



Wildfire Prevention Assessment District  
Citizen's Advisory Committee

Draft Meeting Minutes for  
Thursday, October 20, 2016 @ 7:00 pm



Trudeau Center, 11500 Skyline Blvd, Oakland CA (Wheel Chair Accessible)

**Committee Members Present:**

Sue Piper, Chair: (District 1)  
Martin Matarrese, Vice Chair: (District 7)  
Doug Wong: (At Large)  
Lin Barron, (District 4)  
Steve Hanson (District 1)  
Mike Petouhoff (District 4)  
Glen Dahlbacka (District 6)

**Staff Present:**

Miguel Trujillo, OFD Fire Marshal  
Anette Boulware, OFD Program Analyst  
Teresa DeLoach Reed, OFD Chief  
Olga Bolotina, District 1 Council Aide & Community Liaison  
Iowayna Pena, District 4 Policy Analyst & Community Liaison

**Absent:**

Nayeli Maxson, District 4 Council Aide & Community Liaison

**Meeting called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Chair Sue Piper**

**Thanks to all who attended the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Firestorm Ceremony**

**1. Approval of draft minutes for August 18, 2016 and September 15, 2016 WPAD meetings**

**Motion:** to approve the **August 18<sup>th</sup> minutes**- Chair Sue Piper

The Board: **Move acceptance**- Glen Dahlbacka / **Second**- Lin Barron / **Pass**- all in favor of accepting the updated August 18, 2016 minutes.

**Motion:** to approve the **September 15<sup>th</sup> minutes**- Chair Sue Piper

The Board: **Move acceptance** - Lin Barron / **Second**- Steve Hanson/**Pass**- all in favor of accepting the updated September 15, 2016 minutes.

**MIKE PETOUHOFF requested a change on page 5 of 7, please add to the section that references his questions "Mike Petouhoff asked Fire Marshal Trujillo if he had read the report and taken those recommendations to the GIS staff and Fire Marshal responded that he had not" (Place this sentence after the question mark & before the other sentence). Minutes Approved with this change.**

2. **Open Public Forum** (Speakers must fill out a speaker card for Open Forum or for a specific agenda item. Comments limited to three minutes)

- **Dinah Benson**- advised that it is important hold a specific hearing to take formal testimony both oral & written of what has occurred over the past 13 years. **Chair Sue Piper** – responded maybe this should be held in a separate forum outside of the meeting. Asked the WPAD members if they will come up with a game plan for this to happen in February- Mike Petouhoff, Lin Barron & Chair Sue Piper volunteered to spearhead this.

- **Chair Sue Piper** announced a new representative from Annie Campbell- Washington's office. **lowayna Pena** officially joined Annie's office in September 2016 and is assigned to the Hills area all the way down to the Dimond district.

3. **REVIEW of Financials**

- a. As of September 1, 2016
- b. As of October 1, 2016

**Motion:** to approve Financials;

The board denied the approval of the minutes until the proper adjustments can be made by accounting.

- **Chair Sue Piper** commented the September report had to be adjusted to correct the inaccuracies, there are missing updates and the financials cannot be approved until these adjustments are made.
- **Lin Baron** commented that on the October report there are also inaccuracies listed and it needs to change.
  - **Lin Baron and Chair Sue Piper** also suggested that the \$500,000 be tracked on this report and wants a note to be added, possibly note #7 with a notation that tracks it from the previous budget. Note # 1 should also be corrected because it should be \$90,000.

**Chair Sue Piper recapped the changes and advised they are looking for these updates;**

- 1) \$20,000 should be matching in all the categories as you go across the spreadsheet;
- 2) Whatever is left over (the \$70, 231) should be folded into the Vegetation Management Plan Category;
- 3) Add a note #7 to track the money from the previous district that isn't on the active budget but is being used for the Vegetation Management plan. Need to note that \$500,000 from the previous Wildfire District is for the Vegetation Management Plan.

