



Oakland Firesafe Council
Board Meeting Minutes
By Conference Call
10-Noon

Present:

Ken Benson
Barbara Goldenberg
Jeff Kahn
Jon Kaufman
Jerry Kent
Michael Killian
Barbara Kluger
Mike Petouhoff
Gordon Piper
Sue Piper
Dee Rosario
Robert Sieben
Elizabeth Stage
Nick Vigilante
Allene Warren

Meeting called to order at 10:02 am.

1. Approval of Minutes of March 21, 2020—approved as mailed
2. Treasurer’s Report – as sent via email by Treasurer Michael Killian—on hand unencumbered \$15,613.17
3. Old Business
 - Oakland CP&R—Chair gave a brief update, noting that 4 short videos covering the primary workshop content have been posted on Oakland CPandR.org and that a 7 Step Wildfire Prevention Challenge was launched on Wildfire Prevention Day to run throughout the month. It is sent via email and posted on both the OFSC and OCP&R Facebook pages. If groups are interested in Zoom presentations, OCP&R team members are prepared.

- Discussion ensued regarding OFD and this year's inspections:
 - Gordon Piper:-Enforcing 10 foot rule on fences—
 - Mike Petouhoff—technical specifications—also showed up in PPNA and MNC—consistency between rounds of inspections—person with hand held device can't see previous inspections—causing huge issues on Next Door—hurts enforceability and causes resentment. It's an IT glitch and should be addressed via a code for each property owner so they can see what their inspection is easier.
 - Barbara Goldenberg—Trees—can't tell you take down a tree that you can't get a permit to remove. State regs you may maintain specimen trees.
 - Ken Benson- OFD and the City had very opportunity to do this much better but the mailer received from City of Oakland, worst inspection notice I have ever seen, next to useless. We should constantly remind when they send mailers like this out, difficult for people to take inspections seriously. Consistency has always been a problem, City's mismanagement of Accela roll out. The City needs to do these inspections timely, and do public parcels and need to be consistent. We are not the fire department and not the inspectors. Next Door is saying how bad inspections are.
 - Jeff Kahn—Fences—any guidelines vines on wooden fences.
 - Mike Petouhoff - City and OFD needs someone to look at the process from a customer perspective. Gordon—95 -99% passed; continuation of this inspection process leads to not enforcing code thoroughly—Not a real commitment to enforce the code.

Additional thoughts to Sue by Noon on Monday to get them to PPNA on time

- City Budget—money for Wildfire prevention intact for this year; interest in moving forward with a new District—but not until at least 2021 because Vegetation Management Plan not complete.
Ken: Benson added that there is a \$122 million shortfall in City's budget. Council expressed hope that Federal bailout funds will come to Oakland. Proposed House budget has funds for cities—Oakland would receive \$164 million and 97 million for next year—a lot of give and take, going to get a possibly reduced as it goes through Senate and President's desk. We have to thank our 4 hill based Council members but be aware that nothing is truly encumbered in General Fund—City's approach taking \$\$ from reserve fund, rainy day fund, and if necessary reducing dedicated expenditures in general fund to ensure protection for full time employees and to protect COVID-19 efforts. Watch hearings up until it is approved June 30. Not going to get a lot of help from State in their budget process.
- Vegetation Management Support Program-- City of Oakland policy on using power tools—changed their story, in the past they said “We can't prohibit you from using power tool.” Now Environmental Services, can't use power tools

Jerry—Regional Parks—past union opposition for letting volunteers use power equipment—political and tied to MOU's with the unions.

