



Oakland Firesafe Council
Board Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2021
Via Zoom Conference Call

Present:

Ken Benson
Bob Borek
John Brega
Carolyn Burgess
Chris Cullander
Sheryl Drinkwater
Barbara Goldenberg
Martin Matarrese
Doug Mosher
Gordon Piper
Sue Piper
Bob Sieben
Elizabeth Stage
Nick Vigilante
Doug Wong

Guests:

Olga Bolotina
Joe Devries
Rebecca Sanchez

Meeting called to order at 10:05am.

1. Approval of Minutes January 9, 2021 as mailed
2. **Treasurer's Report** – bank balance including funds from Paypal is \$60,211, with expenses of 4,410 for a total of \$55,801 in the account as of February 20, 2021. \$40,264 is encumbered for OCP&R and the JPA Seed Fund.s

3. Current extent of **East Bay's Tree and Shrub Mortality**—John Brega provided a birds-eye and hiking trail view of the extent of tree dieback impacting Acacias, Eucalyptus, Cypress and Oaks due to an unknown pathogen. UC Professor Mateo Garbelotto calls it “bottom-up crown thinning.” In Joaquin Miller Park, he found of the 140 oaks, only 6 were healthy, 12 dying from SOD, all of the rest in various stage of severe bottom-up canopy thinning. In area from cabin sunset trail below Castle Park Drive where there are 1500 to 2000 oak trees – most are impacted. It is concerning, because when the oaks canopy thins, the leaves stay stuck with a lot of small twigs in the canopy. This is a big fire hazards. At least with oaks, there are now fuel ladders, but it is a real problem of acacias. Professor Matteo says it isn't Sudden Oak Death, and he hasn't seen this before. He doesn't believe it is due to the drought, although the drought exacerbates the problem. Garbelotto underscored that this is new to the East Bay. Over last 3 years, the fog has nearly vanished from Oakland Hills, 2020 8 days of fog and 4 years about 50 to 60 days, fog warmer now.

Joe Devries noted that David Moore of the City's wildfire group is looking at it. Not really one particular thing. Past droughts are what arborists are thinking contributing to this. It is really widespread. CalFire joined our meeting on monthly basis, and we all agree it will need a regional approach to remove these trees. It is an expensive problem for next few years. He added that some acacias were removed along Mountain and Park Blvd. under at \$75,000 CalFire grant through the Diablo Fires Safe Council. The rest of the grant will be spent on Skyline to improve the ingress/egress route. New CalFire grant opportunities out again. They are looking for large scale projects. Joe noted that OFD not applying at this time. Meeting attendees shared their opinion that now is the time to apply to CalFire for big money.

You can add to the monitoring through Crowd Sourcing data on East Bay's Tree and Shrub Mortality- <https://arcg.is/1umezy0>

4. Old Business

a. **Oakland CP&R--Neighborhood Organizing Update- Doug Mosher**

- i. Two one-hour workshops are scheduled for next week: Sheffield Village and Upper Rockridge. Others scheduled after that; 15-20 people attend. We focus on individual and family preparedness. We are sending out our newsletter every week or so; sign ups continue to increase. We continue to market OCP&R to groups throughout Oakland. Our GenOAK.org will participate in a city-wide 2-way radio exercise March 24 with Ham amateur radio group and OES. Contact Doug if you want to participate.
- ii. We are in the final process of signing an agreement with City of Oakland for the matching funds for OCP&R, set aside in 2019. Access to that very soon allows us to extend the program through June 2022.
- iii. We are collaborating with the Emergency Management Services Division (EMSD) which has replaced CORE with CERT Training. The 21-hour CERT Training is very comprehensive, even more info than the previous CORE program, also 21 hour that includes hands on exercises (like CORE 3). Currently, a small percentage of Oakland

residents will take CERT. We are partnering with EMSD on an Individual and Family preparedness curriculum—a Joint OFD, EMSD and OCP&R program, includes LISTOS content. (LISTOS California—under a major grant from CalOES, LISTOS offers a program similar to OCP&R—videos, top notch, compelling—good stuff—can utilize some as it makes sense and incorporate where it makes sense.

- b. **Regional Vegetation Management District Update**-Elizabeth Stage- We raised sufficient funds to hire PlaceWorks as the facilitator to work with local agencies to form a Joint Powers Agency. We are continuing to fundraise. Currently we are strengthening outreach to Alameda County, Richmond, El Cerrito, and extending to agencies in Contra Costa County.
- c. **Oakland Vegetation Management Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report**—Sue Piper
Councilmembers Kalb and Thao proposed amendments to the plan that addressed our concerns about the relevancy and efficacy of the draft Vegetation Management Plan and Environmental Impact Report. They are waiting for staff to get back to them. We were told staff needs time because the proposal was more thorough than City staff expecting.
- d. **SB9 – the housing bill**—OFSC reached out to Senators ask for exceptions for high fire severity zone for subdivisions and ADUs
- e. Rest of money on Skyline—ingress/egress route. **City of Oakland Wildfire Prevention Interagency Team**—Michael Hunt, Joe Devries—Michael’s report
 - I. OFD met with Caltrans on Wednesday and talked about all of their parcels, including Glenwood Glade. This discussion occurred earlier than in the past as the City usually meets with Caltrans in March or April. They will look at extra issues.
 - II. Tree Removal—removed and chipped in place on Mountain between Park and Scout; the ones on Skyline above Redwood Road – 200 trees- going after the ones most likely to block the road; Contractor agreed to take any Monterey Pines, take up to Skyline at Castle to close the turn out. Vince’s crew chain logs together
 - III. CalFire Grant—Edgar—March we will see those grant applications—didn’t get anything, Break up the submissions into 3 smaller ones.
 - IV. **Next Program in The Savvy Homeowner in our Fire Prone Community series:** Thursday, February 25, 2021, 5:30-7 pm, The Savvy Homeowner: Remember the Ember- Practical Steps to Strengthen Your Home Against Fire, Sheryl Drinkwater, architect.

5. New Business

- a. **Governor’s Budget and SB 45:** OFSC sent letters of support for Governor’s Budget and SB45. Elizabeth Stage explained that SB45, “The Wildfire Prevention, Safe Drinking Water, Drought Preparation, and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2022”, is sponsored by 4 senators in San Diego and Ventura County, one in Central Valley--- 2 of them on the relevant committee to which this bill has been referred, natural resources and water

committee—farthest north of that Committee—Santa Cruz and Monterey—no one from Northern California on committee of jurisdiction—on substantive issues—Time to get now—scheduled for hearing in Mid-March—Buffy Wicks—some suggestion way we could get one of the groups in which statewide presence -- Sierra Club, Cal Fire Safe Council—advocates—push forward at committee level- better reflects. What would be a good way to get together a few talking points or observations about making sure that a NC is reflected – is an emphasis in bill on regional planning. D1 D4, Bonta, Wicks— compiling what we would want to see in the legislation—we can take it to our council members.

- b. Martin Matarrese asked City staff which city department is taking the lead in applying for grant for the tree and brush dieback—think about this problem in context of VMP and EIR limits on treatment acreage.

6. Next Meeting: March 20th, 10-Noon.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 am.