

Firewise Council of Southwest Colorado Bi-Monthly Meeting

Educational In-Service

Tuesday, Sept 23, 2008

Location: La Plata Electric Board Room in BoDo Park, 45 Stewart Street

Minutes of the Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 4:30

Present were:

Bob Koenig (Mesa Vista Estates), John Van Schaik (Deer Valley), Craig Goodell (San Juan Public Lands), Jigger Staby (Shenandoah HOA), Ben Cordova (LPEA), Jack Cannon (Enchanted Forest), Dave Abercrombie (DFRA), J.T. Coyne (Vista De Oro), Mike Kane (Fire Ready), Chris Judson (Wilderness Lake), Linda Walters (Elk Stream Ranch), (Philip Walters (Elk Stream Ranch), Cherry Miloe (Forest Lakes), Kent Grant (Col. State Forest Service), Marsha Porter-Norton (Firewise Neighborhood Ambassador Program Coordinator), Joy Mathis (Tripp Ck), Odin Christensen (Elk Stream Ranch), Julie Oskard, Dave Welz (Fire Ready), Michael Stowers (Durango Fire and Rescue), Les Cole (Deer Valley Estates), Kevin Heiner (Southwest Conservation Corps), Susan Bryson (SJMA) Patricia Haupt (Durango Ridge Ranch)

Introduction of New Firewise Council Program Coordinator:

Pam Wilson was announced as the new Firewise Council Program Coordinator. Pam will be replacing Marsha Porter-Norton. Pam has spent 28 years with the US Forest Service during which she has had many roles including Public Information Officer and Public Affairs Specialist. Among her many responsibilities Pam has

- Developed and produced publications
- Been responsible for media relations
- Prepared news releases, articles, news letters, and oral communications
- Been responsible for special event planning
- Much more

Pam has been a member of Firewise since its inception and we are excited about all the experience and enthusiasm Pam will bring to Firewise.

Everyone applauded Marsha's leadership as Coordinator and leading member of Firewise from its beginning. She will be missed and we hope she and John enjoy their stay at Red Cliffs Lodge which Susan Bryson presented Marsha at this meeting.

Introduction of Kevin Heiner:

Kevin Heiner, Program Director, Southwest Conservation Corps was introduced as a new member of the Steering Committee. Kevin replaces Harry Bruell who was President of Firewise for several years while Executive Director of Southwest Conservation Corps.

Fire mitigation costs:

Mike Kane of Fire Ready described an incident of a fire mitigation company making an extreme mitigation cost estimate. Mike cautioned everyone to get several estimates and confirm that the companies in question are insured and are covered by Workers Comp.

Property signage and addressing:

Michael Stowers, Durango Fire and Rescue Battalion Chief, discussed possible future addressing and signage for the County. This could be similar to a plan to standardize signs in Delta County. Standardization would help emergency personnel locate a property. Michael has offered to give Firewise a detailed presentation at a future meeting.

Mini-Grants:

Marsha reviewed the funding and purpose of the Ambassador mini-grants. J.T. Coyne applied for and received a \$1100 grant for his subdivision Vista De Oro. The purpose is to finish preparation of a CWPP, have the Fire Department appraise risks and map property lines.

Budget:

Marsha reviewed the finances. The 2009 draft budget was handed out and is \$35,700. Everyone was encouraged to provide input, if they have it. A CSFS Grant of \$25,000 and a BLM grant of \$17,500 are the principle income components. However, some money is still needed to send people to Tampa and for an updated Web site. In-kinds funds (non-cash) are calculated for the Firewise Council. Even without all the volunteers' submitting their hours yet this year, the program has garnered \$20,952 in "in-kind" funds (room donations, volunteer hours, donations, etc.) The Steering Committee will meet to approve the 2009 budget before year end. Marsha also gave a report on 2008 finances. Grants, along with program sponsorships, a donation from Exxon and a donation from the Durango Fire and Rescue Authority have helped the Council meet its budget this year.

