

NEVADA STATE BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

MINUTES

September 14, 2010

The meeting began at 10:35AM, Thunderbird Lodge, Incline Village, Lake Tahoe, Nevada.

Board members and guests introduced themselves:

Board Members Present:

Robert [Bob] Stewart, US Bureau of Land Management, retired.
Michael Maher , Nevada Historical Society, Reno
Jeff Kintop, State Archivist, Nevada State Library & Archives
Jordan Hastings, Nevada Bureau of Mines & Geology
Marianne Farretta, Cartographer, Nevada Dept. of Transportation
Peg Rees, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Daryl Crawford, Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada
David McMorrان, US Forest Service
Skip Canfield, Nevada Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources
Jack Hursh, Executive Secretary of the Board; Cartographer, Nevada Bureau of
Mines & Geology
Linda Newman, Chair; University of Nevada, Reno, Emeritus

Guests:

Larry Schmidt
Mr. & Mrs. John P. Davidson, residents, Incline Village, Nevada [Lake Tahoe]
Eric Moody, Nevada Historical Society, retired
Guy Rocha, Nevada State Archivist, retired.
David Antonucci, resident, Tahoma, California, [Lake Tahoe]
Ghost of Mark Twain [McAvoy Lane, noted Twain impressionist]

Agenda:

1. Minutes of May 11, 2010
Minutes were not complete; no action taken.
2. Announcements, Chair or Executive Secretary:
Chair thanked the administrators of the Thunderbird Lodge for extending the invitation to meet here, especially Mary Fisher, Meredith Fischer
And Jeff Kintop of the Board for his assistance with the arrangements.
Board members and guests introduced themselves.
A tour of the Thunderbird Lodge will follow the meeting.
3. Announcements from Board members or public: None.

4. Anniversary Peak, Washoe County, first hearing. Documents emailed to Board. Proposed by guest John Paul Davidson, Incline village, to name a particular peak. Mr. Davidson presented his proposal based on his 20th anniversary hike and many return hikes. Tahoe Rim Trail passes about 4 miles from the peak; no actual trail at this time to Peak; view of Lake and Mt. Rose, a worthwhile destination point. Not naming it specifically for a person. Naming criteria as designated by the US Board on Geographic names discussed [can be found through the NV Board web site]: ‘...appropriateness, acceptability, need...’ are primary considerations for naming a feature.

Does the proposal meet the criteria? Consideration by relevant authorities including: Washoe County Commission, US Forest Service, Inter-Tribal Council and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency.

The GNIS was checked and no Anniversary Peak was identified in Nevada or in California.

5. Sam Clemens Cove, Washoe County, second hearing. Nomination to name was initiated by Bob Stewart, US BLM retired and member of the Nevada Board.

David Antonucci, resident and retired civil engineer residing at Tahoma, California [Lake Tahoe], presented a detailed opposing view at the May 2011 meeting. At this meeting he presented an extensive PowerPoint statement detailing his opposition to the naming as based on his extensive research. He intends to present his points in a formal publication [book] at some time in the future.

Primary points as he determined based on research of the historic publications, geology, topography, biology, and history of the times:

Clemens’ publications sometimes contradict themselves, have inconsistencies and Twain was known for exaggeration.

Historic evidence and documentation of possible paths to the area of the cove at Lake Tahoe where Clemens’ group camped.

Clemens went to Lake Tahoe to scout for timber claims which were filed with a map; this is relatively undisputed. But, was this the location of the cove where he camped?

The only documentation about naming the cove for him comes from Clemens’ 1861 letter stating that the Territorial Governor Nye [brother of his traveling companion] was going to name it for him.

Exactness of location of Clemens’ travel is difficult to verify given lack of historic documentation of the area [e.g. maps]. Their terminology may not match what we would use today with our full knowledge of the geography of the Lake.

Mr. Antonucci believes for many reasons including the stated boat trip involved that the site most likely was along the NW corner of the Lake which would be in California. He concludes with the statement that the Board should not pick a place in haste for the sake of naming a place. To name a place wrongly just to name a place would be an injustice.

