

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**of**  
**THE WEST CONTRA COSTA FIRE SAFE COUNCIL**

The board of directors of The West Contra Costa Fire Safe Council (WCCFSC) held a videoconference meeting via Zoom on **September 25, 2023 at 7:00PM.**

The following directors were in attendance at the meeting and constituted the entire board:

Soheila Bana	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Marilyn Saarni	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Ra Criscitiello	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Absent
Rebecca Orona	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Angel Montoya	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent

Present:

**UPDATED AGENDA**

- Announcements
  - Update on Firewise Demonstration Garden
    - Help people learn how to choose plants that can be maintained
    - Marilyn met with public works staff: Bitempo, Mark in charge of vegetation for City, head Parks and Rec team, talked about MOU drafted by Marilyn.
    - Fire Station 63 grasses cut down; 11-12 coastal live oaks to take out
    - Very high fire danger sign: Placement must be under 3 feet, coordinated with public works.
- **Chief Montoya:** asked for funds for a Disaster Plan
- **Firewise communities:** East of Amend approved, West Amed pending, Greenbrier, pending approval need Fire Marshal to help, Volker's neighborhood is pending, Hillside approved! (2 weeks)--first chipping day October 7 (block party is Oct 1) - everyone's excited - 18 people from the county coming to do the work. (Michelle thanked Erica; Erica and Joyce says Michelle really helped.)
- **El Sobrante Alliance for Fire Safety:** Oct 21, 1-4pm
  - Soheila and John Gioia speaking
- **Michelle Rinehart: Clarification of the WCC Fire Safety Coordinator role**
  - Pointed out a distinction between "Wildfire mitigation" and "planning." Michelle is making sure wildfire mitigation efforts happen in timely manner, smoothing out communications. This is distinct from support with planning projects.
- Treasurer's Report - Rebecca Orona, Treasurer
  - Started out year: \$4,000 carried forward from last year's fundraiser and donations
  - \$18,000 capacity grant from CA by end of June

- End of Aug spent \$10,330
- Keeping spending separate
- Starting Sept: \$10,000 from PGE; \$2500 from Novin developer; \$1000 from SIMS; \$2500 Chevron
- \$30k Available for website and other ideas
- Tax return filed for 2022 in May
- Question from Pam Morris: What is best use of monies?
- El Sobrante Stroll - Report
  - Many people signed up to community mailing list
- Report - Alejandro Anasal from CCC Resource Conservation District came out for a site visit to section of San Pablo Creek close to Kennedy Grove Park. We (Erica Peng and Alejandro) are writing up a summary of observations, along with some recommendations. The recommendations align with Dave Winnaker, the Moraga-Orinda Fire Chief. A few highlights from Alejandro's visit and our recommendations
  - [Summary of observations and questions for next steps](#) drafted by **Alejandro Anasal and Erica Peng**, Kennedy Grove Firewise Board member and former El Sobrante MAC member
  - <https://alameda-and-contra-county-regional-priority-plan-ccrcd.hub.arcgis.com/documents/bf25df46bce74cea921b2d268ee93bfc/expand>
  - WCCFSC might be the right entity to reach out
  - RCD unique ability to CEQA across property lines for a major landscape-scale project - open space for W Contra Costa, riparian zones...
  - What would the SPLAT approach look like? Treat areas strategically...
  - Alejandro Anasal (RCD with Ben Weise) funded by Cal Fire; help reaching out and gather data, support grant, outreach, set meetings...let me think more about that .
  - >> WE NEED A FISH AND WILDLIFE PERSON ON THE BOARD
  - Kate Rauch
    - Regional perspective came out of Oakland fire. Barrier has been lack of funding
    - Joint Powers Authority (JPA) came from many years of efforts from the Hills group after Oakland fire but was replaced by MOU
    - CCC didn't think there was strategic sense to form JPA with Alameda County
    - Not all high fire risk areas are the same
    - Need to include own fire chiefs, EBRPD Fire Chiefs, make sure everyone has a voice
    - Tap the wisdom of the people who have been working on regional efforts
    - Alejandro will reach out to Kate to get names
    - Kate's recommendation: Contact municipalities who have documented these projects. Alejandro can bring expertise to projects
      - Pine mortality
      - WUI along Wildcat Canyon
      - Eucalyptus

- **WCCFSC/Richmond Fire Dept Open House—Oct 14, 11am - 3pm. CALLING ALL HANDS!**
  - Plan the October 14th Open House
  - Volunteers!
    - Marian can help at food table
  - Cool T-shirts!
    - Marilyn: Working on new logo for t shirt, planning mtg on Friday 9.30.23
  - Banners and new graphics
  - Soheila: Needs to talk to Battalion Chief Woodard about tables, staffing for hotdogs, need more volunteers, "Green Team"
  - Chief Montoya will be there with his daughter, talking about fire safety
  - Most of the people came about 1:30pm...
  - >> SEND MEETING INFO to Montoya for Fri 9/29 Open House planning meeting

**Meeting ended 9/25/23 8:08pm**

**DEFERRED...**

**DISCUSS** - How to spend the funds raised for October 14th

**DISCUSS** - Situation - Hillside Drive is a street in a VHFHSZ that dead-ends into Kennedy Grove Park. Can this Kennedy Grove neighborhood be included with other areas in Unincorporated ES North (Sobrante Ave/Circle Rd/Skyline, Monte Verde) re: issues on a dead-end roadway? Involves access to East Bay Regional Park District's road.

**DISCUSS** - Situation - Unincorporated ES North - Sobrante Ave/Circle Rd/Skyline, Monte Verde (Deferred from last meeting)

- Describe (Pam Morris and others)
- Traffic study requested - assure that roadways are clear of parked cars (no parking signs, building ordinance?)
- Incentives to get residents to build off-road parking pads (may require removing retainer walls, fence, building parking decks)
- Sirens - how to inform residents of need to evacuate, especially as it may be impossible to have a police car drive through in the circumstance of a fire in that area. Involves Power utility, where to install sirens, backup power, cell companies or satellite Star Link
- Communications within the community
- Water supply (water tanks that can refill tanker truck to fight house fires)
- Evacuation routes, how evacuations are implemented, educating less mobile residents to evacuate voluntarily and proactively (seek local hotel discounts for these people?)
- GOAL - set priorities, what's doable and what has greatest impact on saving lives