



Logtown Fire Safe Council

P.O. Box 1601

El Dorado, CA 95623



Notes of the November 8, 2014 Meeting

Station 44

Diamond Springs-El Dorado Fire Protection District

Introduction and Sign-in: Ken Hasse convened the meeting at 9:10. Pat Dwyer arrived shortly thereafter and took over the Meeting. Members present: Ken Hasse, Rod Repschlaeger, John Lindberg, Marilyn Olson-Petersen and Pat Dwyer.

Treasurer's Report: Ken Hasse advised that our bank balance is a little over \$7,000.00. The October Hot Dog Social brought in \$3,089.00 with \$400.00 in expenses. Nancy Hasse thanked the community – it was through everyone's help in setting up/taking down, buying raffle tickets, making baskets, getting donations from Merchants, and providing music and food – that made the event a success. A special thank you to Ray Nutting for entertaining us while auctioning off the donations. It was a fun day and a successful one too. Rod shared that the balance of any of the food/drinks were donated to MORE.

Ken reminded us that this Event started as a neighborhood "Social" and morphed into a Fund Raiser as residents saw an opportunity to help the neighborhood. Other expenditures this year were limited to the "Signs" for the Annual Events and the \$500.00 contribution to the Sand Fire Victims. Ken invited everyone to suggest projects for funding. The only financial commitment we have made is to update the CWPP. (Pat arrived). John Lindberg suggested that we purchase a Flag for the Fire Station. Discussion followed that a Flag was donated and not mounted as the remodel of the station did not include brackets for the flag. The group liked the idea of a flag. Pat agreed to locate the existing flag and if not available John volunteered to research/purchase a flag.

Chairman's Report: Pat acknowledged that FSC's 2014 has been a good year with successful Events (April's Spring Clean-Up Day and October's Hot Dog Social/Fund Raiser) and excellent presentations by local community representatives (State/Local Fire Departments, Sheriff Office, Animal Rescue Services, Red Cross, Utility Services) to educate us on how to best protect ourselves/properties. Our goal is to have these FSC Meetings be useful and worth your time. We welcome/invite your suggestions for presentations that you think would be valuable. Someone offered that they knew a person who flew one of the airplanes that dropped retardant. She asked if we would be interested in a presentation – group expressed interest and she advised she will follow up and contact the individual. As we look ahead to 2015 Pat advised that he was planning to bring back Mike Webb in early spring to focus on another "fire incident" – specifically how they manage it. He would like to schedule other related agencies on separate meeting dates. He mentioned inviting the new Supervisor of District 2 Shiva Frentzen to attend the meeting. Nancy Hasse suggested inviting Animal Services to talk about their new facility which can now accommodate more animals.

Work Time Sheets: Ken reminded us that this last Spring there was a lot of work done clearing properties and that we all need to record our efforts on the "Time Sheet for Working on Defensible Space" as these hours and expenditures are used to secure County (matching) Funds for projects . The Work Sheet can be turned in any time throughout the year. Pat said he would attach a "Work Sheet Form" to today's Mtg. Notes and probably attach them quarterly. He reminded us that "Fire Safe" Councils grew out of Southern California CDF to create defensible space (focus on "environment around the house"). FS Councils are Non Profit 501c3 entities. "Firewise" Councils, on the other hand, started in Florida after a series of fires and through a consortium of insurance companies (NFPA); their focus is on making the "house" fire resistant. Both entities have similar overall goals. Someday they may merge. Logtown is affiliated with both entities. In order to maintain Firewise Council status we need to demonstrate proactively (community projects and individual property owner actions) that we are enhancing fire protection of our properties. It is important to note the USAA Insurance is now giving discounts to homes within a Firewise Council community -- another reason to keep track of your efforts to make your home safer.

