



**Wildfire Prevention Assessment District Citizens'  
Advisory Committee Meeting  
Thursday, February 16, 2012 7:00 p.m.**

Richard C. Trudeau Center ~ 11500 Skyline Boulevard Oakland, CA  
(Wheel Chair Accessible)

*David Kessler, Chair, Bob Sieben, Vice Chair; Don Mitchell, Financial Liaison; Doug Wong, Chris Candell;  
Dee McDonough, Dinah Benson, Diane Hill, Sean Walsh*

**Present:** D. Kessler, B. Sieben, D. Mitchell, D. Wong, C. Candell, D. McDonough, D. Benson, D. Hill  
**Absent:** S. Walsh      **Staff:** AFM L. Griffin, P. Feng, Y. Altez

## DRAFT MINUTES February 16, 2012

### Call to Order 7 pm

#### 1. Roll Call & Determination of Quorum

#### 2. Open Public Forum

Ken Benson spoke about the performance Audit – It has not been scheduled or staffed. He has solicited Barry Pilger and had conversation with City Auditor, Courtney Ruby in December. Due to cut backs in her department, it has not been scheduled. K. Benson is hopeful that it will start in May; he'll return next month with an update.

Barbara Goldenberg representing Friends of Montclair Park – Reported recent broom chopping and removal that was led by Wendy Tokuda the previous weekend. B. Goldenberg saw a huge pile of brush and asked if the chipping service can be used as other park settings in the past have done so. The concern was that the broom doesn't remain and seed. D. Mitchell suggested that Public Works removes it. AFM L. Griffin will get contractors there.

Gordon Piper, resident and volunteer coordinator – approached fire staff and Caltrans to work on maintenance to remove flammable vegetation around Highway 24. Years ago, there was discussion with Caltrans to get vegetation removed from the hillside. Pampas grass, French and Spanish broom are in the Highway 24 corridor. G. Piper is not satisfied with the state of CalTrans and City property. There are 400 volunteers looking for projects. He suggests that the Fire Department files encroachment paperwork. CalTrans is willing to work every six months with the volunteers but he's seeing no progress. The importance of conducting work this year is to make improvements before 2013 and the 4<sup>th</sup> bore landscaping mitigation.

G. Piper asked the committee if recommendations are being made to address issues in regards to inspections. He would like to see statistics and know what the problems are in North Oakland.

Doug Wong – spoke about engine companies and people implementing the program. It's moving along and needing some tweaks that will be OK'd by AFM L. Griffin and Deputy Chief J. Williams. AFM L. Griffin explained the dependence on engine companies for vegetation inspections. Some of the discovered issues are personnel and cannot be discussed.

There was discussion about a chart that was used in the past. AFM's is expecting his Annual Report will go to Public Safety Committee in March; the draft was just completed. Once it's done, WPAD committee members can approve the accomplishments, goals, the improvement projects for next year, identify any deficiencies, and how they will be improved. There was agreement that everyone sees a house and the surrounding property differently. Massive amounts of data is being shifted into a new data base. When doing this, it can skew information so that new searches and queries need to be made. The new data base is being tweaked so that there are no holes when it's used as a tracking tool for the district.

### 3. Approval of Minutes January 19, 2012 Meetings

Minutes approved as amended

### 4. Financial Report & Budget Adjustments

#### Monthly Financial Update – FY 2011-12 P. Feng

There was clarification from February 16<sup>th</sup> 2012 discussion regarding a \$29,000 adjustment. The funds were received after June 30, 2011 for parcel property tax and \$2,100 for delinquent payments.

Financial reports are on the WPAD website – [www.OaklandWPD.org](http://www.OaklandWPD.org)

### 5. Education/Outreach & Sub Committee Reports:

- WPAD DVD Networking – Fire Safety Education Coordinator was awarded by the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce as the Ambassador of the year and invited to the Chamber’s board meeting. This is an excellent opportunity to gain support for corporate members of the chamber to partner with WPAD by donating to OFD’s 501c3 and helping to make copies of the new DVD for distribution. The advantage for supporters is to have their logo on the DVD and/or packaging that would be delivered to the 22,000+ residents in the hills. The article from the Business Review Newspaper that also summarized the benefits of the WPAD was distributed.
- Orientation - D. McDonough had been out of town
- Annual Notice & Outreach Materials
- Calendar Post Card – B. Sieben is working on his suggestion to change from calendar format to four seasons or Wet and Dry Seasons. He will submit his updates to AFM L. Griffin. After input from the Education/Outreach Ad Hoc and staff’s approval, it will be shared with the committee. Discussion led to eliminating months and using wet/dry seasons. Also, part of the postcard could include emergency information and promote the chipping program. AFM L. Griffin reminded the group that the language developed for WPAD within the ordinance cannot be changed. It was recommended to check the Firewise website for their postings about “*Firewise for All Seasons.*” The WPAD Chair encouraged using money, if available, for additional mailers.

