



# Logtown Fire Safe Council

P.O. Box 1601  
El Dorado, CA 95623



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## Notes of the January 10, 2015 Meeting Station 44, Diamond Springs-El Dorado Fire Protection District

**Introduction and Sign-In:** Pat Dwyer convened the meeting at 9:05. Board Members present: Ken Hasse, John Lindberg, Rod Repschlaeger and Marilyn Olson-Petersen. Pat reminded us of the importance of “signing-in” as attendance at these meetings demonstrates community support for our efforts to secure grants and be proactive in completing Logtown Fire Safe Council projects.

**Events for 2015:** John Lindberg suggested we schedule one of the “Air Drop” pilots to give us a presentation of their tactics and challenges. Pat will be following up to schedule. Firm dates include:

March 14- New District 2 Supervisor Shiva Frentzen. She has experience in Cameron Park and understands local fire service issues; she is a good listener and we expect she will be a good representative for us.

April 11 - Annual Spring Clean-up Day 7am to 2pm. Location: Bobby’s Market with dumpsters for bagged household trash, and green-waste, Snowline Collection Truck for donation and e-waste. Information hand-outs. May provide free hot dogs again

May 9 Mtg. - (CALFIRE) Chief Coombs will give us an update on the health of our fire district and answer questions. This week a \$500,000 new fire engine is being delivered. Our District responds to about 5 calls a day which puts a lot of wear/tear on the vehicle and it is good that our district is getting a new engine. They were also successful in securing a “Ladder” Truck (a surplus vehicle from El Dorado Hills Dist. at about half the market value - \$90,000.) Mike Webb, Battalion Commander, had been scheduled to do another “Table Top” Fire Exercise at this meeting but this is being rescheduled as Mike has been promoted. Congratulations to Mike and we look forward to meeting/working with his replacement (to be announced).

October 10 – Annual Hot Dog Social – Fund Raiser and Fun Social Event

Pat is also working on inviting Animal Services (protecting/evacuating our animals); Master Gardener (Water wise/Firewise Landscaping/Local Native Plants); and El Dorado Sheriff’s Office (wildfire procedures). Pat invited new ideas/topics. Steve Beemer suggested someone to talk about the “Fire Fee” its purpose etc.

**Fire Fee:** Pat offered some background on the “Fire Fee”. It was sold as extra protection for “Wildland Urban Interface Areas”. Three years ago property owners in these areas started to pay the annual “fee”; it was not called a “tax” as that would have taken a vote of the people. Property owners questioned this distinction and filed a lawsuit(s). About \$100 million is collected annually. Approximately \$50 mil was set aside as contingency for potential lawsuit(s) each year. Board of Supervisors protested that funds were not going back into the communities which paid the “fee”. We submitted letters in protest saying this is a “tax” and should as such be processed by the vote of the people and distributed properly. Approximately \$50 million in “General Fund” monies were diverted from Cal Fire’s “Prevention” side of the budget and supplanted by the

“Fee”. At present there approximately \$300 million has been collected. In 2014 the Governor, in consideration of the drought, proposed taking \$10 million from the fund and delivering it back to the counties in the form of grants. This decision put us in an awkward position as we have “opposed” the process but now the Governor is offering counties an opportunity to receive these funds and we do not want to lose the opportunity for funding. Our El Dorado Fire Safe Council Area submitted 7 proposals to Cal Fire and last week we received notice that several were accepted for further evaluation: Logtown 10, County Wide Protection Plan, Grizzly Flat 13, LH-1 Lake Hills Estate, Caswell Road (Placerville) and PP-1 Pollock Pines. In addition there were two proposal from Sandridge and two from the Resources Conservation District. Cal Fire has hired inspectors/ staff to go neighborhood to neighborhood inspecting for “defensible space” to reduce fire danger. The local CAL FIRE unit determines the area to be surveyed; do not believe they have been through Logtown.

Kevin McAllister brought up point that some property owners who sold their property 2 years ago are still getting billed for the “fire fee”. Please contact him if you know anyone else who may also be in the same position. So they can resolve this accounting problem for the neighborhood.

Pat said another good reason to invite the new battalion chief out is to talk about inspecting Logtown for clearance /defensible space. Property owner action is really “common sense” as listed in the “Ready”-Set-Go Brochure. Education is Key. Logtown Fire Safe Council members, if requested, can go out and “evaluate” not “inspect” properties and offer suggestions based on Cal Fire’s “Ready” recommendations. Fire Wise Community status is important as USAA offers a discount on insurance if your home is located in such a neighborhood. Other insurance companies are expected to follow. Logtown is a Fire Wise Community.

**Burn Restrictions and Burn Pile Safety:** This is a great time of year to burn as many of us have recently picked up tree limbs, leaves/needles. Most of you already know “escaped burn piles” are the #1 source of wildland fires. Pat reminded us of the “Burn Guidelines and Restrictions”: call the Burn Hot Line before lighting the fire; have 10 ft clearance around the pile, maintain 4x4 size rule; have a charged water source nearby; stay in attendance and make sure the fire is out. Be careful and be safe.

**Chairman’s Report: Communication:** Please check that our Neighborhood “Phone/Text” Tree contact information, (email, cell number/provider) are up to date. Suggest residents join “Nextdoor Logtown” for social and neighborhood announcements as it seems to be an excellent tool for many in the neighborhood. Ken advised the “Newsletter” will be coming out in March and any information you may want to see in it please let us know.

