



6/1/16 OFSC Meeting

Members Present

Dee Rosario

Sue Piper

Barry Pilger

Ken Benson

Dinah Benson

Gordon Piper

Nick Vigilante

Barbara Goldenberg

Allene Warren

Michael Killian

Non-members participants/presenters

Tom Klatt

Jerry Kent

Absent:

Lin Barron

Jay Ashford

Meeting called to order by the President at 2:09pm.

- 1.) Minutes of 4-01-2016 meeting approved.
- 2.) Michael Kilian gave the Treasurer's report we have \$1,580.40 and have received no new donations and or checks at this time.
- 3.) The Board discussed and approved adding our OFSC logo to Bob Sieben's Book.



- 4.) The President then opened general discussion of the drafted Letter to City Attorney Barbara Parker seeking that as City Attorney she file complaints with State and Federal Agencies for unfair and discriminatory practices in distributing funds for Clean Air and Urban Forest projects such as selected CalFire funds. After a lengthy discussion and receiving Board member input it was decided that Oakland Firesafe Council was not the appropriate sender, signer, and advocate for the letter as presented. It was suggested that perhaps the Oakland Landscape Committee or another non-profit be sought out by the author if they wanted to further pursue the matter.
- 5.) California Invasive Species Advisory Committee – The Board discussed the control and spread of broom in California— dialogued regarding outlawing retail sale of broom; making commercial growers attach warning labels (do not plant this tree within 30 feet of your house if you live in a fire prone area)— legislative ways to reduce fuel loads.—Board that this needed more endorsement of the outlawing of broom—suggested that interested members seek UC, Davis to weigh in on this. –
- 6.) Sun Cal—love to work with us on planning for firesafe practices at Oak Knoll – list of plants approved plant list—25th year planning yes. Ken Benson to reach out regarding their participation.
- 7.) Letter to Public Safety Committee—Board discussed how best to follow the WPAD and prepare a letter regarding City readiness post sunset of funds to meet the vegetation management requirements and to complete both the FEMA grant project and our support for and the necessity for a Hills based Vegetation Management Plan. Board suggest that President reach out directly to councilman Dan Kalb and staff to direct our concerns— The letter needed to go directly to Dan and copy the others.



- 8.) Gateway – Brief update on ongoing maintenance and a call for volunteers for ongoing weeding and maintenance.
- 9.) Parking in the hills/evacuation Routes—friendly reminders—Piedmont Pines—designate pilot areas, test parking – parking to one side on certain streets.
- 10.) Discussed several old business topics like PG&E Shut off valves. Firewise Home Check List—tailors to their own communities—CAL Fire check list—very simple it works, can discuss with people. Barbara and Dee will research and to work on this and present at next meeting.

Special Meeting (General notes)

Tom Klatt
Jerry Kent
Martin Mataresse

What worked?

Martin- discussed past practices and inspections and goat grazing improvements over time. Same with selected clearance efforts in selected but limited projects

Jerry—thankful group in Oakland working on fire safety in Oakland area and thanked us for founding OFSC.

Inspections key, brush clearing, goat grazing, appeared small voice trying to get serious work done in Oakland, with a very limited budget, He noted that the Fire Department not fully behind us.

Disaster to lose money with 2/3 vote required.

Tom—partner on WPAD, band of Oakland Trees between pavement and regents property—couldn't afford to have the City of Oakland leave a ribbon of trees – UC did, ask for reimbursement for the work.



EBMUD cleared up to right of way, and didn't remove trees at Grizzly Peak and Fish Ranch Road. Takes an insider to figure it out what is happening and will happen moving forward. He was stepping down from prior role.

What did not work? :

Signing on a professional services company to shepherd us through a plan or CEQA—no contract signed, clock is ticking. Clock is likely dead for a new district in 2017.

Everything else is slow—City Council didn't pass resolution to contract us in December—City Attorney hung everything up for ages, didn't have a clue that work needed to get done.

OFD relationship with citizens that volunteer in Joaquin Miller Park or Beaconsfield does not work, citizen volunteers not getting due respect and that public/private relationship broken for quite some time.

Goat, FEMA and CEQA review is a different contract- pretty good at roadside contracts; things that are different take forever don't have expertise in those fields. City Attorney was unfamiliar with details.

Fire hazardous trees on City property or when private property is out of compliance – relying on our City Public Works tree crew is not going to work. There's a union blockage getting an outside contractor—dead trees that pose fire hazards are not looked at as emergencies by OPWD.

Jerry—scope of the problem—got isolated – after 1992, Tony Acosta, FEMA put up half the money for a major study 1994 vegetation management consortium plan, Hills Emergency Forum—looking for partnership with EBRP, EBMUD, UC-- did the plan, Tony was the leader of fire hazard reduction in East Bay Hills—he was forester, everyone on



same page. Issue it didn't have an environmental document with it. 1 Environmental document for whole plan—but it didn't occur. Each agency wanted to be responsible for its own territory. \$1 million over 2 years, EBMUD had an EIR, not active participant. FEMA came up with money, EIS on just FEMA grant projects. UC modifying document and Agencies that should be working together aren't—Hills Emergency Forum not competent to represent all agencies in the hills, too many independent voices.

