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| **COMMUNITY NEWS -MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FOLLOW**Meeting Highlights include presentations from the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office and Sedona Fire District which address wildfire mitigation and evacuation.  Keep scrolling down!**A fire with a shadow  Description automatically generatedSedona Fire District's Annual EventWILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS DAYSYard Waste Drop Off (FREE)****A red and white sign  Description automatically generated****April 27 and 28**- VOC - 6657 SR 179 (Back of Vista Village)Enter via Jacks Canyon Rd to East Cortez**May 4 and 5** - West Sedona School 570 Posse Ground Rd. [Click HERE to view or download flier & find out more](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=0a3b8c608f&e=13e034e6d4) Or Call 928-282-6800 [Click HERE to view or download the HOME IGNITION ZONE CHECKLIST](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=6315438bef&e=13e034e6d4)[Click HERE to view or download a flier on How to Protect Your Home from Wildfire](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=5f38f76dd4&e=13e034e6d4) **A red and blue logo  Description automatically generated****Our Beautiful Earth**[Concert - **Sunday, May 5** at 4:00pm](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=6a378baea2&e=13e034e6d4)Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 700 N. Bill Gray Rd, Cottonwood, AZTickets $10, Children 12 and under - FreeVisit [VerdeValleyVoices.org](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=bcaf2594da&e=13e034e6d4) for more information.**A close up of a music note  Description automatically generatedSPRING ConcertThe Cottonwood Community Band, directed by Jeff Bowell, will be performing a free concert on Sunday, April 28, at 3:00 PM at the Phillip England Center for the Performing Arts, 210 Camp Lincoln Road in Camp Verde.**[Click HERE to view or download the flier](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=203d7d957f&e=13e034e6d4)**A logo with text on it  Description automatically generated****SEDONA OAK CREEK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**[School News - April 1, 2024](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=5ebe3ce06a&e=13e034e6d4) **A logo for a company  Description automatically generatedSedona Sister Cities Association**[4 15 24 Newsletter](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=bf99943ade&e=13e034e6d4)**International BRUNCH Celebration & Cultural Exchange -May 19 10am-12:30pm at the Mary Fisher Theater**[Click Here to view or download flier](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=0e97c4847a&e=13e034e6d4)**Complimentary for members, $10 Guests****A logo with text and mountains  Description automatically generatedVerde Valley School**[Newsletter - 4 1 24](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=6b7a89f368&e=13e034e6d4)**A red and white logo  Description automatically generatedLAST CONCERT of the SeasonCome as You Are – An Evening of Saxophone and PianoSteven Banks, saxophone | Xak Bjerken, pianoSunday, April 28, 2024 | 3PMSedona Performing Arts Center – 995 Upper Red Rock Loop Rd, Sedona, AZ 86336**[Additional Information](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=e386d06e10&e=13e034e6d4)**A close-up of a logo  Description automatically generatedREMINDER - Concert featuring R. Carlos Nakai, Native American Flutist - Saturday, April 27 7pmSedona Performing Arts Center – 995 Upper Red Rock Loop Rd, Sedona, AZ 86336**[Additional Information](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=ae0f0c4023&e=13e034e6d4)**A logo for a library  Description automatically generated**[April CONNECT Newsletter](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=474e655f2a&e=13e034e6d4)[April IMAGINE Newsletter for Kids](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=af3f89a98b&e=13e034e6d4)A blue and white logo  Description automatically generated**May 4** Open House  9am - 3pm    **PLANT SALE**Village Rotary Community Garden[Click HERE to view or download the flier](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=626b397f40&e=13e034e6d4) **Roundabout Art Proposals Revealed for Public CommentsMay 1 - 4-7pm at the Village Library**[Click HERE to view or download the flier](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=9845e6a39c&e=13e034e6d4)**A logo of a large rock formation  Description automatically generatedBIG PARK REGIONAL COORDINATING COUNCILMEETING HIGHLIGHTSApril 11, 2024**[A video recording of this meeting is available.](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=175d398009&e=13e034e6d4) President Susan Barber called the meeting to order at 9:00am and a quorum was established.   