He has not presented this as a proposal to the California state geographic names board.

Mr. Antonucci’s complete statement may be found at:

<http://cid-9468fc569e723d15.office.live.com/self.aspx/Public/NBGN%20mtg%2009-14-10.pdf>

Considerable discussion and questions relevant to documentation of trails, cabins, timber and saw mills and other sites mentioned by Clemens in his writings followed with some disagreement. Guests Guy Rocha, retired Nevada State Archivist and Eric Moody, Director, Nevada State Historical Society, Reno, retired and former member of the Nevada State Board on Geographic Names both spoke in favor of the naming.

A map of composite historic cartography of area indicating [as well as known and marked] trails of area involved in Sam Clemens' travels relevant to the cove proposal was presented to Board by Marianne Farretta, cartographer, Nevada Dept. of Transportation.

Larry Schmidt then discussed his research on the trails in the area which he has done on site and finding a rock which fits the description of 'table rock' – as mentioned by Clemens in *Roughing It* on the shore of Lake Tahoe. Rocks of various colors are located at the proposed cove. The location, at the proposed Sam Clemens Cove, would be contrary to Mr. Antonucci's statement. Mr. Schmidt feels that the details mentioned in *Roughing It* and Clemens' letter match the local; locating a rock which matched the description was an incidental bonus.

The Ghost of Mark Twain then appeared [without prior knowledge of the Executive Secretary or Chair] and briefly addressed the group commending the presentations and stating that naming something for him in the area [which bears nothing with his name] would be appropriate and appreciated.

Chairman Newman asked if the Board was ready to vote or if discussion should be continued at the next meeting of the Board.

Discussion continued especially with reference to the literal use of Clemens' works to locate an area not exactly known to Clemens himself.

Chairman Newman read from the US Board *Principles & Procedures* relevant to commemorative naming: Policy 3, Sections 1-3, regarding significant contribution to the area, association with the area and local support. Solving the controversy of the exact location may never be possible but does not prohibit naming a site.

Daryl Crawford representing the Inter-tribal Council, stated that the Council had not made objections. The director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency declined to make comment. The supervisor of the US Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Area, had voiced objections by email; however, the US Forest Service representative to the Nevada Board [eventually] voted in favor of the name.

The motion was then made to call the vote in favor by Skip Canfield, Nevada State Lands, Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources. Seconded by Marianne Farretta, Nevada Dept. of Transportation. Peg Rees, UNLV, proposed that the statement to the US Board specifically mention Section 3. Chair Newman stated that a full statement and all documents would be submitted with the actual proposal even though not required.

Vote taken: eight in favor, two abstentions [J. Hastings & R. Stewart].

6. Waking Spring to Watkins Spring, White Pine County.
Not a voting issue at this meeting. Discussed and asked for additional research on Mr. Watkins prior to presenting this proposal at the next meeting [Jan 2011].
7. Buckbrush Spring, Water Tank Spring, Abraham Spring, all in Mineral County.
Not a voting issue at this meeting. Chair Newman presented photos of the springs and US Bureau of Land Management markers taken just a week prior to this meeting of 3 of the springs. The photos clearly show discrepancies in the names as labeled on the topo sheets and as pointed out by the submitter to revise the names. The photos indicated additional conflicts regarding the naming. Inquiry has been sent to the US Bureau of Land Management national office with no response as yet. Contact with the Nevada BLM office had been made and the Board is now awaiting further information.
This will probably be a voting item at the next meeting.
8. Ex. Secretary J. Hursh reported on an inquiry on a possible future submission for naming of 'Mt. Irish,' Lincoln County.
9. Next meeting: January 11, 2011, 9:30AM, Great Basin Science Sample and Records Library, Desert Research Institute campus, 2175 Raggio Parkway, Reno, NV.
10. Adjournment: approximately 2:30pm

These minutes were condensed by Linda Newman, Chair, from transcription of tapes of meeting and her notes, and subject to approval by the Nevada Board.