

OFSC Minutes Final approved for October 18, 2023

Attending

Ken Benson, Carolyn Burgess, Olga Crowe, Louise Comfort, Joe DeVries, Jen Grimm, Jon Kaufman, Jerry Kent, Doug Mosher, Keara O'Doherty, Gordon Piper, Sue Piper, Peter Reed, Dale Ridsen, Elizabeth Stage, Nathan Stalnaker, Doug Wong

Meeting called to order 7:02pm

1.Minutes

Moved by Dale, seconded by Doug Wong, the minutes were approved as submitted.

2.Treasurer's Report

Bank Balance on September 20th was \$13,613, paid Placeworks and the MOU attorney, leaving \$12,548, of which \$10,811 is encumbered for the Regional MOU project, leaving \$1,737 available to spend. Awaiting checks from the City of Oakland (MOU) and the Network for Good donations. Moved by Dale and seconded by Jon, the report was received and accepted.

3. Old Business

a. Oakland—Neighborhood Preparedness, Doug Mosher reported that the Great Shakeout is happening at 10/19 at 10:19am, after which there will be a GenOAK radio check-in, thanked Joelle for her progress, more groups are expressing interest in FireWise.

b. Advocacy Update---Elizabeth Stage, report will be part of the Vegetation Management Plan discussion under new business.

c. Regional Vegetation Management MOU, Jon Kaufman reported on a major step forward after the Berkeley Fire Chief convened the fire officials to discuss some of their concerns and make recommendations to the attorney; she didn't see problems incorporating their suggestions into the draft MOU. Lisa drafted a resolution for governing boards; it's being put on their agendas, hoping for approval in November.

d. City of Oakland, Joe DeVries, the Vegetation Management Plan is going to the Planning Commission on November 1st. Depending on the extent and nature of the comments that are due November 4th, it may get to City Council in late December or early January. With Ed Orre's help, staff met with Cal Fire to get one of their hand crews to Joaquin Miller Park to do some of the work that had been part of the unsuccessful grant proposal. Ten or more workers rolled in equipment, including in a chipper that can reach into small places. There's going to be a walkthrough to identify "low hanging fruit," that can be done for \$250 a day without red tap.

Olga Crowe reported on the Emergency Services plan to do a Great Shake Out drill at Arise High School in Fruitvale Village, have them practice “drop, cover, and hold on” and give them emergency preparedness kits to take home.

CERT’s last weekend session is a skills-refresh on Nov 11-12. The Disaster Council was restarted earlier this month by convening departments across the administration; in six months city departments plus external partners will advise on priorities and assemble working groups to suggest implementation, especially community engagement and outreach.

Question for Joe re: the ballot measure for the revised assessment district, specifically the public opinion baseline needed to make decisions. Yes, a public opinion survey will inform the preparation of the ballot measure. Ken pointed out that the November OFSC meeting will focus on next steps for the revised assessment district.

e. Initiative on Climate Change—Louise said that they are conducting their second round of interviews, now at the management level. They’re doing their Marin County meeting later this month; the next Alameda County meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 12th.

The website is <https://geomechanics.berkeley.edu/scc/>

f. OWLS and Friends of Joaquin Miller Park--Lin’s on a vacation in the North Atlantic, looking at polar bears, but sent a detailed note about the Vegetation Management Plan before she left. Dale’s going to wait until 2025 to resubmit proposals when more resources are likely to be available, therefore appreciate’s Joe’s success with CalFire.

g. No partner reports.

h. OFSC board meeting on October 23rd to discuss and vote on any endorsement from OFSC.

4. New Business

Peter raised the issue of cellphone service outages in emergencies; they can last for many days, even weeks (think of Hurricane Sandy). The major carriers are conferring with the Federal Communications Commission to work on the problem which is called “cellphone redundancy.” In normal circumstances, each cell phone carrier only provides service to their own customers. The FCC is considering a proposal from AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile—they would provide “roaming under disasters.” The goal is that any carrier that’s able to provide service to their own customers would also provide service to the others’ customers to the extent that it’s technically possible. [Wireless Network Resiliency During Disasters https://www.fcc.gov/wireless-network-resiliency-during-disasters](https://www.fcc.gov/wireless-network-resiliency-during-disasters)

Jen pointed out that the most recent newsletter includes a story about the CABS neighborhood that conducted its own evacuation drill, a good example for others to consider.

Ken announced that the OFSC board will meet on October 23rd to consider taking a position on the Vegetation Management Environmental Impact Report and vote on any endorsement or lack thereof. That discussion will be informed by this meeting's discussion.

Jon reported on behalf of the Claremont Canyon Conservancy board with two points, the revised plan is a significant improvement, and the board continues to be disappointed by thinning instead of removal of highly flammable plants.

Dale also thought the revised plan was a significant improvement, excellent job addressing peoples' concerns about flammable eucalyptus and acacia, dead and dying Monterey pines. The city needs more people in Public Works, cannot respond to questions or advise on initiatives. Volunteers could do more with equipment they're not currently allowed to use; volunteers could be trained and insured to do the work.

Elizabeth was invited to a meeting of the North Hills Community Association; they voted to support the plan because it's substantially better, provides a roadmap to go forward, let's get going. North Hills takes responsibility for Gateway Garden, its area also includes Garber Park; they are pleased that the coordination with volunteers will be strengthened.

Gordon Piper is pleased with the plan for the North Oakland Sports Field.

Joe said that people at the leadership level recognize the importance of volunteers, know that the city couldn't do the work without volunteers, and he hopes to continue to improve the relationship.

Jerry Kent said that the plan is competent, there are things missing, but it's a working document that can and will improve over time. The California Native Plant Society is still working on their response, will be critical of the plan for Knowland Park in particular.

Ken asked for opposing points of view, no one spoke up. He's heard agreement here, and in the emails, phone calls, and meetings he's been involved with thus far. The plan is headed in the right direction.

Discussion of the 1991 fire and lessons learned followed.

Open Forum

Gordon raised the issue of fire inspections of private parcels. Ken said that Chief Covington recognizes the shortcomings, and it will be a priority for him. Jon thinks that professional inspectors are needed.

Dale mentioned that the city has asked the East Bay Regional Parks District to take over management of Joaquin Miller Park, thinks that it might be a good idea but it doesn't honor the history of volunteers who have worked for so many years to make the park what it is today.

Next meeting November 15, 2023 at 7pm on Zoom

Meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,

s/Elizabeth Stage for Lisa Jacobs

