



## **MOUNT VEEDER FIRE SAFE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** Saturday, June 27, 2015

**LOCATION:** Dry Creek – Lokoya Fire Station, 5900 Dry Creek Road

**ATTENDANCE:** Greg Holquist, Bill Robertson, Gary Green, Kelly Wallace, Ken Van Oeveren, Joe Nordlinger, Carole Meredith, Joanne Sutro,

**ADDITIONS/REVISIONS TO AGENDA:** Joe Nordlinger requested that we add the topic of homeowners insurance under New Business

**REVIEW OF THE MINUTES:** The 5/23/15 minutes were approved with 1 correction

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:** None

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Gary Green reported that we have \$18,763.31 in our checking account (plus our \$10,000 reserve). We still have the Golf Tournament listed in our budget under both Income and Expense. The group agreed to discuss at the next meeting whether to keep the Golf Tournament in the budget, given our many other activities.

We have received all the bills for the Wall Road project and we are \$10 over budgeted expenses. Greg Holquist donated the additional \$10.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **1. Grants:**

- a. **Napa Communities Firewise Foundation funding / Wall Road roadside clearing:** Greg Holquist reported that work began in June after he had talked with all the owners. Two crews worked for 3 days at 10 hours per day. They completed approximately 1 mile of the 2.5 mile length. (The last part of the road is already pretty open.) The priority was to remove branches that were hanging over the road, then tree and brush removal. It was suggested that we try to get a Wall Road representative to join MVFSC.

The group agreed that the A-frame signs (telling residents that the work they see being done is an MVFSC project) are very helpful and that we need more of them. It was moved and approved that we purchase 2 more of the A-frame signs.

Kelly Wallace reported that Steve Gort had contacted him about conflict of interest with regard to MVFSC members being hired for MVFSC projects. Gort indicated that he wants a more formal statement included in our minutes. Ken Van Oeveren pointed out the DCLVFD policy that includes conflict of interest. Kelly thinks this is fine and we will send it to Stephen Gort.

- b. **Cal Fire State Responsibility Area (SRA) Grant Program / Lokoya Fuel reduction:** We need to hire a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) to prepare an Environmental Impact Report on endangered species in order to get a Negative Declaration approved by Cal Fire. Don Gasser and Nelson Money were suggested as possibilities. We will need to put this out to bid. This will be the last project we do this year. We also need to get bids from tree contractors. We have to years to spend this money (\$75,000).
- c. **Old Ridge Road Shaded Fuel Break grant:** We have received half of the funds for this project, which is enough for 10 days of crew time and we must spend the money by the end of the summer. So we should do the Old Ridge Road work in August and LAR#1 in September. The group discussed whether to use the funds to finish the north end to the full width or to extend the work on the south end, which has only progressed a few hundred yards and has not been worked on since 2012. We still need permissions from the owners of 2 parcels at the south end and from the new owner of one parcel whose owner at the time we obtained permission has since died. The consensus of the group is that we focus on the south end this year.
- d. **Limited Access Road #1 (LAR#1)/ PG&E CEMA grant:** Greg Holquist, Joe Nordlinger and Bill Robertson met with 4 of the 9 property owners on this road. Their biggest concern is clearcutting. Greg offered to walk each segment of the road with the affected resident/owner. Greg envisions vegetation removal to approximately 35 feet on each side of the road, but it can be customized to each owner. Greg would also like to clear under the power lines (30 foot width, 15 feet on each side) George Bachich is opposed to this so that aspect of the project can skip his segment. Other owners may want a wider clearing. Individual property owners can contract directly for additional work on their own property or make a contribution to MVFSC to cover the cost of the additional work. The Chapman property adjacent to the lower part of this road is a big fire risk.

The actual PG&E application is generic and doesn't specify the number of feet or the type of clearing. Kelly Wallace said that he does not think that we or the property owners have a liability risk if part of the project is cleared less than others.

