



Meeting minutes
Board Meeting
Fire Safe Council of Santa Cruz County
Thursday, Aug 19, 2021
10 am - noon

Attendees: Lisa Lurie, Matt Abernathy, Marco Mack, Robert Gray, Abby Young, Mark Bisbee, Dave Reid, Ed Hayes, Amy Beilharg, Betsy Stiefelmaier, Felix, Susan Marx, Robert Loveland, Lynn Sestak

1. **Call to Order** – Lynn Sestak (filling in for LizAnne Jensen)
2. **Agenda Revisions/Approval** – none requested
3. **Consent to Agenda** – previous meeting minutes not available for review
4. **Board elections**
 - a. Lisa Lurie noted that we need strong committed leadership to drive this organization forward. We continue our search for President and Vice President candidates to fill these roles more permanently. For the interim, the following is now confirmed:
 - b. **Marco Mack** accepted the role as interim President
 - c. **Robert Gray** accepted the role as interim Vice President
 - d. Rounding out our executive leadership:
 - i. **LizAnne Jensen** – Treasurer
 - ii. **Lisa Lurie** – Advisory role to the leadership team
 - iii. **Andy Hubbs** – Secretary
5. **Reports**
 - a. Executive committee reports
 - i. Strategic planning update (Abby)
 1. Main focus was how to get FSCSCC to independent status with engaged and committed leadership, sustainable funding and professional (paid) staffing
 2. Building active partnerships with other like-minded and complimentary organizations and agencies
 3. Community outreach and education through our website, Firewise, HIZ pilot program, reaching out to the underserved, working with the Fire Departments and public safety agencies
 4. Next meeting is Friday 8/27
 - ii. Grant proposals (Abby)
 1. Looking at possibly reallocating some of the \$50K awarded by the Supervisors, and waiting until next month to start search for paid administrative help. Working with Dave Reid on his grant application from OR3.
 2. Dave Reid said he'd like to compose a map of where Firewise recognized and in-process communities are in the county
 - iii. Reminder for Weds 8/25 webinar from Manu Koenig's office (Lynn)
 - b. CERT, Red Cross and Firewise (Lynn)
 - i. Redcross:
 1. LizAnne had reached out to RedCross, new climate action team for our county.

2. That team provided a Spanish language translation of "Prepared not Scared" text. Next step is to send that for printing, to be paid for by Santa Cruz Community Foundation
 3. We proposed Red Cross south county teams get involved evangelizing Firewise to their local communities. Red Cross indicated they didn't have the bandwidth, but provided many suggestions and contacts for how we can do this ourselves (when we have adequate resource).
- ii. CERT:
 1. LizAnne, Lynn and Mary Edmunds from Santa Cruz CERT met recently to discuss LizAnne's proposal for CERT to help evangelize Firewise. Mary indicated they didn't have spare resource now, but invited us to provide a Firewise info training to the next Cert Auxiliary training meeting on Sept 30.
 - iii. Volunteer recruiting discussion
 1. Robert Gray mentioned an upcoming Felton Fire volunteer drive. He would like to refer those with Admin and other useful skills to help with FSCSCC. However we need to ID how we would use volunteers first.
 2. Lisa Lurie suggested one action for the 8/27 Strategic Planning meeting should be to clearly ID some volunteer roles and responsibilities.
 3. Felix also advocated we ID key people that could make a significant difference in the organization, by coordinating key roles/programs.
 4. Dave Reid suggested identifying a Volunteer Coordinator position/role.
 - c. Firewise program update (Lynn)
 - i. See Lynn's PPT slides.
 - d. NFPA HIZ Recap (Matt)
 - i. We had 41 participants in this two day training in Bonny Doon, which Joe Christy (thank you!) helped organize.
 - ii. Matt reported RCD provided 10 scholarships to people who agreed to volunteer in the coming year to do at least 2 HIZ assessment as part of our upcoming pilot HIZ assessment program for Santa Cruz county residents in the WUI.
 - iii. Santa Clara Fire Safe council sent 2 of their employees plus paid for Lynn Sestak's training, for these 3 to do HIZ assessments for their HIZ program.
 - e. Treasurer's report (LizAnne out, no report)

6. FSCSCC Administered Projects updates

- a. Grant status reports
 - i. PG&E Grant
 1. Matt reported phase 1 complete at Summit and Old San Jose Road. Good demonstration area to community. Two acres. Good experience with tree contractors Bay Area Tree
 - ii. CSAA grant (Ed Hayes). The work was completed 2 years ago. Next step is to confirm with CSAA regarding use of left over funds.
 - iii. Rosewood grant – no one present had a status update.
 - iv. CALFIRE grant – no one present had a status update

7. Public Comments

- a. Amu Beilharz introduced herself. She is a long time Sonoma county resident, active with several FireSafe councils in her area. She recently purchased a 200 acre parcel in Scotts Valley as part of her business. She would like to get involved with our board and learn more about Firewise and other programs. She has CALFIRE grant writing experience.

8. Board members reports

- a. Abby (FSCSCC)
 - i. getting more active in her own Firewise community
- b. Marco (Central Fire and FSCSCC)

- i. doing backyard risk evaluations for local communities with Firewise steering committee members, seeking to develop volunteers to do these evaluations.
 - ii. Radio and other emergency communications options for Firewise communities
 - iii. Mt Madonna Center asking for help (lost their fire insurance)
 - iv. Urban HOAs and Wildfire risk reeducation education
 - v. Developing road and signage standards to share with road associations
- c. Ed Hayes (VP of South Skyline FireSafe Council)
 - i. New website launched
 - ii. PGE grant for fuel break – used Bay Area tree
 - iii. Joint project with Santa Clara County FSC for Skyline/Page Mill vegetation management
 - iv. Grant from SSA – add 2 water tanks in Portola area
 - v. Fall chipping program planned (extra \$ is funding this)
- d. Lisa Lurie (RCD)
 - i. Summit Road project with CALFIRE – planning for next phase
 - ii. CALFIRE forest health grants: looking at SLV water district partnerships
 - iii. UCSC land management planning
 - iv. Land scale projects – starting engagement process
- e. Matt Abernathy (RCD)
 - i. RCD will also offer a fall chipping program – more information should be available in the next 2 weeks
 - ii. Doing lots of site visits, mostly in Firewise communities
 - iii. Idea: create a “Seasonal TODO List” with reminders for residents in the WUI. Could be especially useful to new residents.
- f. Robert Gray (Felton Fire Chief)
 - i. Met with Supervisor McPherson to discuss programs to cover disposal of yard waste. Monterey county has a free program. Can Santa Cruz county do the same?
 - ii. Promoting FSCSCC through Felton Fire; help encourage more volunteers
- g. Susan Marx (La Selva Beach CERT)
 - i. Had audio issues, but asked for printed brochures via chat
- h. Robert Loveland (Santa Cruz Planning Dept)
 - i. Updates on Eucalyptus groves
- i. Felix (PG&E)
 - i. Overseeing contracts with Davy tree. 1000-1500 tree trimmings or removals per week. Routine wildfire prevention work (via tree management) continues.
 - ii. Call 1-800-PGE-5000 for any customer questions regarding tree removal, or any other PGE related issue