

**Minutes - Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
Fire Safe Santa Cruz County (FSSCC)**

Thursday, June 6, 2019

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: Santa Cruz County Office of Emergency Services

5200 Soquel Avenue

Santa Cruz, CA 95062

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** At 1035 by Paul Horvat

2. **INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME**

Directors Present: Paul Horvat, President
Ed Hayes, Vice President
Joe Christy, Vice President
Andy Hubbs, Secretary
LizAnne Jensen, Treasurer
Ian Rowbotham
Chris Berry
Lizzy Eichorn
Becky Steinbruner
Tim Reilly
Jen Michelsen
Felix Sorrentino
Bob Loveland

Directors Absent: None

Attendees: Ilana King
Lisa Ehret
Elizabeth Quinn
Justin Acton
Bojana Fazarinc
Leigh Wunce
Betsy Stiefelmaier
Abby Young
Dave Cordano

3. **AGENDA REVISIONS/APPROVAL**

3.1. No changes made to the agenda.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

4.1. Review and approve 4/4/19 meeting minutes. LizAnne requested that item 6.7 be changed to read that both Paul and LizAnne have both been in contact with Pete Muñoa. Joe moved approval of the minutes, Ian seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion carried.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

- 5.1. Justin Acton- Justin is a Ben Lomond resident who lives in a developed residential neighborhood off of Hihn Road. The area is home to thousands of residents that are at extreme risk of wildfire. At the base of the hill that leads up to their neighborhood, across the street from the Safeway on Mount Herman Road, there are expanding homeless encampments. This is Felton Fire Protection District's top priority project, but it is more than the fire department can take on without financial support. A group of concerned individuals is working to devise a plan of action. Any help is appreciated; they need guidance and support from local agencies.
- 5.2. Bojana Fazarinc – Bojana represents 40 residents on Spanish Ranch Road. She is requesting help for tree and debris removal. They have been trying to work with the County on road upkeep but she is concerned that not enough is being done. Landowners have been doing a lot of clearing themselves but they are at capacity. She requests a site visit/evaluation to help the residents prioritize their actions and requests assistance with vegetation treatment along their ingress/egress route.
- 5.3. Elizabeth Quinn – Elizabeth is a resident of Rodeo Gulch, which is a high-density residential neighborhood. She has submitted request for assistance through the fire safe council website and is interested in opportunities for grant funding to help her neighborhood with vegetation management.
- 5.4. No other public comments.

6. REPORTS

- 6.1. Executive Committee report
The ESC has been finalizing the long-term strategic plan and FY19-20 business plan. They have had a number of capacity needs discussions and are working on articulating those needs, with special effort being dedicated to devising a plan that will allow the organization to hire a Firewise Community Program Coordinator by 2020.
- 6.2. Treasurer's report
FSSCC has \$1942.50 in the bank.
- 6.3. Education and Outreach Committee report
Becky is the newly-appointed chair of the committee. The group is planning four educational events, two on July 23rd and two on July 24th. Peter Meza, associate insurance compliance officer with the State of California Department of Insurance, will be presenting on homeowners insurance considerations in high fire risk areas.

The group continues to work on monthly articles. Recently, an article was published in a variety of local news outlets on ten steps that homeowners can take to make their homes more defensible. Ember sparks and fire awareness will be the topic of the next article.

- 6.4. TAC report
The Technical Advisory Committee had a meeting on Monday and reviewed all website requests for assistance. Requests were divided into two categories: chipping requests and larger neighborhood projects. Through the RCD's CA FSC grant, there are adequate funds to address all chipping requests; the program will run in July this year. In the future, it will run in March and June. The TAC will be scheduling site visits in the fall/summer to match the

larger projects to potential grant opportunities. The Santa Clara Fire Safe Council recently applied for grant monies through PG&E on behalf of FSSCC. If anyone gets a request for chipping or any type of assistance, please direct them to the FSSCC website (<https://www.firesafesantacruz.org/no-cost-chipping>).

6.5 Development Committee report

County OES recently promised continued support for FY19-20 (\$20,000). The committee has mostly been working on the business plan. There is a prospect that more grant monies are coming along. There is a recognized need for supplementation of the RCD's budget to continue fire safe council support and a need of about \$150,000 to be able to hire a Firewise Community Coordinator.

6.6 RCD report

There is now a live donate button on the FSC website and a "Resource Library" page where we can link to helpful resources. All County funds have been expended as of March 30, 2019. A funds augmentation to the CA FSC grant is being finalized (new total grant amount is \$162,041). This will allow for a total of 30 days of chipping, 10,000 defensible space mailers, 5,000 copies printed of revised living with fire, and bilingual version of the resource. The RCD is in process of executing the CAL FIRE fire prevention grant that will fund completion of the Graham Hill shaded fuel break, Cliffwood Estates ladder fuel reduction, and additional chipping funds.

6.7 Other director reports

- Chris- the Santa Cruz City Water Department is doing fuel load reduction work at Loch Lomond. They just completed a fuel break on the east side of the lake and are working on CEQA for southwest side of the lake. They are also looking to open an old road for access to the back side of the lake.
- Jen- The San Lorenzo Valley Water District has been working on a fire plan for all of their facilities. This includes extensive mapping and labelling gates. Getting support letters from local fire agencies would be very helpful so this work can continue.
- Andy- CAL FIRE conducted a bid walk with masticator contractors last week for the Aptos Creek/Hinckly Ridge/Buzzard Lagoon 45-day project. Contracting will be underway within the month.

No other reports.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1. Public engagement policies and procedures

The board discussed the need for a communications policy so that outside communications on behalf of FSSCC are cohesive. It was suggested to include this in the policies and procedures manual that will be created in FY19-20. All communications will be run by the executive steering committee. The education and outreach committee will work to develop talking points for the upcoming outreach events.

7.2. Home Hardening Grant funding opportunity

An insurance company has contacted FSSCC and is looking to fund projects between \$25,000-\$40,000. The main foci of the grant opportunity are building home hardening

awareness, home hardening education and outreach, and tracking resident action based on the information they are provided. Proposals are due June 21. FSSCC will be applying for the funds and will use it as an opportunity to build a grant management track record.

8. ACTION ITEMS

8.1. Approve Long Term Strategic Plan

Tabled for next meeting.

8.2. Approve FY19-20 Business Plan

Tabled to next meeting.

8.3. Conduct board elections

Jen, Ian, Tim, Felix, and Andy were up for reelection. All had indicated that they would like to continue to serve on the board. Andy moved that all five of them be reelected, LizAnne seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried.

Lisa Ehret is the Director of Emergency Services at UCSC. She was asked to serve on the board by the Executive Steering Committee. Joe moved that Lisa be elected to the board, Chris seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried.

9. ADJOURN At 1203 by Paul Horvat

The group discussed the need for future meetings to be held from 10am-12pm to ensure that all agenda items are adequately covered. LizAnne offered to be the meeting timekeeper. Joe moved that all future meetings be held from 10am-12pm. Chris seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried.

The next Regular Meeting of the Board will be Thursday, August 1, 2019, at the Santa Cruz County Office of Emergency Services building, 5200 Soquel Avenue.