Pat gave a **Special Thank You to Ken and Nancy Hasse** for their efforts on behalf of the FSC. They were the lead players in creating this Council and have been active participants ever since. A special Thank You to you Nancy for another outstanding "Hot Dog Social". Thank you both. You are indeed the backbone of this Council.

Winter Holiday and Holiday Fire Safety: We invited Bob owner of Stoves and Stuff to be our Speaker today but unfortunately he was unable to attend. We will invite him for another time. Some of the things he would cover Fireplace and Stove Safety: If you have conventional gas/propane stove, these are usually low maintenance but it is good to check its operation at the beginning of each winter and clean filters etc. If you have in floor/baseboards make sure the area adjacent to the floor unit is clear and not blocked as it could turn on at night and ignite what is nearby and you could lose your house. On gas fireplaces he suggests make sure the lava rocks are free of spider webs and check/adjust the flame length. Also check the chimney and flues to make sure they are open and free and no bird nests are present. Similar with Pellet stoves – make sure they are clean and dampers are open. Wood stoves are little more dangerous as you have the chance of embers flying into the room. Make a safe clear area at the base, have a good screen and do not overload and have a spark arrester. He shared story of a resident taking the ashes from fireplace; piling them on the driveway away from the home and then later discovered they reignited and started a fire. Another story involved putting the ashes in a garbage can near the house and it too reignited and created a fire.

Holiday Safety – One of the biggest fire starters over the Thanksgiving Holiday is mis-use of "Turkey Fryers" and "Candle" safety is paramount over the Christmas Holiday. It is easy to forget the candles are there with so much going on so be careful. Keep them away from drapes. The most infamous fire starter is the over-extended "Extension Cord". Enjoy your Holiday and be safe.

Burn Restrictions and Burn Pile Safety: Although Cal Fire has lifted the Burn Restrictions. The consensus is they are premature. Pat suggested waiting until we get a couple more good rains. The vast majority of wildfires in our area are ones that escape from burn piles. It may be OK from Air Resources Board Pollution standards to burn but it may not be "safe" to burn as the surrounding conditions (fuel source, humidity, wind etc) are volatile. Suggest make sure you have cleared dirt area and use the 4x4x4 rule. Have a charged water source and never leave it unattended.

Chairman's Report – Communication: Pat advised that "Nextdoor Logtown" is working well and is now up to 102 residents. It is a good source for a variety of social communications with its open structure – garage sales, lost/found pets etc. Our Logtown "Phone Tree of Text Messages" is coming along fine as are the "emails" for non-urgent notices. Our Logtown Text Messages are for "awareness" purposes to let you know that something

"firewise" is happening in our neighborhood. If you have not already signed up please give Ken your cell phone number and cell provider. Also if your cell phone is not yet on the County's Reverse 911 System please contact the County – they have your landline number already as a contact. If you want them to be able to text your cell phone they too will need your cell number and cell provider -- call the Sheriff Office or go to El Dorado County web page. The County Reverse 911 System will give you text messages advising of "Official" Evacuation Alerts and other emergency alerts. Our "Logtown Text Messages" are "informational/awareness" alerts.

County Fire Safe Council Update: Pat advised that the County Council is doing well. The Council made a presentation of activities to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) which was well received and they have met with several Board Members. Number one issue for all the local Councils is absentee owners and people who do not take care of their property. The Supervisors are discussing a "Weed Abatement Ordinance" that would require some clearance around unimproved parcels similar to what they do for us homeowners i.e. 100 foot clearance. Concept: if property is 5 or 8 acres or less and it is in a community, it needs to be maintained; if it is bigger than that they are thinking of doing 100 foot clearance around the fence line. This is a long term project and a difficult one but at least the BOS are talking about it.

The BOS awarded us \$68,000. – Title III money from Secure Rural Schools Act. This fund source has been unpredictable and we have split the amount with the Sheriff's Office/Search and Rescue for the last year or so. There are restrictions on use and we think "updating" the CWPP is an excellent use that will give us a roadmap showing how best to utilize our time/available funds to protect our neighborhood.

