the finish line thanks to BEACON, the City and other agencies. Paul also thanks Bob Batalio for putting his Engineering License on a project that had never been done before, and the managed retreat has worked.at Surfers Point.</li></ul>
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<b>Item</b>	<b>5A</b>	<b>BEACON Organization and Program</b> <b>Board Members Reports</b>
<b>Minutes/ Actions:</b>		<p><b>Board Members Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Member Halter</b> Highlighted a series of environmental and conservation accomplishments in Ventura, including: the Surfers Point managed retreat project; a Trust for Public Land purchase of over 5,000 acres; the Harmon Canyon and Mariano Ranch land trusts; Petrochem site cleanup and 20-year river restoration commitment; Ventura Botanical Gardens stormwater and climate-appropriate planting efforts; ongoing collaboration along the Ventura River with Channel Keepers; removal of an Edison discharge to a location one mile offshore (operational as of December 30); and expanding regional bike trail connectivity from Ventura to Santa Barbara, Ojai, and soon Peru (along the river/rail corridor).</li> <li>• <b>Member Lopez</b> reported on Channel Islands Harbor dredging. An off-cycle dredging event began in October 2025 and was completed approximately one and a half weeks prior to the meeting, removing 1.6 million cubic yards of sand. Regular-cycle dredging is expected to resume in October 2026 through February 2027. The Army Corps of Engineers is also undertaking a dune habitat restoration project associated with the dredging that has received significant community attention; a community meeting is expected in the coming weeks.</li> <li>• <b>Member Capps</b> reported that portions of Goleta County Beach will be temporarily closed beginning the following week for storm damage operations and sediment beach nourishment, expected to last 3–4 weeks. She attributed the need to the wettest year on record in Santa Barbara County.</li> <li>• <b>Member Gama</b> added comments on the Channel Islands dredging, noting that for the first time in a long time, the dredging contractor exceeded its goals significantly — in this off-cycle, they removed more than half of what is typically removed in a full two-year cycle. He attributed successes due to BEACON in part to the organization's willingness to learn from past mistakes and apply good science.</li> <li>• <b>Chair Friedman</b> reported that Santa Barbara Harbor is currently being dredged, using remaining funds from the prior cycle. However, federal funding for future dredging cycles is not yet secured. He also reported that Santa Barbara Airport is undergoing a climate adaptation planning process, with a preview presented to the Airport Commission the previous Wednesday. The plan addresses flooding, environmental issues, and bird strikes, with sea level rise projections extending to 2090, and includes near-term, 5–20 year, and long-range planning horizons.</li> </ul> <p><b>Public Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul>

<b>Item</b>	<b>5B</b>	<b>BEACON Board Actions and Financial Reports</b> <i>Recommended Action:</i> <b>Receive and file the attached Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget-to-Actual financial report for the year-to-date period ending December 31, 2025 (Exhibit I).</b>
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<b>Minutes/ Actions:</b>	<p>The Executive Director presented the FY 2025-2026 Budget-to-Actual financial report for the period ending December 31, 2025.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BEACON's budget has two components: an operational budget funded by member dues, and a grants budget leveraged using operational funds.</li> <li>• Four multi-year grants are currently outstanding.</li> <li>• Dues collection is tracked quarterly with the Ventura County Auditor-Controller's Office (fiscal agent); the goal is to collect dues in the first two quarters of each fiscal year. As this time, all member agencies are expected to have paid dues within the current calendar month.</li> <li>• BEACON's bank balance exceeds \$500,000, more than tripling since the Executive Director's tenure began (from approximately \$150,000), providing approximately one to two years of operational reserves.</li> <li>• Staffing challenges persist: a six-month recruitment process for an administrative/grants staff position ended when the selected candidate withdrew. Science and GIS staffing have been more successful; administrative staffing remains difficult at part-time compensation levels.</li> <li>• BEACON successfully negotiated a cash advance from a grantor on one project — an uncommon achievement — demonstrating the agency's financial credibility with state partners.</li> <li>• Recently completed grants include a Coastal Conservancy grant on integrated governance for coastal adaptation.</li> <li>• The RCAMP grant, a new three-year grant, is now underway.</li> </ul> <p><b>Public Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul> <p><b>No action required. Board received and filed the financial report.</b></p>
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<b>Item</b>	5C	<p><b>BEACON Budget Actions</b> <i>Recommended Action:</i> <b>Coastal Access Data Research Project.</b> <b>Approve and authorize the Chair to execute Amendment No. 3 with Nate Merrill/Matunuck Research, to provide scientific and technical services supporting coastal and beach access planning to extend the period of performance three months with a revised ending date of June 30, 2026, without an increase in the total funding amount of \$75,000 (Attachment No. 1).</b></p>
<b>Minutes/ Actions:</b>	<p>The Executive Director presented Amendment No. 3, correcting a clerical error in the contract end date from a prior amendment. The amendment extends the period of performance by three months to June 30, 2026, with no change in scope or total funding amount (\$75,000). As reminder, Nate Merrill is a preeminent expert in coastal access data methods and was previously assigned to this project as a U.S. EPA employee. Following his</p>	

