



D R A F T

**Oakland Firesafe Council
Board Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2020
Via Zoom Conference Call**

Present:

Soheila Bana
Lin Barron
Ken Benson
Chris Cullander
Barbara Goldenberg
Richard Illgen
Jerry Kent
Martin Matarrese
Andrew Miloslavich
Gordon Piper
Sue Piper
Elizabeth Stage
Nick Vigilante

Guests;

Dan Kalb Oakland City Councilmember
Lisa Jacobs, Dan Kalb's Office
Rebecca Sanchez, Sheng Thao's Office
Anna Marie Schmidt, Friends of Sausal Creek
Joe DeVries City of Oakland
Rebecca Sanchez, Sheng Thao's Office
Zac Unger, President, Local 55

Meeting called to order at 10:11 am.

1. Approval of Minutes September 26, 2020—accepted as mailed

2. Treasurer's Report

There is \$28,733.95 in the Bank Account. The encumbered amounts for the OCP&R include the second Cal Fire Foundation Grant of \$8 (deposited Sept, 24th) and the remaining amount for the first Cal Fire Foundation Grant of \$1,858. Also encumbered (or restricted) are the JPA Seed Money Fund contributions of \$4,350. The raised earmarked funds for Regional Wildfire JPA approaching over \$5,000 initial target.



D R A F T

3. Old Business

- a. **Oakland CP&R--Neighborhood Organizing Update-** Barbara Goldenberg and Sue Piper attended a Rescape Firescape Certification Workshop that was outstanding. OFSC/ OCP&R and Rescape are looking to partner with a similar program geared to property owners rather than professionals. The contract with the City of Oakland to access the \$125,000 allocated in the General Fund is nearing completion. OCP&R and OFSC are working on revamping the OFSC website.
- b. **Regional Wildfire Prevention District**— Elizabeth Stage – OFSC continues to raise seed money to organize for JPA. Our outreach is slow but steady. Sue Duncan has been a real asset in Contra Costa County. We keep knocking on door of EBRP—a little reluctant, but the team meets with EPRP leadership in a few weeks. The team is talking to Berkeley Thank you for reps for their support, diversity in geography, kinds of organizations MIG, Met with Alameda County Fire Chiefs, hope to meet with CC Fire Chiefs. Will be meeting with Alameda County City Managers and hope to do the same with Contra Costa County city leadership. Elizabeth spoke with Sam Schuchat, top resource guy for the Coastal Conservancy, who offered to help. Together Bay Area to help us with lobbying at the state level.

4. **Grizzly Peak, Evacuation Routes and City of Oakland Wildfire Prevention**

Interagency Team—Joe Devries , City of Oakland –

- a. **Grizzly Peak**—in past couple of weeks; secured all of the lookouts on Grizzly Peak with logs in partnership with UC Berkeley and City of Oakland. We, used larger logs at JMP (reduces fuel load in JMP), saddled logs and chained so they won't move. Partnership of OFD, Tree Division—like to expand on Skyline (DOT still evaluating) past Keller, will take time. Consider them permanent since fire season is year-round for now. Wrestling with what signage—very deliberative—considering dusk to dawn on rest of the road. OPD when conducted operations the other night, did issue tickets. Most volunteering compliance. Will continue to do so during high fire danger times. Also talk of partial closure on Red Flag Days—soft barriers—not staffed, opened to through traffic- concerned about evacuation routes for people from Orinda. And staffing. Dusk -Dawn no stopping is good—problems with people shooting guns in East Oakland and follow ups with tickets—think a dramatic drop. Seeing a radical spike in violent crime during COVID—hard for OPD in that end of time cannot divert resources—using resource officers. Considering allowing Fire Inspectors to be peace officer certified so they can issue tickets with unlawful assembly, parking issues, fire code violations and who is ticketing on turn outs on UC Land—interagency collaboration with UC Berkeley, Berkeley Police, Orinda, Oakland – looking at entering in an MOU.
- b. **Evacuation routes**, working with ZoneHaven, and continue to examine safe streets model—asked planning department to look a regulations when issuing permits, to see that contractors, developers are not creating a safety hazard on the street. DOT as well as Planning and Building-- DOT still are complaint driven—they know width of streets, but will respond to where public sees the pinch points.



