

Notes of June 14, 2014 Meeting

Station 44 Diamond Springs El Dorado Fire Protection District

6109 Quartz Drive, El Dorado, CA

Introduction and Sign-In: Pat Dwyer called the Meeting to order at 9:05. Members Present: Pat Dwyer, Kevin McAllister and Marilyn Olson-Petersen.

Board Election: June is Election Month. We have two vacancies and there were two candidates. Ken Hasse is running for re-election and John Lindberg is running for the second seat. Pat asked for volunteer proctor to assist in counting the ballots. Pat Relfe volunteered. The result: 22 votes for both candidates. Election of Officers: The following nominations for Board Officers were approved: Pat Dwyer, Chairman, Ken Hasse, Treasurer and Marilyn Olson-Petersen, Vice Chair/Secretary.

Chairman's Report: Appreciation for Kevin McAllister: Pat presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Kevin for his volunteer service of 2 years. Many of you might not know that he was the "Finger Master" adjusting the Smokey the Bear Fire Alert SIGN as fire status changed throughout the year. His time and effort at many of our activities is greatly appreciated. Thank you Kevin!

Geezer Team -Hot Dog Social Auction Item: Marc and Trudy "won" the bid in the Live Auction at the Hot Dog Social and paid for 3-4 hours of defensible space clearance by the Geezer Team. They later decided to donate it. There was a family in our community with a recent death that was in need of defensible space. So the Geezer Team (Steve Morgan, Ken Hasse and Pat Dwyer) selected them and got their gear together and helped clear the property. Pat remarked that it helped reduce fire risk in our neighborhood and it helped a family in need. It felt good to be a part of it. It really represents the purpose/philosophy of our fire safe council levels of responsibility: individual owners are responsible for creating their own defensible space, however, some may need assistance and hence our role to reach and help. Where the need is greater/larger in scope we work together as a community to tackle the task or apply for grants to make things happen.

Reverse 911: Your "land line" is automatically signed up but if you want to add your "cell" phone number for calls, email, texting you need to go to the El Dorado County Sherriff's Website or our EDCFSC Web site (www.edcfiresafe.org) which has a link. This will enable you to receive an "FIRE ALERT" call, email, text" on your cell where ever you may be. Such notice may give you time to go home or call someone to help you. We have our own Logtown Community "PHONE TREE" system but it has its flaws with residential owners changing frequently and it is often difficult to keep it up to date. We continually try to make it functional for all areas. We are however in process of creating a text messaging system specifically for Logtown. We have 20 people signed up and we just need your cell number that can receive "text messaging" and the name of your provider. We think this will be a much better system. So please contact me if you are interested in becoming part of the local text notification system.

Treasurer's Report: Ken is not present to give the report. Our balance is the same as last meeting: \$5816.00. We raised this money with your help for our community and we want to put it to good use. So if you have ideas please contact Pat and he will bring it up at the next meeting for consideration. Last meeting we announced that we needed to change the location of our bank account (from US Bank to Umpqua Bank) to be a sub account of the County's Fire Safe Council. This will stream line our actions and the change will take place at the end of the fiscal year – end of June.

Hot Dog Social Planning: Tis that time of year again to start planning for the October Hot Dog Social. We have been doing this social-fund raiser now for a couple of years and have developed a few key components. Good food (Free BBQ Hot Dogs, volunteer side dishes, sodas/water) music provided by our local P.O. DJ, and Auction/Raffle of gift baskets and other items. It is a fun event and the money we raise goes toward our fire safe activities. If you have any suggestions/ideas to make it better for us all please contact Pat. Last year we added the "Rattle Snake" Contest so keep track of your sightings.

County Fire Safe Council Update: We are doing much better this year. Last year at this time the "El Dorado County Fire Safe Council" was on the ropes; we (Logtown), however, had some money in our account. We worked hard and made a presentation to the BOS (Board of Supervisors) - a plea for Title 3 money to become available. They liked our presentation and gave us \$26,000 in Title 3 and \$25,000 from the General Fund saying we believe you are a valuable asset to the County. They stated there needs to be better accountability. We used some of the money to submit grant requests and we received more grant money than any other county in the state. Most Fire Safe councils have paid staff, ours is totally voluntary and we are very proud we received the funds we did. It has been a good year of re building relationships with the BOS, Air Quality Management District, Water Resources, EID, PG&E. Many of you are aware of the numerous lawsuits on the use/misuse of the "Fire Tax". There is a meeting to be held in Chico with all the Fire Councils to talk about getting these funds (or portion thereof) back to the counties. So we wait to see what happens when these meetings convene. Pat mentioned that it might be beneficial if we did have a paid staff person with some clerical support at the County Fire Safe Council. It is something to consider if we had the right person. There is a burn out factor.

