

OFSC Minutes draft for July 23, 2022

Attending

Lin Barron, Ken Benson, Carolyn Burgess, Macy Cornell, Olga Crowe, Nik Dehejia, Sue Duncan, Barbara Goldenberg, Jon Kaufman, Jerry Kent, Jocelyn Mapp D7, Doug Mosher, Bret Peterson, Diane Russell, Nathan Suslow, Elizabeth Stage.

Meeting called to order 10:32am

Announcement

Congratulations to Doug Mosher who is receiving a Jefferson Award from KPIX Channel 5. True to form, he said, "It's a team effort."

1. Minutes

Not yet available

2. Treasurer's Report

Bank Balance \$44,404, after payments to PlaceWorks and OCP&R staff leaves \$17,628 unencumbered for OFSC and \$17,628 for Regional JPA project. Moved by Lin Baron, seconded by Carolyn Burgess, the report was approved unanimously.

3. Old Business

a. Oakland CP&R, Doug Mosher and Macy Cornell

Doug reported that four thousand people had been reached with presentations, including twenty-two neighborhood councils. Working with OFD Emergency Services, the OCP&R workshop has been combined with their Personal Emergency Preparedness workshop; it can be presented by either group or the two together. This collaboration has received a grant extension from the Oakland General Fund, championed by Council Member Sheng Thao. GenOak and social media continue and a new "Adopt A Hydrant" program has been launched for National Night Out (August 2nd). A grant from the California Fire Foundation will allow the Firewise program led by Macy Cornell to ramp up, getting more neighborhoods involved. There are currently ten neighborhoods in process, ranging from OFSC members' neighborhoods, parks, and farther afield. The goal is to get to twenty neighborhoods this year.

Question, Does OCP&R present with CORE/CERT? Doug clarified that "CORE" is the umbrella name for the OFD emergency programs and "CERT" is the revamped training program for volunteers. Introductory presentations about emergency preparedness (the newly combined program) should precede deep dives into specific programs. For example, the Firewise USA presentation takes about 40 minutes and expects 20 minutes of Q&A; it's usually offered for a neighborhood (sometimes even a block or two), so it's recommended that it follow the general introduction.

b. Regional Vegetation Management JPA, Jon Kaufman

There's agreement to draft a Memorandum of Understanding for cities and counties to consider and adopt, hopefully in the next few months. They are identifying an attorney to draft it and have formed a "working group" (elected officials and fire chiefs from Oakland, Berkeley, Richmond, and Pinole, as well as Alameda and Contra Costa Counties); that group might emerge as a steering committee. A small grant from PG&E is expected soon and Contra Costa Supervisor John Gioia is working on a third grant from Bay Area Air Quality Management. The state is updating its fire code this year and the cities are required to conform theirs; the fire chiefs, led by David Winnacker, Orinda/Moraga, will collaborate on their updates since the jurisdictions differ in their previous adaptations.

c. City of Oakland Ken Benson based on conversations with Joe DeVries and Michael Hunt who were unable to join

Joe is continuing to work across departments, got the logs moved into place on Skyline, and worked with Berkeley, Orinda/Moraga, and community volunteers on a relatively peaceful 4th of July. Michael reported that the first round of inspections by fire fighters is mostly finished and the second and future rounds, conducted by inspectors, have started. Tree removal on Skyline is proceeding. Chief Freeman is frustrated by the slow pace of hiring replacements on the inspection staff and has made it a primary focus. Felicia Wanzo-Bryant was promoted from Assistant Fire Marshall to Fire Marshall, having served as assistant; she oversees the Wildfire Prevention Department.

Questions:

There are many properties that shouldn't have passed their inspections, what steps are being taken to improve the quality of the first round of inspections?

Ken said that Chief Freeman is very interested improving the process, including the training and auditing (initially at the fire house level, then at the battalion level), and would like specific information (the street address and noncompliance issues) sent to Joe DeVries; subsequently Macy Cornell volunteered to collect this information so that it's organized and can be shared readily (macymcornell@gmail.com).

What standards are used by Oakland? (They seem to be inconsistent with Firewise.)

The cities use the current state fire code to varying degrees of fidelity; Oakland's is relatively consistent with the states'. As noted earlier, the state is updating its code and the cities will then have to adapt. In anticipation of more attention to the 5 feet from structure ("ember zone"), the Diablo Firesafe Council is taking proposals from low-income individuals for a maximum of \$5,000 to meet these more stringent requirements.

Who should do the first round of inspections? There was a wide-ranging discussion of the wisdom of having firefighters do inspections instead of inspectors, also having trained residents (e.g., Firewise groups) do an advisory round before the official inspections begin. A range of ideas followed, including the "boots on the ground" perspective of firefighters; the reluctance of Oakland to displace employees, especially those who are represented, with volunteers; the

costs of each approach for training and auditing and the benefits of community awareness and acceptance.

d. Advocacy, Elizabeth Stage

It's been confirmed by OFD that the City of Oakland budget for 2022-23 has adequate funding for vegetation management; the revised vegetation management plan EIR is expect "sometime this Fall."

There's interest in the work in City of Berkeley since they have \$8 million annually from their ballot measure; the Claremont Canyon Conservancy has invited Mayor Arreguin, Council Member Wengraf, and a representative from the fire department for the Conservancy's annual meeting on Sunday, November 13th, 4pm, Claremont Hotel.

At the state level, two bills for stronger standards for homes are scheduled for hearing August 1st, the defensible space grants bill has moved to the suspense file.

At the federal level, many bills for wildfire (e.g., better pay for federally funded fire fighters) are being culled before proceeding; their deadline is September 30th.

4. New Business

Nik Dehejia, CEO of the Oakland Zoo, summarized a ballot measure that will provide more resources for the zoo; highlights are here <https://oaklandside.org/2022/07/20/this-fall-oakland-voters-could-approve-a-new-way-to-fund-the-oakland-zoo/>

Ken will put a discussion about endorsement on the agenda of the next OFSC board to decide whether to endorse the measure.

Nik is interested in collaborating with OFSC and its affiliates on messaging, as appropriate; they reach hundreds of thousand of people annually through their outreach and social media.

Open Forum

Olga Crowe requested time for Emergency Management Services on next month's agenda.

Next meeting 8/20/2022 at 10:30am via Zoom

Meeting adjourned at 12:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Stage for Lisa Jacobs