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	<p>separation from EPA, BEACON retained him as a consultant to continue this important work supporting coastal and beach access planning and data development.</p> <p><b>Public Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None.</li> </ul> <p><b>Motion to approve as set forth in the agenda. Moved by Gama/ Second by Halter. Unanimously approved.</b></p>
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<b>Item</b>	6	<p><b>Executive Director’s Report and Communications</b></p> <p><b>The Executive Director will report on recent activities and achievements of BEACON, upcoming events of interest to the Board of Directors and the public, and general status of BEACON major projects, including the status of recent BEACON presentations on activities and accomplishments to our member agencies. There will be no Board discussion except to ask questions or refer matters to Staff; no action will be taken unless listed on a subsequent agenda.</b></p>
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<b>Minutes/ Actions:</b>	<p>Executive Director Marc Beyeler provided the following report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Channel Islands Harbor Dredging and Financing</li> <li>• BEACON staff annually convenes the SAN (Sand) Summit in cooperation with the City of Port Hueneme and Channel Islands Harbor/County, attracting 50–70 participants. The Summit serves to mobilize stakeholders and engage state and federal representatives on dredging finance.</li> <li>• Congressional funding for dredging is not automatic — it requires annual Congressional approval, which has proven difficult year to year.</li> <li>• Santa Barbara Harbor did not receive approximately \$3 million in federal authorization for FY 2026-27.</li> <li>• Congressman Brownlee secured approximately \$12 million for Ventura Harbor and Channel Islands Harbor for the coming year, though that amount may not fully cover needs.</li> <li>• BEACON's three harbors (Santa Barbara, Ventura, Channel Islands) all affect sediment management and sandy beach preservation. Each has a different dredging frequency: Santa Barbara dredges twice yearly; Ventura annually; Channel Islands Harbor every two years.</li> <li>• The next Sand Summit will be scheduled around the March Board meeting.</li> <li>• Completed Grants and Project Updates             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Coastal Conservancy grant on integrated governance for sediment management and coastal adaptation has been completed.</li> <li>➤ Projects in progress or recently supported by BEACON include:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Goleta Beach nourishment and ongoing restoration</li> <li>➤ Santa Barbara East Beach — systemic nourishment approach</li> <li>➤ Isla Vista living shoreline dune pocket project</li> <li>➤ Carpinteria living shoreline and shoreline management plan (currently funded)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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- Ormond Beach restoration and public access plan (early implementation)
- Port Hueneme / Surfrider beach restoration at Hueneme and Ormond Beach
- Programmatic and Financial Outlook

The Executive Director noted that project costs have increased dramatically — Surfers Point was originally estimated at \$5 million as a single project; Phase 1 alone cost approximately \$4 million and total project costs have reached nearly \$17 million.

BEACON will bring forward additional nature-based project concepts (dunes, wetlands, artificial reefs, green groins) for Board consideration based on lessons learned from Surfers Point and other projects.

Finally, the Executive Director reminded the Board that BEACON operates on the state fiscal year (July 1–June 30). The board meeting schedule is: January, March, May, July, September, and November.

The March meeting is for dues and preliminary budget discussion  
The May meeting for Budget and contracts approval

In addition, for 2026, Chair Friedman and Vice-Chair Gama continue in their leadership roles under BEACON's two-year leadership schedule, through January 2027

**Public Comments:**

- None.

**The next Board Meeting will be held on May 22, 2026, at 9:00 AM, at the City of Carpinteria City Council Chambers.**

**Meeting Minutes by Gerald Comati, Program Manager, BEACON.**