



San Luis Obispo County Fire Safe Council

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**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 21, 2022
0900-1130 hours**

Meeting held at San Luis Obispo Veteran’s Hall with Zoom

BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Debbie Arnold – Co. Board of Supervisors	Russ Johnson – Lake Naci Focus Group
Ed Waage – Citizen at Large	Tom Wright – Citizen at Large
Royce Larsen – UC Cooperative Extension	Bob Neumann – Second Supervisorial District
David Van Son – Atascadero FD Focus Group	David Pierson – Cambria Focus Group
Dan Dulitz – Fifth Supervisorial District	Steve Negro – First Supervisorial District
Skip Dyke – Range Improvement Assoc	Turko Semmes – Building Industry
Jeff Jones – Citizen at Large	Carissa Zaragoza – Air Pollution Control Dist
Scott Johnson – Citizen at Large	Chris Dicus – Cal Poly State University
Martin Scott – Ranchita Estates Focus Group	John Owens - San Luis Obispo County Fire
Chad Pankey – Citizen at Large	Emily Miggins – Los Osos Focus Group
Dan Ponti – Farm Bureau	James Blattler – City of San Luis Obispo

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Scott Hallett – Paso Robles Focus Group	Stacy Korsgaden – Insurance Industry
Dena Paschke – Fire Prev Officers Assoc	Bill Cochran – Cattlemen’s Association
Jeanie Hanson – ECO SLO	Tom Peterson – County Fire Chiefs
Chris Slate – Third Supervisorial District	Spencer Gordon – Resource Conserv Dist
Ruben Brand – PG&E	

FOCUS GROUP and EX-OFICIO REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE:

Baxter Boyington – Toro Creek Focus Group

STAFF PRESENT:

Dan Turner – Executive Director	Loree McRoberts – CAL FIRE
David Erickson – CAL FIRE	Jon Gee – CAL FIRE
Jason Potts – CAL FIRE	Greg Alex – SLO FSC Webmaster

GUESTS:

Adan Orozco – CAL FIRE	Tom Swanson – CAL FIRE
Oscar Villanueva – CAL FIRE	Brandon Sanderson – CAL FIRE
Ryan Trapp – SLO County OES	Scott Milner – SLO County OES
Toni Davis – CAL FIRE	

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Debbie Arnold at 9:10 a.m. followed by introduction of directors, staff, focus groups and guests. President Arnold will be leaving the meeting at 10:30 a.m. and Dan Dulitz will assume responsibilities.

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

We invited the scholarship recipients to attend our meeting to introduce themselves and inform us on the impact the award will have on helping them reach their educational goals. Unfortunately, they started school September 19 and had classes scheduled during our meeting times. Many of the recipients submitted thank you letters in their absence. The following scholarships were awarded:

- Thomas Elliott - \$2,500 award
- Carlos Rosas Hernandez - \$2,500 award
- Heath Hooper - \$2,500 award
- Matthew Crockett - \$1,500 award
- Sophie Kroesche - \$2,500 award
- Samuel Ericksen - \$1,000 award
- Connor Schuda - \$2,500 award

CONSENT AGENDA

- July 2022 Board of Directors meeting minutes were presented.
- August 2022 Executive Committee meeting minutes were presented.
- 2022 Active Grant Financial Summary was presented.
- 2022 Active Grant/Contract Project Status was presented.
- Abbreviated Bank Statement ending August 31, 2022 was presented.
- Contract Summary graph ending August 31, 2022 was presented.
- 2022 Fire Safe Operations account ending August 31, 2022 was presented.
 - A motion was made to issue a check to Paso Robles Emergency Services for \$239. Those funds have been in our account for several years for use by the now retired Fire Safe Trailer. Since Paso Robles Emergency Services has purchased a new trailer, it was thought they should have those funds.
- IRS letter dated August 2022 stating they need more time to review the 2019 tax return was presented.

It was moved, seconded, and approved to approve the July 2022 Board of Directors meeting minutes and accept for review the August 2022 Executive Committee minutes. It was also approved to accept all consent agenda items as presented: Waage Second: Semmes

It was moved, seconded, and approved to issue a check in the amount of \$239 to Paso Robles Emergency Services to use on their interactive Fire Safety Trailer utilized by all jurisdictions in the County: Waage Second: Semmes

PRESENTATIONS

Chief Heather McCulley from the State Fire Marshal's Office and Oscar Villanueva from CAL FIRE/SLU presented the new defensible space rules that take effect January 1, 2023. The new rule designates 0 to 5 feet from the house as the "Ember Zone". This area can't contain anything that could catch fire. Things people store up against their homes such as firewood and lawn furniture need to be moved at least five feet away. This also includes landscaping items such as mulch and plants.

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Home inspections for defensible space compliance regarding real estate transactions was also discussed. The only role that CAL FIRE plays in the process is performing the inspections. The Department of Real Estate initiated the legislation (AB38) that went into effect July 1, 2021. The seller or seller's agent must request the inspection and have someone present during the visit. The inspection is a pass/fail and the details are worked out between the buyer and seller to ensure the property fits into the guidelines set forth either at time of sale or within one year of escrow closing. These inspections have nothing to do with insurance. The insurance industry has their own guidelines and can set standards above and beyond what CAL FIRE inspects for.

