

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



Board of Directors

Mike Callaghan, Chair (16)
Chuck Bowman, Vice Chair (17)
Mike De Lasaux, Sec/Treasurer (16)
Don Gasser (17)
Jim Hamblin (17)
Jerry Sipe (16)
Shane Vargas (16)

Mission Statement:

“To reduce the loss of natural and human made resources caused by wildfire through Firewise Community programs and pre-fire activities.”

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 10, 2016 - 9:00 am.

Plumas County Planning & Building Services Conference Room
555 Main Street, Quincy, CA

1. Welcome & Introductions – Mike Callaghan
2. Review Agenda – **no changes**
3. Approve Meeting Minutes – **m-Hamblin, s-Bowman, passed.**
4. Public Comments - **none**

New Business

Nominating Committee for Election of 2017-19 Board of Directors – Mike Callaghan

The Fire Safe Council bylaws call for formation of a nominating committee at the November meeting. There are currently seven members of the Council Board - four of which are reaching the end of their two year term. Only one Board member, Jerry Sipe, has declined further nomination. Therefore, one seat is vacant. If there is greater interest, the bylaws stipulate that the Board can expand to as many as fifteen members if approved by membership. The Board exists to represent stakeholders identified in the bylaws, which state:

“The following list is for the purpose of identifying various agencies, associations, communities, private sector professions and other job descriptions, which may be drawn from for this council's Board:

Local Fire Agencies

State Agencies

Federal Agencies

Air and Water Management

Local Firewise Communities

Private Business Sector (which includes insurance and realty companies)

County Agencies

Members at Large

Homeowner Associations”

Chuck Bowman was nominated as committee Chair and the committee will report nominations at the December meeting. It was noted that a Forest Service representative should be sought for the Board.

Updates

1. Plumas County Tree Mortality Task Force –

Mike Callaghan noted that the working groups are well represented and that objectives of the IAP have been updated. Captain Shane Vargas has sent the IAP to group leaders for final review.

Unit Chief Don Gordon shared that tree mortality flight data is currently undergoing review, while agencies are looking to streamline their messaging. He expects the data to be released by the end of the month. He has observed that other county's TMTFs are starting to see a decline in participation (Butte is still active, Lassen is backing off, and Modoc is not organizing). He encourages Plumas County to stick to the mission, have clearly defined objectives, and keep moving forward. Recent precipitation has provided some drought relief as is reflected in the NOAA Drought Outlook Map:

http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/mdo_summary.php

Mike Callaghan plans to bring an update on TMTF activities to the Board of Supervisors and noted that a future Declaration of Emergency could assist in procuring *planning* funds. Jerry Sipe encouraged inclusion on the agenda to allow for BOS feedback.

Future TMTF meetings will be scheduled monthly on the same day as Fire Safe Council meetings, at 1:00pm.

2. Status of Current Grants –

Hannah Hepner reviewed the active grant spreadsheet. Of note: - The remaining planning funds for the Greenhorn CDS CWPP should be returned to the County, - Burning was completed on the C-Road narrows on Oct 24th, - Mastication at Cutler Meadows was completed the week of Oct 21st, - The Barry Creek project will require another grant modification to account for lack of biomass, - Lot assessments are underway for East Shore Lake Almanor, - Landowner agreements are going out for Hwy 70, - American Valley is in progress and landowners have been providing primarily positive feedback, and - RPF addendums for Dixie Valley and Mohawk Vista will be signed next week.

Sue McCourt asked if scattered landowners are eligible for Stevens funds. It was clarified that Stevens funds are awarded for private lands that are included in a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for projects that will benefit federal lands. The Fire Safe Council has stipulated project areas of approximately 100 acres to improve efficiency. While larger contiguous properties are preferred within these project areas, the project can be defined into several smaller target areas.

The California Fire Safe Council award for the Senior Disabled program was declined due to the need for clarification around the financial relationship regarding the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement between Plumas Corporation and the PC FSC.

3. Status of Grant Applications in Process -

Three SRA grants were submitted. Results should be announced in early December.