There were no other Ad Hoc committee updates.

### 6. Staff Report – AFM L. Griffin

- 2010-2011 Annual Report

The report generated to City Council will cover last year and next year’s plan; the committee chair was given a copy. AFM L. Griffin will use photos which are more visual and reflects what we have accomplished. It will be available to each committee member to review and provide comments. It’s scheduled to be ready next week on Wed.

Update – at the last meeting, 39 properties were identified for priority for abatement. These properties were posted with a flyer that gave a chronological perspective. The enforcement has been thorough and is why the language of the annual notice is very important. There is a Request For Proposal for a plant management fuels specialist - capabilities of potential contactor went out last week for Garber Park, Shepherd Canyon, and Beaconsfield. Walk-through in each individual area is presently being conducted. This ensures that they have the experience and education to design and protect native species. It’s designated to be a two-year project. One group of individuals is working the site area. The botanist or plant specialist will control the contractors and make sure that seasonally, we’re doing work in a timely manner. Proposals for the three separate contracts are due Feb.21<sup>st</sup>.

AFM reported that a fire study was done for Shepherd Canyon and Skyline. We’ll file CEQA and after a review by the Planning Department, the project will start.

- **Chabot Space and Science Center** – there was a meeting to start moving forward. There was confusion regarding pallid manzanita and approval by City Council. The EIR that was written in the 1980's needed to be reviewed. Hopefully, we can implement what was in the plan - \$170k. Prior to the work being done, there is concern about bird nesting. It's a two-year project. We will pursue the smaller trees that cast shadows over the manzanitas to help open the canopy. The pallids are dying because they are shadowed by the larger trees. The work is scheduled to start in March. AFM L. Griffin discussed wanting to target trees where the fire study shows the highest risk; it's based on vegetation type, location, and close proximity to structures.
- **FEMA Grant** – A Montclair group met with Fish and Wildlife, the next meeting was scheduled. There's a teleconference on Wed. and meeting with East Bay Regional Parks and Berkeley; it's moving very quickly, Once the document is done by June or sooner and approved by lawyers, it will be put out for public comment with a thirty day window and then the project will begin.

A discussion followed - AFM L. Griffin noted that contractors need a minimum of \$1m liability in case any damage is done by them. OFD staff does a final site assessment before the work is finished.

Example of Pinehaven - the owner has not responded, we need a timeline for inspection dates with a detailed process and using GPS, latitude/longitude, photos, explanation of location of the tree that needs to be limbed up. Other discussion followed about the lack of rain this year may cause a higher fire danger. Dollars will be saved because OFD is controlling enforcement within WPAD. There are no other fees for clearing properties other than administrative fees. It was felt the City Attorney and Fire Chief's opinion would be helpful in this matter.

Agendized for next month; March 15<sup>th</sup>, approval of 2012-2013 Budget.

The budget will reflect proposed changes:

- Chipping Program - \$90k to \$100K
- Vegetation Management - \$1m to \$1.2
- Support Services for Inspection Program - \$35k to \$65k

It was recommended \$65-\$90,000 be allocated for public information electronic signs that have up-to-date accurate information.

## 7. Pending List of Future Agenda Items:

- Creating a fire safe landscape that looks good – Bob Sieben

## 8. Other Business & Announcements

North Hills – meeting is Thurs., March 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 Hiller Highland Drive. Focus is on the non-ignition zone and part of the inspection zone, Carol Rice will speak about plants, Cheryl Miller will speak about mulch/landscaping, AFM L. Griffin will be present, and B. Goldenberg who attended a Fire safe conference. Mike Dobson will be paid to videotape, not to exceed \$100 so it becomes backup info to share as educational materials. The agenda for the North Hills May meeting has not been set. D. Kessler, Chair of North Hills suggested addressing issues that G. Piper discussed regarding the 4<sup>th</sup> bore and the 4<sup>th</sup> bore Coalitions; they will help with planting on the project. G. Piper was asked to prioritize parcels in that area.

Diablo Fire Safe – Alameda County Community Wildfire Protection Plan – meeting was announced for Wed. Feb. 22nd 11:30 AM – 1 PM at Trudeau.

**Adjournment 8:50 PM**

***Next Meeting March 15, 2012 – 7 PM***

Note: Type in blue underline indicates a link to a report attachment available at [www.Oaklandnet.com/WildfirePrevention](http://www.Oaklandnet.com/WildfirePrevention)