She affirmed that two public agency speakers were scheduled, Sergeant Cody Kruse of the Yavapai County Sheriff’s Office (YCSO) and Chief Booth of the Sedona Fire District (SFD). The presentation topics are wildfire preparedness and emergency management. **Yavapai County Sheriff’s Office: Sgt Steven Warburton**Sergeant Steven Warburton, YCSO, spoke as Sgt Kruse had been called away on an emergency.   Sgt Warburton runs and manages the Forest patrol unit and SWAT team.   It is the Forest patrol unit who deals with search and rescue and natural disaster emergencies such as wildfire and floods.   He controls all of the YCSO evacuation processes and focused his presentation on evacuation.  The YCSO still uses the Ready-Set-Go system and sends out emergency notifications for evacuation.   Ready-Set-Go are the three stages in an emergency and because of the nature of our location surrounded by national forest, our area is always at the “Ready” stage.   Residents should follow Firewise recommendations and keep protective barrier spaces around their home.  They should also have an idea of the routes available should they need to evacuate.   The YCSO has two alert stages – the first being “SET”.   If there is a wildfire in the area, they work very closely with the local fire district and state wildland fire departments and crews.  Sgt Warburton emphasized that they are not waiting for a wildfire to get too close and then try to evacuate.   They can see a fire heading in a certain direction and will put areas in its path on SET and encourage residents on SET to actually prepare to leave, sometimes days in advance.  The SET notification gives residents time to prepare for the actual evacuation GO notice.   Preparation avoids last minute congestion, bottlenecks and worry during an evacuation.  The GO notification asks residents to leave the area.  They cannot force you to leave.  Notification occurs via the Emergency Notification system (phone, text and email) currently in place and also by volunteers going from door to door to be sure everyone in the area has been notified to GO.  Once an area has been evacuated, the Sheriff's Office closes it off.  Only people who have chosen to stay will remain.  They conduct roadblocks and have roving patrols to protect the area 24/7.  No one is permitted to move around an evacuation zone and evacuees are not permitted to reenter until the area is reopened.   Sgt. Warburton then addressed a new system of zones being used by Yavapai County.   The system is called Genesys Protect and provides information as well as emergency notifications for specific zones within Yavapai County. Although Coconino County uses a different system, to avoid confusion the zones within Sedona that are in Coconino County are also listed on the Genesys system utilizing the same zone names that Sedona already uses.  Sedona encourages residents to “Know your Zone”.  The entire area of Sedona, VOC and Yavapai County is covered by these zones.  You can go online and get information for your zone or you can opt in as a resident and receive notifications directly.   All zones within the VOC area are four digits beginning with “13”.  Information includes finding your zone, what zones are on SET, what zones are evacuated, roadblock locations, evacuation shelters, animal shelters, and sandbag locations for flood times.  The Genesys system works with mapping software so that people seeking directions from Google maps etc. will not be directed into a roadblock or closed area.  He then addressed the question of evacuation routes, noting that in some areas like Jacks Canyon there is only one way in or out.  He emphasized that if your area is one way in/out, an evacuation order will be sent to you earlier to allow time to leave and avoid bottlenecks. He noted that where some routes are locked, such as Verde Valley School Road, in an emergency the YCSO will unlock and open them.  In answer to a question, Stg. Warburton confirmed that although Code Red has been discontinued, the current Everbridge notification system continues to be used and Genesys Protect will be in addition to the Everbridge notifications.  Sgt. Warburton then offered to send his email so that future questions may be sent directly to him. * [Genesys Protect](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=f1b7c24214&e=13e034e6d4)
* [Everbridge Emergency Notification](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=f69f7a5ffc&e=13e034e6d4) (Alert Yavapai)