FEMA EIS—is a really good EIS. HCN group has hijacked whole discussion. OFD doesn't know, insular and focused primarily on suppression, tree people want to hijack whole discussion and not focus on clearance needs. Tunnel area with a little bit of work could be made safe.

Tom_- biggest of the original FEMA grants—City of Oakland led for all 3 agencies, in 2006—3 funded in California, we were one of the 3, counting on Oakland to administer the funds—been 10 years, no motion entitlement documents—do a CEQA document—Oakland doesn't have any hope in implementing in window allowed by FEMA—

City's responsibility—OFD, PUB Works, Parks & Recreation? Not clear who wants or has taken ownership and stepped up to do the CEQA and planning work. Until ground work ready, why go after new grants?

Politically within the City of Oakland there is no will to do a CEQA—

Spending FEMA money in time—If no one at City Hall who has clout or desire to get moving on it—is there someone in the Mayors Administration who gets it? If not, someone on elected side to cut through this current stalemate.



Jerry—Park district ask permission to take money directly from State OES—they will deal with state separately, pulled out of Oakland grant.

Wish for a future district:

Martin—take it completely out of Fire Department—City Administrator managed it. Monies split between OPR and OFD. The foundation is in planning and fire prevention, retiree wants to work part time. Doesn't have expertise, the Planning Department doesn't want to write grants for OFD. Need a CZAR who has power if we stay with City of Oakland model.

Do we need a special district works beyond Oakland boundaries, say to Hayward, and like in Hayward move the vegetation management inspection process, stick it back into public works code enforcement-- Suppression folks not right place –

Jerry—makes mayors responsible for safety of the community—need to have political clout highest elected office—

Tom—need someone outside of fire managing at a czar level, can work between the silos to bring together—make more than one department to get project off the ground.
Get political leaders—City Council—City Administrator too

What services budgeted for:

Need to start with a budget—what we would like in budget

A good planner

Aspirational—but reality:

Don't want to be promising the aspirational goals



Why take private money to do what should be done by City on its own property

Won't work if private moneys displace public obligation—Ken

Ken—more widespread abilities around projects that volunteers do—brush gets cleared and projects gets done, on both private and public lands—true impact of fire—addressed in holistic approach in a larger area, than just around a public right of way, park or school.

The group felt it is the City's responsibility to take leadership—we can only do so much, we need a special district to do the other.

How do we get the City to take responsibility—?

Before, we didn't cut fuel breaks; we needed money to do extra road side clearance—Martin

We oversold selves on first two districts; we didn't hire any more people to do—got money for contracting, tasked staff to do what they did before, not first on their plate- Barbara

Need to build an organization to do the work.

When we price things out – poll public how much you willing to pay, but not what the real cost of doing all the projects.

Can't forget—we spent \$700,000 a year on flammable fuels removal, that included recession would have been 0 without WPAD.

There were things accomplished way money estimated and how it was spent-- \$700,000 plus the goat contracts 1.1 million is spent—moved tons of stuff—better now than 15 years ago. Barbara



At beginning, advisory committee and manager (LeRoy) unclear on responsibility, limitations, and roles were—Have to a manager, paid for by the district—its chaos someone that can be a project manager.

PG& E getting act together – a player in fire danger mitigation in North California. Have an organizational structure.

Jerry—no one else has free money to do the work. Park District when it did its plan – 0 idea of what it would cost estimated just \$1200 a year per acre, going into area \$8000 per acre first time and everyone is just guessing on the money to do the work.

SF restoration authority 2 billion for Measure AA-- approved a measure \$12 a year for 20 years-- Get 3 xs in grants from other agencies

Work hard on real costs, and then politics of with public is willing to spend.

Tom inconceivable doesn't see perpetual public safety issue—municipal priority—UC fully funded annual work and FEMA grant—to say we have no money to do important public safety endeavor, a core mission of the City. Not an excuse

Nick—we don't get out to the grass roots—we don't get them to understand – those are where our allies are. Educate people in wildfire area about issues of concern. Need a broad base.

Dinah—City of Oakland is self-insured, 2 billion a year. When they put budget, they do not prioritize city liability. For average private property owner, have bucks in the game. In Montclair, can't get insurance from usual insurances—they don't know it. Too many more fires, no one will write fire insurance in California? What happens??



Economic reasons to advocate for money for a cohesive, effective operation for wildfire prevention.

Fire Department with Code Enforcement acts like police, don't like to do. Code Enforcement people do understanding protecting the public.

Regional-- start with Oakland, the other agencies are running own programs. Hammer out something that makes sense for Oakland.

Jon—a regional solution is almost impossible unless you have a bankroll to get it through. City of Oakland has to solve this.