National Firewise meeting, Tampa Fla.:

J.T. Coyne described his up-coming visit with Pam Wilson to Tampa Fla. The purpose of the visit is to exchange and discuss information and program concepts from Firewise organizations around the nation. J.T. and Pam will give a presentation describing our Ambassador program. J.T. gave a preliminary overview of the PowerPoint slides and text he and Pam will be using.

Elk Stream Ranch CWPP:

Philip Walters summarized his experience developing the Elk Stream Ranch CWPP which was approved last month. Among his recommendations Philip stressed:

- *First make sure you get HOA members consensus concerning wants and needs*
- *Tie into the county CWPP*
- *Bring in neighboring land agencies and local Fire departments to develop a team*
- *Determine values at risk, (lives, homes, scenery, etc.)*
- *Consider access, signage, slope risk etc*
- *Consider preparing a map to illustrate these risks*
- *Develop and short (several pages) plan document and include the detail in separate appendixes.*
- *Communicate subdivision mitigation/road needs and get homeowners to accept cost share.*
- *Worked with Kent Grant (State Forest) and Craig Goodell (BLM/ National Forest) on formal issues concerning State and Federal lands.*
- *The process will require several iterations ; Elk Stream Ranch took two years to complete*
- *The Elk Stream CWPP is posted at <http://www.eastcanyonservices.com/cwpp.htm> Click on the "Elk Stream Community Wildfire Protection Plan" link*

House Bill 1110 update:

Bob Koenig reviewed state Bill 1110 which was signed by the Governor 5/28/08. The Bill was designed to provide a tax deduction incentive to mitigate property. Unfortunately a \$100 expenditure would result in only a \$2 State tax saving, and that would require a Federal taxable income over \$60,000. At the maximum, if \$5000 is spent to get a \$2500 deduction, the result would be only a \$116 State tax saving even if Federal taxable income exceeds \$100,000.

Committee Effectiveness:

Due to time limitations this discussion was deferred to the next meeting. Bob Koenig suggested committee effectiveness could be enhanced if each committee selected a spokesperson to give a brief summary of the committee activities and ideas at Steering Committee meetings. The purpose would be to enhance communication. Bob requested that at the next general meeting (Nov. 18th) all aspects of the committee structure should be discussed. There are four committees as shown below.

Committee Members are:

<u>Education:</u>	<u>Mitigation</u>	<u>Ambassador</u>	<u>Executive</u>
J.T. Coyne	Jack Cannon	Jigger Staby	Marsha Porter-Norton
Benny Cordova	Cherry Miloe	Marsha Porter-Norton	Susan Bryson (ex officio)
John Van Schaik	Anne Schrier	Bob Koenig	Les Kole
Joy Mathis	Archie Hanson	Jack Cannon	J.D. Burke
J.D. Burke	Mike Kane		
Lezlie Melton			

.Inservice, Dr. Sam Burns:

Dr Sam Burns of Fort Lewis College reviewed his experiences in studying CWPPs nationwide.

This was a very informative presentation and we encourage anyone interesting in pursuing a CWPP to contact Dr. Burns. National research over many states shows that there are dozens of kinds of CWPPs. Dr. Burns has looked at over 40 CWPPs nationwide. The intent is to bring the homeowners and federal people together. Some state Forest services are more stringent than others.

Actually there are only three requirements. All of this is described in detail by Dr. Burns' handouts. The information provided by Dr. Burns is too much to describe here. However anyone interested in the CWPP process is encouraged to contact Dr. Burns. The handouts can be obtained by contacting Dr Burns at burns s@fortlewis.edu. Or myself (R.L. Koenig, Vivendaalta@frontier.net).

Next Meeting:

The next bi-monthly meeting will be Nov. 18th at 4:30 **at the Public Lands Center, 15 Burnett Court, home of the San Juan Mountains Association.** (Note: One week earlier than usual due to Thanksgiving)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45

Bob Koenig
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