President Barber thanked Sgt. Warburton for his time and informative presentation noting that the Sedona Fire District would be presenting later in the meeting.   **Sedona Fire District: Kirk Riddell, SFD & Chief Dori Booth, SFD, Fire Marshal**Kirk Riddell and Chief Booth emphasized Firewise preparations to maintain a defensible space around your property.  (Image of Home ignition zones & Home Ignition zone checklist) In the first 0-5ft from the home, use noncombustible, low growing green vegetation and no trees if possible.  Be sure that roofs are clear, and gutters are free from debris.  Missing or damaged roof shingles, tiles or panels should be replaced so as not to allow an entry point for airborne embers.  Openings such as attic vents and basement crawl spaces should be covered by 1/8” mesh screening to breakup embers and prevent entry into the home.  Where trees are within that zone or between 5-30ft, keep them trimmed so that they don’t overhang the roof or tuck under the eaves.  Further out, trim them up six feet to ten feet (depending on the size of the tree) and keep dead fuels from under them to avoid ground fire reaching up and catching the tree.  Large clumps of native manzanita or scrub oak should be kept thinned and separated from other clumps.  The idea is to have less and less available fuel as you approach your home. SFD will work with HOA’s to be sure that fire clearing efforts are not in violation of local CC&R’s.  Firewise® is a grass roots program that helps neighborhoods improve the fire safety of their community.  Firewise® does not require removal of all vegetation (moonscape), it requires the creation of defensible space by using breaks between vegetation, and the removal of ladder fuels to slow the advance of wildfire.   Consider using native plants and trees near your home, that don’t drop extensive leaves and flowers which dry out and can be flammable.  Care needs to be taken that storage under decks does not provide a source of fuel that can ignite near your home.   Chief Booth reminded the Council that embers can travel over a mile from an active wildfire and if they land on debris, can ignite or smolder, igniting a secondary fire.   New construction in the area uses fire resistant materials for outer walls and roofing.  Kirk Riddell cautioned local HOA’s to work with the Forest Service on firebreaks by vulnerable communities, and not to attempt to create a firebreak on the national forest yourself.  The Fire District is hosting clean-up days and will have dumpsters behind Vista Village for yard waste, April 27 & 28.   No cactus and no items that aren’t yard brush waste and branches.  There is no dumping charge.   There is also a clean-up event in Sedona on May 4 & 5.  Kirk concluded by reminding the Council that the SFD will come to any HOA along with a representative of the USFS to talk about Firewise and do a Firewise assessment with recommendations for improvement.  [Click HERE to view or download YARD WASTE CLEANUP flier & find out more](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=e6e82f514b&e=13e034e6d4) Or Call 928-282-6800 [Click HERE to view or download the HOME IGNITION ZONE CHECKLIST](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=238d05f728&e=13e034e6d4)[Click HERE to view or download a flier on How to Protect Your Home from Wildfire](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=eda9f0101f&e=13e034e6d4)In answer to a question on a report of possible changes to smoke detector requirements, Chief Booth asked that the information be forwarded to her so that she could check on it. **Roll Call:** Secretary Mary Pope then called the roll, confirming 17 member organizations and 12 guests present.**Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved unanimously as written, on a motion by Bob Marriott, seconded by Carolyn Fisher.  There was no President’s report.  **Secretary’s Report:**  Mary Pope asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the March 14 BPC meeting and hearing none, Pat Robles moved that the minutes be approved as written, and Bob Marriott seconded.  The minutes were approved unanimously.   Mary moved on to changes in Reps/Alternates, welcoming John Wichert as the Representative for Pinon Woods II, as Rose O’Donnell steps back to first Alternate.  She also welcomed Diana Judson as a new Alternate for Pine Valley who’ll be stepping in for Dennis Baumann midway through the meeting. **Treasurer’s Report:** Patty Reski reported that all annual assessments have been received and there have been no additional invoices from Earthrise.  March had the usual monthly expenses for MailChimp. **Unfinished Business:**SOCUSD Board Action 4/2 regarding the Big Park School Property:  Several BPC members attended the school board meeting and Carolyn Fisher summarized the action taken by the school board to put permission to sell, lease or transfer the property to a private party onto the November ballot.  Currently they may retain the property or sell, lease or transfer it to another governmental agency.ADOT 5-Year Plan – Exit 298 Task Force Recommendations:   Dave Norton reviewed the resolution prepared by the task force ([See Attachment A](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=99864f814c&e=13e034e6d4)), noting that the deadline to submit materials for the June 21 ADOT meeting in Flagstaff is May 24.  