**Oakland Firesafe Council Meeting, October 22, 2022**

**FINAL Minutes**

**Attending**

Lin Barron, Ken Benson, Louise Comfort, Joe DeVries, Jessica Feil, Barbara Goldenberg, Jen Grimm, Lisa Jacobs, Jon Kaufman, Jocelyn Mapp, Robert Meyers, Sue Piper, Peter Seidl, Elizabeth Stage

Called to Order at 10:35am.

**1. Minutes**

No draft minutes from the previous meeting were provided for review.

**2. Treasurer’s Report** (Ken Benson, on behalf of Treasurer Michael Killian)

OFSC Bank balance is $35,980, of which $21,892 is unencumbered. In the JPA account we have $17,026 unencumbered and in the main OFSC account there is a little less than $5,000. The good news is people are starting to do the recurrent donations from our website. In addition, we do have the new agreement in place with the City of Oakland (EMSD), for which we are grateful to Jessica Feil and her colleagues for pulling that through the current budget cycle.

So even though we have less than $5000 unencumbered we have income coming in over the next year to continue our outreach and community education projects.

**3. MOU Update** (Jon Kaufman)

We are now moving forward with trying to get the local municipalities and agencies enter into an MOU (instead of forming a joint powers agency at this time). We have decided to engage Hanson Bridgett, a local law firm with significant municipal experience and public policy issues. We are awaiting the draft MOU from the firm. We are working to schedule the next meeting of a ‘working group’ – a subgroup of stakeholders – which will be asked to review and consider the draft MOU. The next step will be to encourage all invited parties to sign the MOU which will be a vehicle to enable the different entities in the East Bay Hills to.

OFSC, via the Bay Area Council, is set to receive grant from the California Coastal Conservancy, in light of our work to build a regional collaboration, to explore the potential of offsetting the costs of tree removal through a process to create biochar. EBRPD has a much more significant grant for biochar exploration; the Conservancy would like our project to be in line with theirs.

**4. Update from Oakland/EMSD** (Jessica Feil, EMSD)

The Great Oakland Shakeout, held on October 20, which OFSC collaborated on, was a success with at least 100 participants. There were many partners included such as Red Cross, FEMA, UC Berkeley involved in organization. There was also great participation from our high school, which will continue to be a focus as it is important to bring young people into emergency preparedness. An after-action report will be forthcoming

EMSD’s upcoming participation in events include Trunk or Treat on October 31, and a Piedmont Wildfire Evacuation event on November 5.

**5. City of Oakland Wildfire Prevention Interdepartmental Team** (Joe Devries)

Oakland is launching a climate action fellows program and one of the issues they will look at wildfire resiliency, helping EMSD with evacuation information, assisting with outreach at events, supporting fire inspection activities, helping build resiliency hubs, researching potential for using compost for reducing fire risk.

Jocelyn Mapp (District 7 staff) asked about the fees relating to vegetation management inspections as constituents have complained about the financial burden. Joe Devries clarified that the fees are set at cost to maintain a fiscally viable service.

Carolyn Burgess and Barbara Goldenberg suggested that Jocelyn could tell her constituents about Diablo Firesafe Council program to support low-income homeowners to keep their properties in compliance. Information can be found on its website here: http://www.diablofiresafe.org/veg\_removal.html. In addition, Barbara Goldenberg mentioned the Oakland Fire Department ‘random acts’ fund for seniors and other low-income residents. Another resource is CALFire SNAP grants <https://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/>.

**6. Oakland Neighborhood Organizing Update** (Ken Benson on behalf of Doug Mosher)

Macy Cornell resigned due to family matters but has fortunately agreed to support the transition. A person active in the area has already been identified to replace her; she will hopefuly be starting in November.

Team has delivered information to 4300 Oaklanders at meetings, events and tabling opportunities including 27 neighborhood meetings. Doug was tabling at the Alameda County Emergency Preparedness Day on October 20, 2022.

**7. Advocacy** (Elizabeth Stage)

Elizabeth provided an update on new guidelines for home hardening insurance requirements proposed by Insurance Commissioner Lara. In good news, the industry seems to be very accepting of these new guidelines. More information here: <https://www.insurance.ca.gov/0400-news/0100-press-releases/2022/release076-2022.cfm>

AG Bonta is developing guidelines to help cities in California reduce their liability risk in challenging development that that does not appropriately take wildfire risk into account. More information can be found here: <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-issues-guidance-local-governments-mitigate-wildfire-risk>

**8. Fundraising** (Ken Benson)

Ken and Jen Grimm will launch a fundraising campaign this fall. The link to set up a recurring donation to OFSC, or make one-time donations which will of course also be happily accepted.

can be found here: <https://oaklandfiresafecouncil.org/donate/>

Mailing checks to 6114 LaSalle Avenue, Suite 462, Oakland CA 94611 is always an option at any time. Robert recommended writing checks for an IRA’s Required Minimum Distribution.

**9. New Business**

**Louise Comfort –** Her group received the NSF grant and is planning a series of community workshops in early to mid-February to help design the project and refine the messages.

**Lin Barron –** Provided an update on the CalFIRE grant for tree removal in Joaquin Miller Park and encouraged more collaboration between and Friends of Joaquin Miller Park.

**10. Next Meeting November 16, 2022 at 7:00 pm**

**Meeting adjourned at 11:57am.**

Shoestring Gardening, Gordon and Sue Piper, West Linn Garden Club, May 2022

Excerpts on Volunteers

Build Relationships with volunteer sources: church groups, Scouts (Eagle Scout Projects), local service clubs, corporate volunteer programs (e.g., Home Depot, Salesforce, Waste Management), local colleges and universities (fraternities and sororities, environmental clubs)

Managing volunteers: Confirm schedule with volunteers and finalize # of volunteers, provide instructions (e.g., wear long pants, long sleeves, sturdy shoes, a hat, bring own gloves, sunscreen and water, and mask, if necessary), have volunteers sign in (name, phone, and email address, signed waivers), set up a database for future use; break up projects into segments that teams of up to 5 can work on, assign a team supervisor from your group to supervise each team, engage with volunteers during the workday– explain purpose of the project, answer questions, write a thank you after the event and try to engage them to come again in the future.

Volunteer teams: assign a supervisor, appoint a safety coordinator who reminds volunteers to take hydration breaks and keeps track of tools, orient volunteers to the work plan and tool safety, assign one or two volunteers to remove green waste to the common dump spot.

Managing tools: Where to get them--borrow from tool lending libraries, rent from commercial tool lending libraries, encourage your volunteers to bring their own, maintain your own cache; always count them before and after the volunteer event;

Marketing tips: Develop a brochure for your organization that people can take home with them, hand out business cards so they won’t forget, develop a website and use social media to get the word out, set up a sign board with your organizations’ name to publicize the workday

Schedule workdays on known “green” event days: Martin Luther King Day of Service– January, Earth Day—April, Arbor Week- April, Wildfire Prevention Day-May

Fundraising: Take a letter and walk around the neighborhood near the site, use personal Christmas Card List, send out solicitation on local listservs, if permitted, send out solicitation to previous volunteers, seek out grants from service clubs, online review of potential grants from local foundations, corporations, etc.

Fundraising Pitch: Share what you have accomplished in the past, share goals for the future, include a remit envelope and/or instructions for sending checks, sign up with Paypal for online donations on your website

Fundraising isn’t only about real dollars: Nurseries might be throwing items out at the end of the season or going out of business, ask for free wood chips and other materials, look for used materials on Craigslist or NextDoor– ask if seller would consider donating, sometimes it takes more than one request---- reach out to multiple stores or ask one store several times!