Someone asked about the local Councils. Pat responded that Grizzly Flat is probably the most active. They have about 30-35 people at their meetings and similar size neighborhood but little different geography as they are way at the end of the road there. We are number two – like Avis we try harder. Auburn Lake Trails is organized around their Home Owners Association. They have leg up with a little more teeth because of the HOA/ CCRs/gated community. They can require the owners to do the clean-up/clearance and can use the security guards to patrol/enforce. Cameron Park has one guy at the fire station as their "council". He is a paid fire prevention staff person. They do not do community meetings. They do have a clean-up day and they have within their Community Service District a weed abatement program. The structure varies with the needs of the community. Pleasant Valley, for example, is working with the Grange and that seems to be working for them. People often want a project – clearance around an evacuation route or fuel break. They came together, formed a council, got a grant, did the project and then disbanded. It takes a commitment from people like Ken and Nancy to keep it going - keep it interesting and relevant, so we are not wasting your time one Saturday a month. There is

a new council forming in Lake Arrow Bee. Karen Hass is taking a lead. They asked for our help and we said we would be happy to come up but our role would be advisory as it has to start at the community grass roots level to be sustainable. Her husband is involved and it would be like a Nancy/Ken transplant. Bob is a ham radio operator. You all had asked for a Scanner Clinic and Bob said he would be pleased to come to one of our meeting. **A Scanner Clinic is scheduled for July Meeting.** He is director of KOVR Broadcast Engineering/ Operations. Also Chief Swab of Georgetown will be present to give us the scanner frequencies and help us understand when and how to switch to the different frequencies as the fire conditions change – shifting from the 911 frequency to the tactical channels the Fire Chief utilizes to communicate with his crew at the fire site.

BOS Disaster Planning Briefing – Tuesday June 17th – 11:00. Public invited. Up here we are used to preparation for fire and maybe earthquake but Jamie Morgan advised the County wants to be prepared to deal with a disaster that may occur to the West of us wherein mass of people may need to get to the foothills and how would we in our area accommodate them. Pat will attend and report back at next mtg.

Friends of Seniors. We had a program and we ran out of grant money to help senior and disabled people who are both physically incapable and financially unable to pay to have their defensible space done. We did the Spaghetti Feed Dinner with Friends of Seniors and raised about \$4,000. The County FSC kicked in another \$2,000 and the “Day of Giving” Event sponsored by the El Dorado Foundation raised another \$1,700. So we do now have some funding available. In conjunction with Friends of Seniors we get applications. We go out and inspect the property using the “READY” Brochure as a guide to assess the property. Then between the County FSC, and the Friends of Seniors, we chose 2 sites a month. MORE (Motherlode Rehabilitation Enterprises) is contracted to do the cleanup work. We are getting ready to do our first two in a couple of weeks which happen to be in the Sly Park area. Not everyone who applies will be selected as the program is structured to serve the neediest residents.

Neighborhood Coordinators: Susan Ferguson asked whether anything was resolved at the meeting relating to Mica Evacuation Route; Pat said nothing was resolved. Kevin stated -it is in the courts at the moment. Pat said that when we had Jamie Morgan here at our Evacuation Fire Incident Exercise in March – he said when health and safety are at risk they do not care about gate/easements; they are going to do whatever they need to do to get us safely out. It could be Neilson Ranch or send us down Crystal. Do we want three evacuation routes – the answer is yes we do – the question is how to get that done.

Steve Beemer suggested a good use of the Fire Tax money would be to have someone who is already paid to write tickets with a large fine for those that are in violation of defensible space and use those fine monies to fund a position for the Fire Council. Pat advised that Cal Fire locally did bring on staff to do those 4291 Inspections and assess a small fine but they did not have the staff to do the necessary follow up. Steve shared that LA County clears those properties that are not doing clearance and adds the work costs to their property tax bill. Cameron Park did something similar but had difficulty recovering the reimbursement money in a timely manner. Pat said it is a convoluted problem; follow up officers are not available and there is a difficulty in getting cash flow to pay the staff up front. The upcoming

meetings on the Fire Tax Fee will be helpful to determine how best to use those dollars. Kevin advised that Sacramento County is now considering a Fire Tax.

“Volunteer Time Work Sheets” for property clearance. Pat handed out the sheets and suggested we check our calendars and estimate the work hours. We get grant match credit for every hour you do to create defensible space and also receive credit for any work “paid” on a dollar for dollar basis. This helps us get grants and do fuel reduction projects. Please turn them in to Pat as we use them to document hours worked in our community.

Kevin advised that **National Fire Insurance Companies and USAA** in particular are starting to take into account fire safe council activities and the fire prevention work being done in neighborhoods as part of their underwriting evaluations. This next year USAA will give discounts for homes within an active FireWise Community and Logtown is a FireWise Community (see our signs near the “Defensible Space Signs”) The hard work that Logtown and Ken and others have done is starting to pay off. Though it may only be a small discount it has impact when they are considering a moratorium and they will look at those locations with active fire prevention work and give them more lee way and hopefully determine that our insurance policies are continued.

Website. Pat then gave a presentation on the Fire Safe Council’s updated Website. It has an excellent link to add your cell number to the Reverse 911 Program. There are maps and reports on fire status locally and statewide as well as information on all the fire councils, Evacuation Routes, The Ready- Set-Go Brochures. All valuable information. Please check it out.

Well thank you for being here and we look forward to the Scanner Presentation at the July meeting. Don’t forget your Volunteer Work Sheets.

Adjournment: Meeting Adjourned at 9:50

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) John Lindberg 303-3673.