Martin, tweak government to make it

Contract attorney for attorney needs. Monies have to pay.

Berkeley—has same issue

IF only look at geographical confines of City—Manager—what do you want in the district—what we want it to do—who do we want as a partner—The City and Departments as a partner =-- what does it mean—before we allowed that as assumption.

Issue of the Unions, Charter City and Contracting in—limit to City Government

What do we want to do—Volunteer Coordinator who understands environmental issues?

Needed to spend time disputing boundaries of the district—CalFire—no shake roofs there—certain places who can I be in high fire hazard zone—well thought out—challenge state authority, not just most voters and contributors, but most rationale.



Type of district—the funding from big parcel owners, now off the table, Buy in or responsibility for that – of those big parcel owners to raise funding levels.

Need to clearly separate from the City and OFD and is in necessary to even if partner with City of Oakland. City of Oakland must comply with State of California, and CAL Fire relative to WUI. Need to be clearly separated from their statutory requirements—however we structure ourselves vegetation management, special district cannot be tax required agencies for compliance

Very clear what we don't do—Definition of No—I don't inspect properties, I don't clear parkland, don't clear school areas, don't clear public utility

What we do and will need is—clear definition of No and Yes.

Do district \$12 a year level—supervisory - rest of money comes from City on a Transfer and gets sent to us to spent—city should be able to afford \$1million

Not use money on public properties—for public private partnerships—reduce fuel load, education and outreach. Who holds City accountable for that?

Only plan that was done was the 1994—based on National Forest Fire models, Residential area—3 guys In a car and typed the neighborhood—done by university, Dave Sapsis, CalFire mitigation guy.

All data on a website—data link—

How to make that happen—



Oakland improving house after house—and not having a clear fire hazard plan—

Need to advocate for better wild fire priorities when approving new construction== including reducing increased density.
Where do we want to be in 20 years- beyond basic annual vegetation management and goat grazing?

Take out of fire department, public works—new partnerships in removal of trees, working with UC and other partners, and having goals in ending up with a dramatically different “view”—less trees, more fire breaks, help private homeowners and public property owners.

Dinah—vegetation management dealt with public property
Vegetation management dealt with private property - grants
Someone who really know about planning and integrate with other governmental systems
Someone how to apply for grants, make it a priority Grant administration.
Someone to get a handle on educational component/ Volunteer

Use Code Enforcement—on public and private property

Scott Stevens—state responsibility with WUI

Local Fire Chief does residential houses, not WUI—will state accept that—

Other state universities, that UC Davis and UC Berkeley --engineering, forestry—ignored our presence—they are not involved in education of



people—University should be able to provide information and be a force in our community.

DEE—has to have oversight over budget—ability to follow the money
Needs to be a resolution in finances of City of Oakland-General Fund is a black hole, Department heads decide whether if money is appropriated it actually gets spent.

Martin—education—University up here with academics and data, Look at FOOSC—school aged children helping with restoration projects—
District wide restoration plan, demonstration projects throughout the district, kids could have class field trips—learn about fire prevention—
more of these conquer sites, restore fewer weeds, need on going, kids grow up build a generation of people who know about fire

Next step in District:

Communicate—to our friends in the political positions in City of Oakland:

Need a lot more planning—commitment to doing Vegetation Management Plan and CEQA long before –

List for them – these are the things there won't be

City of Oakland—Geographically—

Still a large eucalyptus grove at Mills College
King Estates—has grass—

Need clout—Oakland Firesafe council do the survey of the area



Tree inventory—specific plan – and goal with replacement landscaping and on public and private property—aging tree—

Data sets in 1994 plan doesn't translate into a specific project—

Nick- put together a list of what we would like to see in a District

Other municipalities – see where they are, what they are doing, and best practices---- Orinda

Use of city staff vs. city contractors—

City Charter—make city friendlier to volunteers-- what is model for partnerships—may have to attack that charter—

Create a district no connection public operations of city—operate much like DFSC—benefit to those who participate in it, education, projects, fuel load management, no direct connection to public properties and public management of public properties—responsibility of City.

Special vote

LAFCO—special district , mosquito abatement, vegetation management, LAFCO-- Nate Miley – make a motion at county level, LAFCO hearings, series—

Planning – what's in the district, what's not in district, how will it be formed, how will it collect funds, how do we know that it has done what it said it would do.

What has to happen within the city or without?



Get members, OWLS—to do work in the neighborhoods—right of entry, permission on public property—

Neighborhood stuff—

Falls under state's auspices

Agenda for next time—not a committee formed to create district—want to know manage this and do plan—

On agenda through public safety—in front-- Sue to Dan.

Boundaries—how far fire can spread, how much damage can be spread—Adjourned at 5:05

Transportation—City moving 200 OPWD people to department. City has an effective Public Ethics Commission with staff—

Sabrina if contacted could have conversation with City of Hayward, where the moved vegetation inspections to Code Enforcement in Hayward also in Walnut Creek.

Meet in August 13 Saturday morning 10 am.