SRA Fire Fee monies are available. \$100 million was collected and \$10 million is available for local drought related fire safe purposes. Eligible projects include: CWPPs, education awareness and fuel reduction. "Concept Papers" are due next week. We are looking at developing a Concept Paper to strategically bring together a Master CWPP for several areas on the West Slope of the County: Pollock Pines, Camino, Cool, Coloma/Lotus, Logtown, Placerville and Diamond Springs. These CWPPS were developed separately over a number of years and a coordinated approach would be beneficial to protect our region. We would like to bring in the "operations" experts to guide us as to where we should focus our fuel breaks to enhance "prevention". John Lundgren raised the issue that most of the time we hear about Cal Fire is when they are putting out a fire and we do not hear about "proactive" upfront prevention activity. Pat advised Cal Fires does have a "Pre-Fire Planning Unit", however, he acknowledged we need to get them out into the community more. As you all may know when budget cuts come around it is often the "prevention" side that is cut in favor of having sufficient "operations" available to fight a fire. There will be multiple meetings set in each neighborhood with representatives from State/Local fire agencies, residents and CWPP consultants as we roll out the development of a Master CWPP. Our role as residents in participating is important as well. Ken shared that last year when we were developing a plan only 2 residents showed up at one of these meeting -- so we need to continue to be actively involved. These Councils are bottom up volunteer organizations and independent by nature and there is a delicate balance of leadership to work with governmental entities.

We are submitting a second "Concept Paper" on Public Education and Awareness: a proposal to hire a PR Consultant to take this information and make it something unique to communities that have CWPPs. Pat handed out an example; a pamphlet tailored to the Sandridge Fire. It contained educational material on fire prevention/evacuation as well as specifics on the Sand Fire. We are looking to create a tool that will inform the public and encourage/motivate them to get involved in protecting their community. Wildland Fires are a threat in our foothill community and individual actions are critical to keep us all safe.

There are several other grant proposals: Logtown 10's \$220,000 proposal for fuel reduction on the Eastside of Monitor and Dolomite. Last year we could not complete the project but got 14 acres of the 58 done and this grant will enable us to complete the project and extend the fuel break to the end of Galena to Dolomite. Grizzly Flat, Lake Hills Estate and Weber Creek are all submitting grant requests. These proposals total around \$900,000 for our entire County area. On the US Forest Service Grants there was \$3 million available statewide and our county got \$300,000 – approximately 10% of the total which is more than any other county in the State.

Ken shared how neighbors are taking action. Steve Morgan and Sam White are cleaning up a neighbor's parcel along Crystal Blvd. The **Chipping Program** is up and running. We did get an interim PG&E \$30,000 Chipping Grant which we have been using as we waited to have funds released from an earlier authorization. We need to utilize the PG&E monies by the end of this month so please sign up for chipping service. We will have chipping services available for next year and half. We are considering doing a Community Chipping Day if we get a lot of residents signed up for our Annual April Spring Clean Up Day. We could schedule the chipping the following week.

We are also considering a Green Truck Day – instead of using a dumpster you can take small twigs, leaves and place them in black trash bags at the end of the driveway that weekend and we can schedule a Green Truck to pick up the green waste. Rather than load and unload your vehicle you can just take the bags to the driveway. Ken reminded us that if you have Garbage Service you can get two "Green Waste" Carts and that helps take care of a lot of yard/garden clean up.

Question: What is status of our Fuel Breaks. Ken responded we did Slope and in 2010 we did the West side of Crystal and around and up to the end of Mica. Where it is grazed it is in good shape but it will need some maintenance where it is not grazed. Pat interjected that the grants did the hard work of the initial removal and it is unfortunate that some landowners have not kept up on maintenance. Use of a herbicide or weed eating would keep it under control.

Meeting adjourned until January 10th.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO YOU ALL

Signed

Marilyn C. 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)