The residents' release form only grants permission for access and vegetation removal. It does not mention liability to MVFSC or PG&E. The property owner is not releasing MVFSC from liability and MVFSC is not releasing the property owner from liability.

Joe Nordlinger asked whether we have Director and Officer (D&O) insurance for individual MVFSC members. Ken Van Oeveren will ask Kent Imrie (Malloy Imrie & Vasconi) to come and talk to us about D&O insurance.

The money has not yet been received from PG&E. Greg has sent in a W9 and photos. Greg expects that 50% of the money will be received within a week or two and that work can begin at the end of July. Joe Nordlinger said that he might do some time lapse photography as the work proceeds.

2. **Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (NCFF) Annual Meeting:** We have been asked to give 2 presentations – a “how to” presentation to give advice to other Fire Safe Councils based on our success and an update on our activities and proposed work. Bill Robertson will give the first presentation and Carole Meredith will do the second one.

This meeting is scheduled for July 18, the same day as the Home Winemakers Classic, the major annual fundraising event for the Dry Creek – Lokoya Volunteer Fire Department. This schedule conflict also occurred last year. Because of the conflict, most of the MVFSC members cannot attend the NCFF meeting because they are committed to work at the Home Winemakers Classic. The group agreed that Carole Meredith (as MVFSC Secretary) would write to Stephen Gort at NCFF to let him know that only two MVFSC members can attend the NCFF meeting and that we must speak early in the meeting so that we can drive to St. Helena for our event. We will remind him that our event is always on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in July and to please avoid this schedule conflict in the future. Next year, the Home Winemakers Classic will be held on July 16, 2016.

3. **Firewood Sales:** We must move our accumulated firewood because it is in the way of the planned county work. Should we sell our firewood at a discount? It was agreed that we will privately sell our 4 cords of split wood at \$100/cord. We will offer the unsplit wood at \$50 per standard pickup truckload (8-foot bed). We will give away the large Douglas fir rounds.
4. **Home Winemakers Classic:** We will not have a MVFSC table but we will make the MVFSC canopy available for the band.
5. **CWPP:** Bill Robertson reported that he has generated a spreadsheet but has been waiting several months for more progress from Evangeline James. So far, the lack of an updated CWPP has not help up our funding but it could soon become more urgent.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Napa Valley Community Foundation Report:** No update
2. **National Firewise Community status:** No update

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Fire spotting cameras on communication towers:** Greg Holquist said he will talk to representatives of the Marin County Fire Safe Council to learn more about how their system works. Carole Meredith reported that Valley Internet would be willing to participate in a Napa County program. Carole also said she had met someone who worked in forward-looking projects for AT&T and that a local technology-based project like this is something they might be interested in supporting.

- 2. Homeowners Insurance:** Joe Nordlinger asked whether we could do anything to help local residents obtain homeowners insurance, given the high fire risk in our neighborhood. Gary Green reported that the Napa County Board of Supervisors is trying to lower the ISO rating of the rural parts of Napa County. (On a scale of 1 to 10, a lot of Napa County is rated 9, representing a very high fire risk.) For example, the county is getting 2 more water tenders.

Gary Green reported that the Napa County Fire Safety Advisory Committee at one time prepared a letter to provide residents with the names of insurance companies willing to work with areas that have a high ISO rating. Gary will try to obtain a copy of the letter from Kerry Whitney, the Risk Manager for Napa County.

- 3. Funding to assist needy residents with fire safety:** Joanne Sutro proposed that we draft a letter to Community Projects to thank them for their past support and ask for \$10,000 to improve fire safety around the homes of local residents who, for reasons related to age or physical disability or financial resources, are unable to assume responsibility for fire safety around their homes. Joanne agreed to draft this letter. It was proposed that we start a fund for needy residents and that we try to raise \$100,000 over the next 18 months.

**OTHER BUSINESS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** 12 noon

**Next Meeting:** Saturday, July 25, 9 am  
Joanne Sutro and Wayne Cain's residence, 4143 Dry Creek Road