D R A F T

- c. **Disease affecting black acacia**—David Moore from Tree Services, sent samples to UC Berkeley to figure out why the black acacias are having problems. Not sure if they will make a comeback with water in the spring but City Tree department closely monitoring this.
- d. **Joaquin Miller Park**—smaller task force looking at more patrols, removing brush. 2007 City Council voted to ban smoking in our parks, 2 fires on hillside by Gateway, Tried to get signage from PWA or City—City could do a better job of enforcing no smoking—legalization of marijuana—prioritize certain parks but up clear no smoking signs, if there is a place to sit it simply becomes an open invitation for smoking and fire.
- e. Comments:
 - i. Gordon Piper, Oakland Landscape Committee-- Power tools—under Adopt a Spot—OFD only does an annual clearance or goat grazing and feels the City needs to look at changing that rule. Question of inspectors not inspecting city open space and Cal Trans properties, or working with large property owners,
 - ii. Elizabeth Stage, North Hills Community Association—NHCA has written to Chief Drayton asking for breakdown of inspections—privately held, city owned, and 3rd party (Cal Trans) asking for whether they have been inspected, have they passed, follow up and what stage in – so we can gauge the extent of the remediation, waiting for Chief Drayton to respond. City Council passed a homeless encampment policy- that gives priority to areas where large numbers of children, blocking doorways of businesses, high fire danger—put fire marshal in the position if someone is even in a small encampment. Homeless administrator will meet with the Council Office monthly to get a sense of prioritization—a number of small encampments in D1—send them to Lisa Jacobs staffs D1 for homeless. Elizabeth—a ton has gotten done. As Beat 13Y thank you for keeping Kristine Jurgens Duenas on the job on Grizzly Peak, as progress on Grizzly Peak; next step of priorities, displacement program—now to Gateway and Firestorm Memorial Gardens, Hiller View area and to Skyline and that area. Lisa—enforcement her top priority and the person in charge of enforcement of DOT, gets that this is a public safety issue. Send up troops on Red Flag Days, provided an actual report. Next priority to identify those streets of 30 or so where there is continued non-compliance. How hard would it be to get a new 311 category—safe parking, to help people make reports. Best way to get it in the system and be actively monitored.
 - iii. Jerry Kent, Claremont Canyon Conservancy—now is the time to work with UC fire mitigation plan—they’ve dealt with turn outs with status quo, fuel management in that area not in their plan. 3 agencies that all know that is an evacuation corridor and place to stop a fire. EIR under review, it would be great to have Oakland on the same page.



D R A F T

- iv. Anna Marie Schmidt, Friends of Sausal Creek—responding to Black Acacia issue—applaud wait and see, seen pathogens being spread – as citizens and residents asking for action and requesting information—where can they go to a city spot—communication? She and FOSC will talk to Tree Division, and public signage—unfolding in last week and a half.
- v. Gordon Piper, Oakland Landscape Committee—City will be coming out with 10 year Vegetation Management Plan in November—concerns with problems – removing fire prone trees and planting replacement vegetation – many of our hill parks, city doesn't plant anything, aging urban forest, city's focus on tree planting on East and West Oakland, no plans for replacing and lack of water at North Oakland Sports Field—going on 3 years. Problem with any water at Gateway, and NOSF, how carry out urban forestry projects without resources?
- vi. Joe: Devries:
 1. Power Tool – looking at use—Risk Management, hope we can get a turn around on that.
 2. Caltrans—I meet with them – go over parcel by parcel, This year Vince Crudele, of the Fire Marshal's office, is singing Caltrans praises—every spring, map out where they needed to go. May not be official inspections, huge collaborations, and they meet monthly—on fire they have been really responsive. Homeless encampment policy—we did not think to put High Fire Severity Zone in it if it weren't from Dan Kalb and Lisa. We have an agreement with Caltrans, our fire marshal tells Caltrans, fast tracks to Governor's Office to approve it, and come back to take care of it. Crowds gathering everywhere like at Lake Merritt, Streets and parks, the City is working on that. Chris—about UC EIR, refers to large track of land below Grizzly Peak, plans to build, not regulated by Oakland or Berkeley, huge increase in density, and no evacuation routes, 2 lane road very twisty.
- vii. Rebecca Sanchez-Environmental Liaison Sheng Thao's office—asked that we/they send the scientific articles, etc. to her FYI.