Several task force members plan to attend the ADOT meeting June 21 in Flagstaff and possibly May 17 in Tuscon.   Points highlighted in the task force recommendation are safety and visibility. They suggest relocating the southbound exit ramp, installing a warning sign for truck traffic not to use the exit if they’re having brake issues and to use the rest stop instead, installing a roundabout at the junction of the exit ramp in westbound SR 179, installing a stop sign on SR 179 from Beaver Creek, installing a warning sign under the overpass noting the blind intersection (which could be electronic/light up when traffic was detected on the exit ramp), and lengthening the north and southbound exit ramps on I-17.  He noted that SR 179 goes completely under I-17 and continues into the Beaver Creek area.  John Wichert then shared the task force recommendation on screen for Council review.    It was noted that unless a change is made, ADOT only plans to resurface the overpass at Exit 298 without any safety improvements. The situation is unchanged from the last 5-year review cycle.  After discussion, Dave Norton moved that the resolution prepared by the task force be adopted by the Council and Mary Morris seconded.   Motion passed 16 in favor, one abstention. Wildfire/Insurance Survey Results & Recommendations:  Joe Skidmore reviewed the data collected from the BPC survey noting that while insurance rate increases were well distributed, the non-renewals and cancellations tended to be near the national forest borders.   Not exclusively, but a definite trend.   He then noted that the number of insurance companies involved in non-renewals and cancellations was broad with no company targeting the area and he also made it clear that the survey was voluntary and self-selected, and the 15.9% non-renewal/cancellation rate could not be considered to be a firm data point, only a trend.  Aside from verbatim commentary, difficulty in obtaining insurance is a serious issue, although non quantifiable.  Joe then noted that data shows a high level of concern (61-65%) about future cancellations as the cancellation rate accelerates, and the additional wildfire risk seen to be posed by the proposed APS overhead transmission lines through the national forest.   He then emphasized that over 90% of respondents are actively working to reduce the wildfire risk to their property and many concerns center around risks that are out of their control such as neighboring properties and the proximity of the national forest.   He concluded that there is a great opportunity for continuing education on being Firewise and to correct misconceptions. He also expressed a concern that the survey went primarily to residential homes and not to commercial establishments.  There is a need to reach out to our local businesses and understand their concerns about wildfire and insurance.    He noted that work is continuing with the APS Transmission line subcommittee and the USFS on alternatives to overhead lines.  As an additional follow-up, Joe volunteered Mark Matousek to contact Insurance Brokers to get a better understanding of the issues. During discussion, John Wichert noted that the sharp rise in insurance non-renewals and cancellations due to wildfire risk happened after the close of the USFS public comment period on the APS Transmission line project and that this increasing risk should be raised with the USFS to be taken into consideration.  Joe agreed, also noting that the APS safety record in our area is very good and their transmission lines and surrounding forested areas are well maintained.  ([Link to presentation](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=c61b6d10bd&e=13e034e6d4)) **New Business:**4/5/24 VVREO Special District Meeting Recap:  In the absence of Tom Binnings, Carolyn Fisher summarized, noting that Tom emphasized that the meeting was not to explore the pros and cons of a Special taxing district, rather it was to explore the vehicles that might help pursue a special taxing district to take over and manage the Big Park School property for the community.   Two attorneys were present, one from Arizona and one from Colorado.  Possibilities exist and more research is needed.   One concern raised is the 20-acre property size, more than would be needed for a community center.   Dave Norton suggested that BPC survey the community as no one really knows what the community would want to be located at the facility.   We need to find out what the community wants and whether they’d be willing to pay for it.    He noted that what was being proposed was much larger and more complex than the RRREMD Special Taxing District that he’s involved in.  Maintaining local control is critical.   Carolyn Fisher then made a motion for the BPC to create an Ad Hoc Committee to study the possibility and practicability of forming a special taxing district or other options for the creation of a community center on the Big Park Community School Property.   