Perimeter Solutions was scheduled to speak but their representative has recently left the company. The company would like to perform public outreach on roadside treatments that could benefit SLO County. This has been a long-time process in dealing with Cal Trans that has not seen any highway shoulders treated in this county but in others. San Luis Obispo County Public Works has allowed application on some County roads with great success.

ROUNDTABLE

The following focus group reports were given:

- Cambria
 - There will be a scarecrow of Fisci Fire Fox at this years Scarecrow Festival.
 - The Cambria Elementary School will have Fisci and activity book presentations during Fire Prevention Week.
 - Poster contests with Cambria schools to promote fire prevention with winners having their posters displayed in the Fire Safe message boards.
- Toro Creek
 - Three fire prevention signs have been installed on Toro Creek Road.
 - Their focus group meetings had 22 attendees in July and 18 in September.
 - A second evacuation route has always been wanted. PG&E has access road property and are willing to speak with property owners.
 - Topic of discussion at their meetings is private property hazardous fuel reduction and if they can get assistance from any local groups. CEQA does not apply to private crews hired by private property owners.
- Los Osos
 - It has been challenging to get the varied age groups of the interested citizens to agree on a meeting time/place. Zoom is being considered.
 - They would like to focus on defensible space around homes.
- SLO City
 - Chief Aggson is retiring in November.
 - Ready, Set, Go grant was awarded to them, and they plan on utilizing it for SLO Creek hazardous fuel reduction.
 - There are 3 town hall meetings scheduled for Ready, Set, Go in September. See SLOCity.org/wildfire for dates, times, and locations.
- Lake Nacimiento
 - The recent fire in Running Deer was stopped by the recent work the Great Tree Tenders had performed.

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- They are using an app called Slick Text. It immediately sends emergency information via text message.
- The County of San Luis Obispo's Emergency Services department is continuing to update Zonehaven. They are working with Dave Fowler and Brooke Johnson defining areas better.
- John Owens, Acting Unit Chief for SLU, updated the group on the headquarters having to move to the South Bay Training Center due to a flood at the Laurel Lane office. Not sure how long the temporary location will be utilized. Chief Moore has left SLU and that position is being advertised with an expected fill time of 60-90 days out.
 - Local fire statistics this fire season
 - 184 wildfires, 700 acres burned – weather, staffing, aircraft, and fire breaks have all contributed to the low season numbers
 - Peak staffing has been requested to 12/31/22 based on weather forecast
- PG&E has contracted with private fire response crews to protect their assets. They also have their own fire engines.
- Chris Slate, Board Member, has been in the hospital for quite a while. He has been weaned off the ventilator and will be coming home soon.

FIRE SAFE COUNCIL BUSINESS

- A letter was submitted to the Governor to oppose unless amended in regard to AB1717. This bill would require the paying of prevailing wage for fire prevention grant projects. The bill has passed the Senate Appropriations Committee. The bill would be effective 1/1/24 and 1/1/25 for non-profits.
- New Fire Safe Focus Groups are forming in Avila Valley and Huasna Valley. Huasna Valley is asking for formal recognition and are currently working on chipping and a wildfire pre plan map. The recommendation was made to invite them to the next Board of Director's meeting for introduction and vote.
- Succession planning needs to happen. Please invite people to come to our meetings and consider becoming involved in making their communities fire safe.
- New grant projects need to be submitted as soon as possible.

NEW BUSINESS

- Fire Safe Focus Group Guide
 - A formation and operations guide could be funded by the County Coordinator grant.
 - One of the duties of the 1st Vice President (Dan Dulitz) is to assist focus groups. Baxter Boyington, Emily Miggins, and David Pierson have volunteered to work on this.
 - There is also funding available to hire a focus group coordinator.
- SLO Land Conservancy would like to become more involved and possibly hold a seat on the Board. Discussion found most members asking that groups interested in holding board seats attend meetings on a regular basis before being able to be formally considered for a board seat.

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NEW GRANTS

CAL FIRE/SLU Unit Direct Award Program

- Awaiting contract for Long Canyon-Huasna-Suey Creek VMP
- Potentially up to \$600,000 available for FY 21-22

US Fish and Wildlife / SLO Land Conservancy Proposal

- Oceano Dunes Lakes project is private lane with SLO Land Conservancy easement. They would like a prescribed fire for WUI and to restore wetlands/lakes. This project is still in discussion.

Additional funding in the Governor's Proposed 22-23 Budget

- Grant application period opening soon
- SLO County Parks wants to partner on systemwide parks wildfire plan
- SLO Land Conservancy considering their countywide properties for wildfire plan

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Covell project tour – was considering October meeting but should be postponed until May

NEXT MEETINGS

Executive Committee Meeting

- Wednesday, October 19, 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- Location: TBD

Board of Directors Meeting

- Wednesday, November 16, 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- Location: TBA

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Dan Dulitz adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Loree McRoberts

Recording Secretary