4. New Business

- a. **Proposed OFSC 2020 Insurance Cancellation Survey**- Chair was given authorization to use the assumptive close version and if the Chair does not receive comments in the next 4 or 5 days; then send out the Survey as is (Resend survey to Members for comment).
- b. **Approve Fund Raising letter**—Sue Piper will resend to members to review
- c. **City of Oakland's position on Accessory Dwelling Units in the WUI**
<https://www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-research/accessorydwellingunits.shtml>-- Joe Devries noted that Planning Laura Kiminsky (sp) -- is specifically looking at that in the General Plan and Land Use Elements and tracking at state at Senate—very concerned about that. Our lobbyist say that Legislative Contingent is recognizing that need as well.



D R A F T

d. **Extra fee for vacant lots**—Lin Barron asked if it still applies to property owners with vacant lots in the hills. Council Aide Lisa Jacobs said it is possible to get a waiver, if the property is found to be undevelopable and that the process supposed to be pretty straight forward. She noted that Council Member Kalb asked to have area exempted but got push back from other colleagues. Some people want to get rid of properties in face of tax. Crazy to see more houses built— participate in the discussion of revision of the General Plan—Sue to send notice about participating in General Plan update.

e. **Keep Oakland Beautiful Board**—Gordon Piper suggested an initiative to change the name of Keep Oakland Beautiful to Keep Oakland Beautiful and Firesafe—to support efforts to enhance parks and open space, aging fire-prone forest, City seldom plants anything, need a more diversified landscape—Just as giving away daffodils and poppy seeds, resource gardens sharing them with city staff, greening groups and homeowners to get ready for fires and earthquakes that are coming. Where do we want to be in 5-10-50 years in terms of transforming the fire-prone urban forest, parks and open space to something better? Don't see much \$\$ or planning on that subject. Talk about planting natives—no funding, no water.

5. Open items

a. Soheila Bana—in El Cerrito—just 94803 Emergency Preparedness Alliance—a maze of interwoven city and unincorporated territory—hard time to get them to define evacuation route and we are learning from you all. We are all in it together in the WUI.

b. Dan Kalb—This weekend, beyond being Red Flag, High Wind—now more than ever, neighbors are not blocking the street, take precautions more than any other time. The risk is great now than previous bad weekends. We should be worried and concerned next couple days. We expect power to go out and stay out until Wednesday afternoon. Anything above 13 and 510 and below Oakmore, Rockridge. Charge cell phones and make sure to have access/passwords stored and ready.

c. Andrew Miloslavich —reinforced agreement with EBRP—taking out eucalyptus—proceeded to chip on our fire break—when they do good work, do it properly. So busy can't keep an eye on everything.

d. Barbara Goldenberg—Rescape—my biggest take away was to mulch 1" or less, not 4-6", somehow this message has to get out there.

e. Lin Barron—Interagency cooperation—received a message about "Irvine Fire"—smoke coming over the hill—the fire was on Irvine Road in Moraga, not Irvine, CA.-- Grizzly Stables—what are they doing in Orinda and Moraga. Forum—need a regional wildfire prevention district--- HEF.

6. **Next Meeting** Saturday—November 21st via Zoom—

7. Meeting adjourned at 11:43am.