4. Standing Reports and Discussion

- Website - Mike Callaghan inquired as to the total amount paid for website design services. While this information was unavailable at the meeting, at the time of writing it is known that \$1710 of the contracted \$2400 was invoiced. The website still needs to be updated with missing press releases, interactive maps, and the list of archived projects.
- Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance Program - Mike McCourt still has applications trickling in. He recently attended a HOA meeting for Red Clover subdivision. High Sierra Fire, the program's contractor, has purchased a chipper, which should help with disposal issues. At the conclusion of this season Mr. McCourt provided Captain Vargas with a list of all treated properties - which subsequently passed 4291 inspections - confirming validity of the service provided through the Senior Disabled program. Chief Gordon shared our model with Lassen Fire Safe Council and they are interested in more information. Mike Callaghan noted that this program was a long-term investment and we should expect a chipping program to require the same wherewithal.
- Feather River Stewardship Coalition - Hannah announced that the next meeting will be held December 1st at 9:30am.
- CAL FIRE – Captain Vargas summarized that 3,000 property inspections were completed this year in Plumas County, with 750 needing additional work. By the conclusion of the season, all but 60 properties were in compliance. He felt that the inspections were well received this year. In the past three years about 90% of the county has received an inspection.

Chief Sean Delacour said crews have been working on the Peninsula and will shortly be assisting Greenhorn with their burn pile. There are several Fire Safe Council projects the crews can be used for, once CEQA/NEPA approved, including East Shore Lake Almanor (259) and Gold Mountain (281). Mike De Lasaux proposed that a priority list be created for utilizing crews. Chief Delacour is uncertain if funding will be available next year and would like to act on projects that are ready. Mr. De Lasaux additionally suggested that coordination is needed with landowners and that the Council could request county-wide coordination funds for SRA implementation. Chief Delacour noted that Butte's system of a Board member directing Cal Fire crews worked well.

Chief Don Gordon – Honey Lake Power has been awarded a subsidy which, in the contract language, stipulates transition to utilization of Tier 1 High Fire Hazard Severity Zone material. In five years the facility will require 80% to come from these zones. This information should be used to inform the Council's project planning. Additionally, Honey Lake Power will be closing for maintenance and are uncertain when they will resume operations.

At a recent Unit Chief Meeting, Chief Gordon was proud to share the success of Plumas County's numerous Firewise communities. These types of organizations will continue to gain importance – for example with securing homeowners insurance. One of the insurance rating companies has issued a tool for assessing risk that fails to take into

account fuels reduction work that has been undertaken locally. It has engaged state-wide conversation and the State Commissioner of Insurance is aware of the issue. The Senior Disabled program and Graeagle Firewise have directly resulted in homeowners retaining their insurance.

Sue McCourt mentioned that there is currently a link to a webinar on the Plumas Fire Safe Council homepage titled “Understanding Insurance in the Wildland Urban Interface.”

USAA insurance company gives a 10% discount for being within a Firewise Community. Cary Curtis was identified by USAA as a Firewise leader and issued a survey to assess her impression of Firewise effectiveness.

- USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction – Ryan Tompkins anticipates that the Bucks Land Tenure Agreement will be finalized this month. Across PNF there are multiple stewardship timber sales in progress utilizing forest health authority. Additionally, they are taking advantage of the burn season.
- Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District – Julie Ruiz noted that burning ceases in American and Thompson Valleys after Nov 15th. There will be no extension because of the early ban lift this year.
- Firewise Communities – John Reynolds from Grizzly Ranch reported that the majority of seasonal residents have left and there is no Firewise activity.

Cary Curtis from Gold Mountain said that Sara Jones is finishing a project to treat about 20 acres of critical landowner property in the community. The Firewise committee is starting to plan for 2017 and expect to have all areas treated by the end of next year.

Chuck Bowman of Graeagle Firewise reported that 80 trees have been removed, but 20 new trees have been identified for removal in the last month. The mortality is apparent from drone footage, but not from the ground. The community’s Firewise Day included planting of trees in an area affected by a house fire. Additionally, a 50 acre thinning project is in the works.

Sue McCourt from Sloat-Cromberg-Camp Layman Firewise group said they will have a Firewise meeting in December. Action items have been identified. They will need to conduct their Firewise Day before submitting for recognition. Mrs. McCourt attended the C-Road CSD meeting where there was a lot of talk about fire, they did not have time at this meeting to talk about the details of how to become a recognized Firewise Community. It will be an agenda item for them in January.

Lake Almanor Firewise groups are working with Cal Fire on projects.

5. Other Updates & Upcoming Events

Feather River Stewardship Coalition Meeting Dec 1st 9:30am

Plumas County Tree Mortality Task Force Meeting Dec 8th 1:00pm

Adjourned - Next meeting December 8th, 2016