1. Call to Order: Chairman Pat Dwyer called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. Board members present were Pat Dwyer, Rod Repschlaeger, John Erickson, Chris Olson and Marc Regelbrugge. Dwyer began the meeting by leading the Pledge of Allegiance. He reminded the assembled public to sign-in, to avail themselves of coffee and treats, and to see John Erickson to purchase Logtown hats, T-shirts and coffee mugs.

2. Announcements: Dwyer briefly discussed the Fire Safe Council meeting schedule for 2019. Guest speakers will address topics such as the history of the Town of El Dorado and surrounding areas, the recent acquisition of lands south of Crystal Blvd. to the Cosumnes River and west of the Nielsen Ranch by the American River Conservancy, disaster preparedness and emergency response as viewed by the County Office of Health and Human Services and the Sheriff’s Office of Emergency services, and domestic and large-animal rescue operations during evacuations. Our Community Clean-Up and Firewise Day is scheduled for June 8th. El Dorado Disposal has graciously offered to provide dumpsters for bagged household waste, and Snowline Hospice will be on hand to accept donations of lightly used items and e-waste. Green-waste dumpsters will be in Logtown at Station 44 (Quartz Dr.) and at the CSD common area (Dolomite Dr.) during the 1-2 weeks prior to Cleanup Day. Finally, our annual Hot Dog Social is scheduled for October 12th at Station 44. It will be an exciting year, and we look forward to seeing you at our monthly meetings and Firewise events.

3. Guest Speaker: Dwyer introduced Chief Bryan Ransdell of the Diamond Springs-El Dorado Fire Protection District (Diamond Fire). The Chief has spent some 32 years in the Fire Service, with approximately 26 of those in Placer County. He began by introducing the Fire District’s Fire Prevention Officer, Glenda Thornton, and emphasizing the important role prevention plays in keeping our communities and properties safe. He also noted that Diamond Fire seeks partnerships with individuals and Fire Safe Councils for fire prevention activities, and was very complimentary of the Fire Safe Councils’ roles of Education and Action in helping to prevent fires and to reduce fire severity within our communities.

Chief Ransdell explained that Diamond Fire has been building its capability consciously and continuously. He has reduced the number of Chiefs and invested in more firefighters/EMTs so that Diamond Fire can now field four-person engine companies, rather than two-person companies when he began his tenure. Diamond Fire also provides the only Medium Rescue capability in El Dorado County and maintains a State-certified training area at which Diamond Firefighters train firefighters from across California. In addition,
Diamond Fire responds to the second-largest emergency-call volume in the County!

As far as new initiatives are concerned, the Chief was pleased to announce near-term acquisitions of a Type 3 (backcountry) fire engine and a tactical water tender. These new resources are important to preserve the availability of a Type 3 engine south of the Georgetown Divide, as a Cal Fire AEU engine is slated to be moved north.

Challenges on the horizon include the viability of smaller Fire Protection Districts (FPDs) in the County and improving coordination among County FPDs for emergency response. Chief Ransdell noted that the County Administrative Officer and the Board of Supervisors are pushing for consolidation of smaller fire districts as a way to assure affordable fire protection services throughout the County. Diamond Fire, which conducts some collaborative activities already with the Rescue FPD, is exploring options for possible consolidation with Rescue FPD to improve commonality and efficiency across their adjacent service areas.

At the County level, the Fire Districts participate in a County-wide Fire Operations Committee, which identifies and targets specific areas for development of coordinated methods and procedures for responding to large-scale emergencies throughout the County. The Chief stressed the inherent advantages that come from detailed procedural and operational coordination; having everyone “sing off the same sheet of music.”

Chief Ransdell took several questions from the audience, the first of which addressed evacuation planning and routing in light of experience from the Camp Fire. Ransdell emphasized that evacuation plans are developed and executed by the Sheriff’s Office, but acknowledged that evacuations need to be planned and executed with full awareness of the emergency at hand. The Chief’s advice was to stick to the main roads – secondary roads are often not well maintained, well marked nor well identified. As a result, potential evacuation routes can be unpredictable. The best course of action is to be prepared: don’t wait for an evacuation order if you are in danger; be able to leave quickly via the main roads; know where you’re going.

Responding to another question on the origin of last summer’s Bumper Fire, the Chief informed the audience that the fire appears to have been started by sparks from a chain saw. He also offered that many fires are started by lawn mowers operating in dry conditions, and stresses the need to avoid mechanized operations when fuel moisture levels are low.

Dwyer thanked the Chief for his presentation and his service, and presented Chief Ransdell and Fire Prevention Officer Thornton with Logtown coffee mugs as tokens of the Council’s appreciation.
4. Treasurer’s Report: Treasurer John Erickson reported that October’s Hot Dog Social grossed about $2,240 from the raffle, auction and donations. After costs of approximately $738, the Council netted some $1,500 for future activities and projects. Erickson also reported the Council’s total assets were $9,513.19 as of the beginning of January.