- c. **QUESTION For Action:** Approve reallocation of \$429,109 from FEMA Grant Reserves
  1. Reallocate to the Vegetation Management Grant Reserves, or
  2. Reallocate to funding Goat Grazing Contract for 2017-2018

Board discussion on how to allocate the funds with the suggestion of splitting the funds cover 3 different project areas; Goat Grazing, GIS and Vegetation Management Plan.

**MOTION:** Chair Sue Piper –to proceed with reallocation the FEMA money to Vegetation management plan program. Recommend to the Fire Department that they use \$500,000 from general fund for goat grazing and GIS and the remaining funds go to vegetation management.  
**Second-** Lin Barron /**Pass-** all in favor of accepting the motion / **Martin Matarrese- Abstained**

**4. Vegetation Management Statistics: Anette Boulware Program Analyst II presented the report.**

- a. Status of inspections of public properties
- b. Goat Grazing
- c. Road side clearance
- d. Residential Property Inspections

**Board members requested to discuss at the next meeting** out of the approximately 300 miles of “public access roadway in the WPAD area section of the report”, can you provide more of an explanation of why are we not clearing more of this area, i.e. 74.23 miles was cleared but there is 300 what about the rest?

**Questions to answer at the next meeting;**

- 1) Out of this total amount (300 miles) how much will not be cleared due to no access/ land lock?
  - 2) Of the 300 miles is it 150 on each side of road or total of 300 miles overall?
- **LIN BARON** questioned the variance in amount of debris contracts vs. what is listed on the financial report, there is a difference of \$20,000.
  - **CAROLYN BURGESS**-questioned what is the follow up on missed properties with debris removal projects? Fire Marshal Trujillo and Anette Boulware provided an explanation of the process.
  - **GORDON PIPER**- inquired of Vice Chair Martin Mattarrese who will maintain the open spaces? Vice Chair Martin Mattarrese advised that he take that inquiry up with the Director of Public Works Brook Levin.
  - **CHAIR SUE PIPER** –questioned that out of the City lots what is causing them to stay in a non-compliant status (130 of them as of October 2016)?

**Board Discussion** on elements of the statistical report that should be considered to broaden the scope of what is being reported.

**5. Vegetation Management Report**

**Fire Marshal Miguel Trujillo read the printed report.**

- a. **Update on Caltrans Clearance Along 24/13/580& EBRP tree removal at Lake Temescal**
- b. **Update on status of hauling contract for Chabot Space & Science Center project (\$216,000)** - Chief of Staff Angela Robinson-Piñon gave updated information. Bids have been received from 2 firms; Davey and West Coast Arborist. The decision has been made to move forward with Davey and she is working to finalize some details so the project can move forward. Davey has an on-call Biologist who will be monitoring the tree removal activities. The goal is to have the administrative work done as quickly as possible and the project is anticipated to take a few weeks to complete.

c. **Status of Vegetation Management Plan Progress and Work Schedule-** Chief of Staff Angela Robinson Piñon gave an overview via power point presentation of the Scope of work that is being reviewed by the City Attorney's office. Anticipated project goal is within 18 – 24 months.

- **LIN BARON-** suggested that the 416 City Properties that are on our matrix chart be included in the properties listed in the plan.

d. **Procedures for protected species-** Fire Marshal Miguel Trujillo advised that we are continuing our work on this and the newest component is putting together an RFQ for an on-call Biologist. **Lin Baron-** posed a question whether the property owner is responsible for clearing areas in neighborhoods that do not have sidewalks.

**Chair Sue Piper** clarified that if there is no sidewalk and no easement, it is responsibility of the private property owner to clear. **Fire Marshal Miguel Trujillo** confirmed that this is correct.

e. **Progress on implementing GIS systems for vegetation management-** Prototype presentation given by Division Manager of Information Technology for the City of Oakland Ahsan Baig. Board members to provide their feedback once they have had a chance to test the product.

- **Chair Sue Piper** questioned how will they know which ones are City Properties will it be color coded? Ahsan responded YES.

- **AHSAN BAIG TO DO-** send web link to Anette Boulware Program Analyst to forward to WPAD members.

