



MOUNT VEEDER FIRE SAFE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Saturday, September 26, 2015

LOCATION: Joe Nordlinger's house, 4297 Dry Creek Road

ATTENDANCE: Greg Holquist, Bill Robertson, Joe Nordlinger, Gary Green, Carole Meredith, Evangeline, James, Ken Van Oeveren

ADDITIONS/REVISIONS TO AGENDA: Bill Robertson requested time to present an eyewitness account of the Valley Fire.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES: The 8/23/15 minutes were approved

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

- 1. CEQA report for Cal Fire for the Lokoya project:** This project requires a Negative Declaration CEQA report by a Registered Professional Forester (RPF). Nelson Money, the RPF who was going to work on the Lokoya project has backed out. Davey Resource Group has 4 RPF's and one was assigned to our project. He did the CEQA work in 5 days and submitted it to Megan Scheeline at Cal Fire. The county deadline of 10/1 is not relevant here because there will be no earth moving.
- 2. Napa Communities Firewise Foundation Conflict of Interest requirement:** Greg Holquist met several times with Darren Drake (Napa City Fire Marshal and an NCFE director) to discuss the NCFE requirement that groups receiving NCFE funds sign the NCFE Conflict of Interest statement. It is unclear whether it is appropriate for MVFSC to do this since MVFSC is an advisory committee to the DCLVFD, which has its own conflict of interest policy.
- 3. NCFE and dust suppression payment:** After initially declining to pay, NCFE then agreed to pay for the dust treatment that was required for the contractor to transit through the vineyard to work on the Old Ridge Road.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Gary Green reported that we have \$39,474.36 in our bank account and that we are in good shape with regard to our 2015 budget.

With regard to sales taxes payable to the Board of Equalization, the DCLVFD board pays the taxes after we report the amounts to them.

We received \$20,000 from Community Projects for defensible space around homes of needy residents. They would like to be recognized for this gift. We must determine how we define “needy”. Do we mean physically needy (i.e., old, ill or disabled) or financially needy. We agreed that financial need is the most important criterion. Gary Green has created a separate account for the Community Projects money.

It was noted that the MVFSC website is not up-to-date with meeting minutes. Carole Meredith agreed to send the missing minutes to Sue Santos to put on the website.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Project updates:

- a. **Limited Access Road #1 (LAR#1)/ PG&E CEMA grant:** Greg Holquist reported that the work is complete all the way up to the 3 top homes (Nordlinger, Culler, Bachich). Work is still ongoing on the Chapman driveway and is expected to be finished on Monday 9/28. The crew will be available for a few more days. Greg said that PG&E does not anticipate having any funds left over and that the program will end on 10/31.

It is important that residents along LAR #1 (and future LAR projects) understand that they should still evacuate in the case of a fire. The clearing along the LAR’s will give them time to escape.

- b. **Cal Fire State Responsibility Area (SRA) Grant Program / Lokoya Fuel reduction:** The required CEQA document has been submitted and Cal Fire approval is anticipated around 9/28. The work is expected to start on October 12.

2. **Recruiting and Advertising:** Joe Nordlinger suggested that since he runs a recruiting company, he might be able to help with recruiting more active participants to MVFSC. He asked us to think about what kinds of skills we need that we could look for in the community. Where are our gaps? Examples might be marketing and website development. Should we ask Sue Santos to join our board, or someone with her skills who would not charge for the work. Should we look for someone associated with the Land Trust? (e.g., Ann Taylor Schwing, Alice Kubler, Jaye Cook)

We might also look for a representative from one of the wineries in our neighborhood. Ken Van Oeveren wondered whether anyone at Mayacamas Vineyard might like to get involved. He recalled seeing a document that said they must join the MVFSC but no one else in the group had seen or heard of this.

Carole Meredith offered to create an MVFSC Facebook page. Because this might involve small (\$5 to \$10) expenditures from time to time to “promote” posts, Gary Green will give her the MVFSC credit card number to use for this purpose. Gary agreed to change the “website” line in our budget to “website & digital marketing”.

OTHER TOPICS:

1. **Napa Resource Conservation District collaboration:** Joe Nordlinger is an associate director on their board. One of their staffers expressed interest in the work of the MVFSC when Joe told her about it. She suggested that we come to one of their meetings and tell them what we do. They have a sizable budget and their board

consists mainly of land owner, including large vineyard owners. Is there an opportunity for us to collaborate with them on grant applications? It was proposed that we learn more about the group before going to one of their meetings.

2. **CWPP:** Kelly Wallace is unable to work on the CWPP. Bill Robertson is taking the lead now. Evangeline James is continuing to work on parts of it, i.e., definition of LAR's, draft of all the projects.
3. **Water sources and 4291 assessments:** Greg Holquist said he would put those topics on the agenda for the next meeting. And we can also consider potential helicopter landing sites and evacuation routes. We will need to gather more information and present it to county officials. We can get some of this information via Google Earth Pro. Local organizations may have evacuation plans, but some of those may be inadequate.
4. **Firewood sales:** Greg Holquist said that we need wood splitting work parties. He suggested that we purchase carport covers to protect the firewood, but Gary Green said we already have 3 of those.

Storage space may not yet be an issue because the county work on the site may not start this year because of the October 1 soil disturbance deadline. That being the case, should we stop privately discounting the firewood? (Current public prices on the website are \$225 for a cord of seasoned, cut and split wood and \$75 for a pickup load of un-split wood.)

5. **Obligation of cell service providers to improve coverage in rural areas:** Joe Nordlinger asked deputy planning director John McDowell about this and was not able to learn much. Joe did note that in 2013 Verizon and AT&T included improved rural coverage as part of their justification for new cell towers on Big Ranch Road and on the way to Lake Berryessa.

OTHER BUSINESS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER: Bill Robertson reported on his experience doing Damage Assessment on the catastrophic Valley Fire. The roadside clearing efforts of the South Lake Fire Safe Council greatly improved the ability of residents to escape. Bill noted that the Cobb Mountain area is quite similar to the Mount Veeder area and so the Valley Fire should be a wake up call for our neighborhood.

Bill said that insurance companies may soon start inspecting houses. Greg said that we can get ahead of that with our 4291 assessments. It was proposed that over the next few months, we go to all the wineries and vineyards in our area to do fire safety assessments and encourage financial support.

Bill also reminded us of the high erosion risk after a fire and that is a point of overlap between MVFSC and the Napa Resource Conservation District.

ADJOURNMENT: 12:00 pm

Next Meeting: Saturday, October 24, 9 am
Dry Creek-Lokoya Fire Station, 5900 Dry Creek Road