**Treasurer Report:** Ken advised our bank balance is \$7,453.09. We brought in about \$3,000 from last year’s Hot Dog Social and our expenses from July 2014 to date total \$1,159.59. Ken invited ideas for expenditure. Pat researched the request for a Flag at Station 44. A flag was donated to the station but in the remodel it was taken down. Pat talked with Fire Chief Coombs who advised it is best to replace the old pole with a new 30 foot one. They offered to fund the cost for the pole and we offered to pay for the flag.

**County Fire Safe Council Update:** Of the \$10 mil from the “Fire Fee” that is being made available to Counties – San Diego is the highest contributor with habitable structures at 23%;

San Bernardino is next at 21% and El Dorado County is at 17% with smaller percentages for remaining counties. At the 17% level El Dorado's "fair share" is approximately \$ 1.7 million. We submitted \$1.4 million in proposals. We are hopeful all of the grant requests will be funded. Amongst these requests is \$70,000 for a Countywide – Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Individual plans are only good for 5 years. Logtown's CWPP needs to be updated and there are 10-12 others within the County that also need updates. Rather than do a piecemeal approach the thought is to do one integrated CWPP for the whole county. These grant funds could help those areas with limited funds. Such an approach would allow better use of community resources in times of need. Each community would be able to maintain its own unique elements. Ken noted that Logtown was not on the current list of CWPPs and we need to correct that error. Pat advised that matching funds/in kind services and letters of support from local Supervisors and other pertinent groups are needed to secure the grant. All support data etc. are due back on January 27<sup>th</sup>. So a lot of work needs to be done within the next few weeks.

**Neighborhood Coordinator Updates:** This is the best time – in advance of the fire season -- to revisit our neighborhood "zones" and have Captains check with residents to ensure that we have current contact information and identify those who may want some advice/information or physical help "readying" their property.

**Public Comment:**

Smokey Bear Fire Status Sign: Steve Beemer brought up issue of "updating" Status Sign in a timely basis. Pat stated he was looking into "relocating" it as presently it does not have good visibility. Others agreed it was a poor location. Perhaps near Dolomite would be better. Idea needs further research to make sure visible and not cluttering an area.

Trimming Grey Pines: Someone asked who to call to trim the tree from overhead lines. Apparently PGE is good at trimming and follow through: AT&T not so. It was recommended you advise "cut to the ground and treat" as this keeps return visits to minimum.

Preparation of Countywide CWPP: A question was asked as to who will prepare the plan. Pat advised it will probably go out to bid. Wildland Fire Rx, Barry Callenberger has done a number of plans and is highly recommended. Pat would like to see some changes in the Plan. In the past it has been driven by "Foresters" mainly looking at fuels and healthy forests, however, he would like to see more input from the "Fire Suppression" angle whereby access for firefighters in fuel breaks is given stronger consideration i.e. is this an accessible break or a slow-down break.

Linda Colombo Sand Ridge Fire Safe Council: Linda gave a brief presentation on the Sand Fire. Showed a map/ pictures of areas where clearance and advance work had been done to better prepare them before fire season. They did a lot of clearance along the road to provide greater visibility and establish loops so fire trucks had better access to and from residences. PG&E did a lot of clearing/trimming to the ground with treatment applied. They are now allowing chemical treatment on stumps which allows them to be dormant for about 10 years. Also realized when calling in a fire location – it is not enough to say the Street address – you need to also say what "COUNTY" you are in because there are several roads with similar names that are in different counties. Bell road is a good example.

**Special Presentation:** This is about Ken and Nancy Hasse. When they moved to Amador Pines they became familiar with foothill fire issues and got involved in the community. Ken wrote articles for the local paper and when arriving in Logtown Ken and Nancy continued to be involved. Nancy helped organize the meetings and added delicious homemade treats to keep us all returning. Many of you will recall the 2005 Highway49 motorcycle fire that threatened our area. That fire really kick started the Logtown Fire Safe Council. He worked with Gene Murphy and Rich Englefield to get the CWPP in motion. Once he got the Plan in place he drafted/submitted/managed grants to accomplish CWPP objectives. He worked tirelessly and quietly; contacting homeowners to get authorization to have "clearance" work done on their property. All of this to make our community safer. As time went along there was a crisis in the "County" Fire Safe Council and Ken again stepped in to take on some of their issues in accounting etc. He is still Treasurer at the County Council and at the Logtown Council as well.

All this is leading to Special Recognition. There is a 2015 Wildfire Mitigation Award administered by 3 agencies: Nat'l Assoc. of State Foresters, International Assoc. of Fire Chiefs, and National Fire Protection Association. They have 3 Award Categories: "Nationwide" for those professionals who do fire prevention; "Regional" for those who do multi state work (5 awards) and "Local" those who do local work (10 awards given). We submitted Ken and Nancy for the "Local" Award and they won. This is quite an outstanding accomplishment. We are proud they were recognized nationally for their contribution to our community. An Award Ceremony will be held March 25 in Reno. CONGRATULATIONS KEN AND NANCY.

Adjourn to Next Meeting – February 14, 2015

Signed: *Marilyn Olson-Petersen*

Logtown Fire Safe Council: Pat Dwyer, President (622-7121), Ken Hasse, Treasurer (620-7220), Marilyn Olson-Petersen, Vice Chair/Secretary (620-2461) Rod Repschlaeger (621-3219) and John Lindberg (303-3672)