Dave Norton seconded.   During discussion it was noted that it may be premature to create a committee as the property belongs to the SOCUSD and the BPC has no actual influence or authority to determine its future at this time.  Further discussion questioned the interest of the SOCUSD in the community as opposed to financial gain from sale/use of the property. Tom Swaninger, Superintendent of Schools, SOCUSD, emphasized that the school system’s number one priority is the students and their education.  He was not speaking on behalf of the school board, but as Superintendent of schools.  He noted that the issue of the Big Park School property was complex and the process fluid to find the best solution.   After discussion, the motion passed unanimously and Dave Norton, Carolyn Fisher and Bob Marriott volunteered to be on the committee suggesting that additional members of the community also join.  Community Plan Committee new Purpose & Scope:  Joe Skidmore presented the revised Purpose & Scope (Attachment B) noting that originally the committee was created to provide a vision to include in the Yavapai County (YC) ten-year plan.  The new Purpose & Scope are written to assure compatibility to the YC Comprehensive Plan; which has a specific structure and will be reviewed again in eight years’ time.  In the interim, the document is useful for our own purposes to guide future development, business and land use in the VOC.  Joe then noted the committee’s intent to change from ad hoc to a standing committee.   As per the BPC bylaws, President Susan Barber appointed Joe Skidmore as Chair of the newly proposed Community Plan standing committee and Joe presented committee members as Tom Binnings, David Gill, Jan Groves, Marianne Langridge, Kathy Nelms, Judy Poe and Jeff Swan.   A motion was made by Carolyn Fisher to approve the Purpose & Scope of the proposed Community Plan standing committee as well as the appointments of its Chair and members.  John Wichert seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.   A close-up of a document  Description automatically generated**Committee Reports:**Planning & Zoning – Bob Marriott reported that the tutorial that Nancy Maple created for the four volunteers to keep track of petitions and development proposals filed with Yavapai County and posted on Citizen Serve, is being scheduled.  Additional volunteers are welcome to join.  During discussion it was noted that the Patel property on the corner of Jacks Canyon Rd and SR 179 would likely begin construction soon on a Hilton Garden Inn.  Apparently, they expect all permits to be approved by the end of May, although the BPC P&Z committee expects it will take longer than that. Construction is expected to take fifteen months. Bob then noted that he trying to get an expert from the USFS to work with the contractor to minimize the impact of the invasive weeds currently growing on the site so that their seeds aren’t inadvertently spread by the construction.  In answer to a question, it was noted that the original approvals of plans for the property will expire in June of 2024, hence the haste to begin construction before then. There was an article in the VOCA newsletter and Bob was asked to send a copy of the newsletter to Mary Pope as part of the BPC meeting highlights and community news email.  Another question was raised with respect to the Patel’s request to pave part of the site and the impact on flood control.   That request is under review by YC as flooding of the wash was a major issue in previous years. Art in the Roundabouts – Rolf Funk reported that in addition to general publicity, invitations to the Reveal on May 1st at the VOC library have been mailed to BPC members and local businesses.  Artists proposing the sculptures will be available for questions and discussion.  Posters will be on display and comment card available until May 8.  ([Click HERE to view or download the flier](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=f2f9091f10&e=13e034e6d4)) Verde Valley Transportation Planning Organization (VVTPO) – Jeff Swan noted that the project of greatest interest is the refurbishment of Exit 298 at the intersection of SR 179 and I-17.   Although the work is supposed to begin in August, a scope of work is not yet available from ADOT.   Jeff will continue to monitor the situation.   Other projects include a grant received by Yavapai County to review traffic safety plans.   These are smaller projects and as they are proposed he’ll provide the information to the BPC. Dark-Sky – Dave Norton reported a successful Dark-Sky party at VOCA park with about thirty residents in attendance.  Meeting adjourned 10:48am**Reminder:**  Next Big Park Council meeting is Thurs, May 9 at 9am via ZOOM |

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