- **Vice Chair Martin Mattarrese** questioned if roadside clearance information can be added. **AHSAN BAIG advised that he would have to find out where that information is stored, he will have to research this.**

- **Mike Petouhoff – offered to send to Ahsan Baig a GIS report that was produced approximately 10 years ago that has information that may be helpful to this project.**

- **Chair Sue Piper** questioned how is this being funded? What is the cost associated with this? **Fire Chief Reed-** responded that we are working to identifying funding sources, including the possibility of left over resources going towards this project.

f. **City of Oakland Contract Compliance Requirements and Vegetation Management Contracts**

- **Chair Sue Piper** advised they would like to see this done by January 2017. **Fire Chief Reed** responded, we are looking at overall costs to prepare our budget to make sure we are covering all bases.

6. **Letter to City Administrator re Loss of FEMA Grant**

7. **Grant Applications**

8. **Announcements**

9. **Adjournment - 9:20 p.m.**



Wildfire Prevention Assessment District  
Citizens' Advisory Committee



October 22, 2016

Dear Mayor and members of the City Council

Current funds for the Wildfire Prevention District will be fully depleted by June 30, 2017, leaving the Oakland hills extremely vulnerable to another conflagration, greater than what occurred in 1991. Nevertheless, the City is still responsible for wildfire prevention. A funding plan must be developed to extend beyond June 2017 and the current WPAD program. It is urgent that the City immediately finalize a contract to develop a Vegetation Management Plan for the Oakland Hills. And we urge the City to make completion of this plan a high priority within all of City Government, not just in the Fire Department.

We, the Citizens Advisory Committee of the WPAD, are extremely disappointed and frustrated with the news that FEMA withdrew their funding of the City of Oakland's grant to address the high fire risks in the Highway 13/24 corridor. Oakland's poor management of the FEMA grant was in stark contrast to the successful approach of East Bay Regional Park District in the same FEMA grant. We need an effective process for managing hazard mitigation grants to avoid future failures.

We frankly think City Leadership failed— from Administration through all responsible departments — to give those efforts the highest priority required to secure the FEMA funds. At the heart of this failure was a fundamentally flawed planning process that did not properly define objectives nor evaluate options. More importantly the plan did not include a functional framework to resolve stakeholder concerns.

The Citizens Advisory Committee in early 2015 helped facilitate the City's decision to develop a Vegetation Management Plan as the foundation for future wildfire prevention efforts. This is to be a plan based on best practices with full environmental review (CEQA) to provide a roadmap for long-term wildfire prevention that is trustworthy and transparent. It requires management and oversight by staff experienced in major project management and CEQA.

The actual plan development and CEQA will take at least two years to complete before it is brought to Council for approval. At best, a real plan for reducing fire risk in the Oakland hills will not be ready until 2019. It is urgent that the contract and the Vegetation Management Plan be on a fast track without delays, while also being as thorough and complete as possible.

Unfortunately the Vegetation Management Plan appears to be jeopardized by the same lack of urgency, inexperience and poor management as with the failed FEMA grant. It has already taken City staff more than a year and a half just to develop an RFP and contract with a consulting firm for the plan. This delay has been frustrating, knowing there is the real possibility of another wildfire in the hills.

The Oakland hills areas are again extremely vulnerable to another devastating firestorm as we had in 1991. Over the last 25 years, the burn area has returned to a perilous state with a near total build-out of new homes and the regrowth of vegetation. The inevitable fall season Diablo winds can easily whip a

small spark into a catastrophic inferno, especially after the last five years of drought and with the warmer climate conditions.

Timeliness and effective management are critical for Oakland's wildfire prevention planning. Lack of experience, administrative delays, and conflicting priorities cannot be allowed to bumble this effort. We believe that the responsibility for the Vegetation Management Plan rests with the City Administrator's Office, not with the Fire Department. Furthermore, we believe the entire process requires citizen oversight, and encourage the Council to extend the service of the WPAD Advisory Committee to monitor the Vegetation Management Planning process.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan J. Piper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "S".

Susan Piper  
Chair, Wildfire Prevention and Assessment District Advisory Committee