- Jon Kaufman—East Bay Regional Vegetation Management District JPA—getting more endorsements Public Lands Committee of Sierra Club, Sheng Thao first public official—Pending: DFSC, Wildcat Canyon—
 - Barbara Kluger—Community organizations interested in wildfire prevention—to endorse this- Beth Wurzburg—California Native Plant Society—lack of detail what types of vegetation might be used to replace things that are taken out. We don't want to be too specific at this point. Keep talking in general terms of what's flammable and not—Jon will reach out to Beth.
 - Mike-likes idea of Regional Authority—fire doesn't know boundaries—okay for planning and could need clarification—JPA – doesn't necessarily take away individual city's efforts. Need to flesh it out a bit.
 - Barbara Goldenberg—Friends of the 4 corners—we'd like associations but less formal groups welcome.
 - Gordon Piper-more than trees in the forest—no plan for water to establish replacement planting needs a CalFire urban forest management plan, tree groups push for trees. Need a greater diversity beyond the trees. No plan for changing the landscape—would like that to be part of plan.
- 4. Allene Warren —Raise funds by applying for state and federal grants and she was neither in favor nor looking forward to another parcel tax initiative.
- 5. Jon commented that the JPA don't have to have a tax measure, although it is permitted. Initially they pool their funds. He felt that no tax measure is going to pass at this time.

4. New Business

- a. Chair sought a vote on where we felt we were on funding for a new or another WPAD, since the idea was floated to go out for another WPAD (generating \$1.7 or \$2 million for annual vegetation management) at a recent City Council meeting.

1 WPAD;

2.WPAD- enhanced;

3 WPAD and special projects;

4 only after completing Vegetation Plan;

5 No (See attendees list for how each voice voted)}

Attendees were polled with the following results:

Everyone felt that this was not the time to go out for a vote. But if such a measure would be put to a vote in 2021 or later, 10 were in favor of a WPAD and Special Projects; 5 for special projects only after completing the Vegetation Management

Plan. No one favored options 1 or 2. The Chair will send a letter to the Mayor , Interim Fire Chief and City Council .

Who would manage a new district need someone more enlightened than OFD—something better than typical fire.

- b. Allene Warren recommended that attendees raise questions about candidates' positions on wildfire prevention in upcoming candidate forums, Ken Benson suggested a potential phrasing- "the current City council already approved an initiative that wildfire prevention is a city priority. Given the context of COVID-19 and city's need to response to pandemic, where are you on the support of and furtherance of that initiative to put Wildfire Prevention as a priority?"

Are you committed to the annual requirements and state enforced requirements for their own properties in the WUI and are you committed that the general funds necessary to do that to bring city into compliance be earmarked and spent accordingly?

Chair would put together a list of questions that could be used—formally articulate in writing. Funnel a list of questions to Sue so we can use them in upcoming debates but all seemed to agree now is worse time during COVID-19.

5.Open Forum-

- Bob Sieben—Good News—without homeowner taking responsibility to harden homes, never going to stop the fire. Talked to 3 Rotary meetings—4 to 5 simple things homeowner can do. Well received. UP at the Waterford, within Rossmoor, 6 entities surrounding—apartments budgeted \$65,000 to take care of fire hazards around his apartment.
- Jerry Kent noted that Dave Winokour(sp), Fire Department Chief Moraga Orinda was quoted in the May 6, 2020 Chronicle that due the combined danger of COVID-19 and Wildfire local jurisdictions may not be able to count on Forest Service to help us out—he has a solution – Moraga-Orinda-- because of problems getting people—get all kinds of things mobilized in advance—support services working in an outdoor environment; Hire recently unemployed workers—give them jobs in fire create a pathway for employment as fire fighters-- Bob would add—got to be a way when crews from Prisons who had experience,-- when they get released, we could employ them.
- Barbara Goldenberg gave update on Diablo Firesafe Council—did not get money from CalFire as did City of Oakland—only large projects like Orinda. DFSC has applied for PG& E grant to do more of our \$5,000 homeowner grants. Have 99 approved and accepted community-based grant applications—on number 57 with

no additional funds available. 2 or 3 partial grants turned back. Seriously rethinking how we do business.

- Dee Rosario gave an update on East Bay Regional Parks: treated 30 acres with Moraga/Orinda fuel break; initial treatment on 110 acres, continue on regular maintenance on 800 acres, planning for another 40 acres on 6 additional FEMA funded sites. Applied .5 million from Cal Fire, and \$1.5 from FEMA for FEMA Mitigation Funds.

Meeting adjourned at 11:48am

Next Meeting June—20th at 10am - noon on Zoom