5. Old Business: Dwyer announced that the Logtown Fire Safe Council submitted a proposal seeking funding for the LT-10 project in response to Cal Fire’s latest CCI Fire Protection grant solicitation. LSFC’s proposal requests some $450,000 to construct approximately 100 acres of shaded fuel break on the east side of Logtown and Monitor ridges between Monitor, Galena and Dolomite, and Union Mine Rd. As a result of the work done under prior Cal Fire and US Forest Service grants, the LT-10 project’s environmental and archaeological assessments have been completed and approved, rendering the project “shovel ready.” If awarded, the grant will run from September 2019 to mid-March, 2022. Award announcements are expected in April 2019.

6. New Business: Dwyer reported that Logtown must renew its application for designation as a Firewise Community. Firewise status is designated for communities that demonstrate investment to increase their resilience to wild fire by identifying and mitigating fire risks. In Logtown’s case, the primary risks are (a) fuel loading on steep hillsides and (b) highway and residential ignition sources. Secondary risks include evacuation planning, structural resilience and maintenance of defensible space. The required community self-assessment evaluates these risks against the means the Community is deploying to address them, specifically: mitigation plans and actions.

Chairman Dwyer also mentioned that now is the time to update our Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). This plan is updated every five years, and addresses community fire risks and mitigation plans. Perhaps most importantly, the CWPP establishes fire-risk mitigation projects, plans and priorities. The Fire Safe Council is soliciting inputs from you, our Community, to reflect your areas of concern and your ideas and priorities for potential fire-risk mitigation projects. While the LT-10 project represents the culmination of fuels-reduction work to complete Logtown’s “Ring of Protection,” maintenance of prior project areas is one potential topic for inclusion in the new plan. You can review the current CWPP on the El Dorado County Firesafe Council web site (edcfiresafe.org) – see the “Resources” page at the end of these notes for the complete web address (URL).

7. County Fire Safe Council Update: Dwyer reported that the Board of Supervisors is beginning to consider a brush-clearing ordinance that addresses
vacant and wild lands. Some initial proposals have suggested requiring reduced-fuels zones within 100’ of all property lines.

Dwyer further reported that the California Conservation Corps (CCC) has some $20 million funding to be spent before June 2020 for community-benefit projects. Logtown has engaged the CCC in prior projects, most recently including the LT-9a project that created a shaded fuel break between Crystal Blvd. and SR 49 from Mica Street north to Lauren Lane (also, see Public Comment). Other potential projects may be able to benefit from the CCC funding.

Dwyer also noted that Cal Fire’s Amador-El Dorado Unit (AEU) has reported that some 400+ fires occurring in the Unit in 2018 were contained to an extent of 10 acres or less. While large, catastrophic fire events capture much greater attention, it is important to realize the efforts and successes that Cal Fire and local Fire Districts have made to mitigate the spread of wild fires and minimize losses of property and life in our neighborhood. It is also a stark reminder to all of us that ignition sources and dry fuels are omnipresent in our Community, and that these two factors can combine quickly to result in a life-threatening conflagration. That is why it is so important for each of us to eliminate or control ignition sources diligently, and to maintain our defensible space and landscapes effectively to eliminate potential fuels for wild fires.

8. Public Comment: Members of the public noted and discussed the quick and effective response of Cal Fire and local agencies to extinguish a small fire on a Lauren Lane property between Highway 49 and Crystal Blvd. Ken Hasse noted that the area into which the fire grew had been treated by a CCC crew in 2016 as part of the LT-9a fuels-reduction project. It is quite likely that the fire was slowed by the reduced fuel load in the previously cleared area, making LT-9a an example “success story” of the efforts to protect our community by well-planned, fuels reduction/clearing work.

Dwyer noted an interesting article he had seen in the Los Angeles Times that chronicle the origin, spread and reactions to the Camp Fire that devastated Paradise and surrounding communities and caused over 80 deaths. Read the article at https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-paradise-survivors-20181202-htmlstory.html. Other stories can be found by searching for “Camp Fire” on the LA Times web site.

9. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m. The next meeting will be on February 9th at 9:00 a.m. at Station 44 on Quartz Drive. See you there!
Logtown Fire Safe Council
On-Line Resources

http://www.edcfiresafe.org  El Dorado County Fire Safe Council


http://www.edcfiresafe.org/programs-grants-2/chipper-program  Chipper Program
(FREE!)

http://ready.edso.org  Sheriff’s Office Emergency Notification System
Sign-up for “Code RED” (replaced reverse-911)

http://www.friendsofedcseniors.org/  Friends of Seniors, a private, non-profit advocacy organization supporting wellness, life enrichment, dignity and independence of El Dorado County Seniors and their caregivers through advocacy and financial assistance.

Useful Telephone Numbers

Southwest County Resident Sheriff’s Deputy Steve Wunschel  (530)957-3581

EDSO Dispatch (No emergencies.  FOR EMERGENCIES, DIAL 911) (530)621-6600

Logtown Fire Safe Council LT-10 Project Coordinator Marc Regelbrugge  (415)640-3068