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| **COMMUNITY NEWS -MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FOLLOW**Meeting Highlights include presentations from the USFS and Sedona Fire District which address wildfire mitigation for communities adjacent to the national forest.  Keep scrolling down!  A close-up of a label  Description automatically generated**FARM to TABLE Event****Sunday May 19 - 5:00pm**at the Verde Valley School FarmFresh farm treats, wood-fired pizza, wine pairingRSVP Required - Send to advancement@vvsaz.orgSuggested Donation $100Click [HERE](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=fe07d6adc5&e=13e034e6d4) for additional information[5 7 24 Verde Valley School Newsletter](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=528841df98&e=13e034e6d4)A red and black sign  Description automatically generated**CELEBRATION****50th Anniversary of EMS Week****Saturday May 25  - 10am - 2pm** at Station 3, 125 Slide Rock Road, VOCApparatus Display, CPR Classes, Safety Information and moreBurgers & Hot Dogs cooked by the Fire ChiefFREEClick [HERE](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=1f73a77cf7&e=13e034e6d4) for additional informationA logo for a company  Description automatically generated**REMINDER** - International BRUNCH - **Sunday May 19 - 10am-12:30pm** Complimentary for members, $10 GuestsClick [HERE](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=fdc7943c38&e=13e034e6d4) for additional information[Sister Cities Newsletter for May](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=d79d421197&e=13e034e6d4)A close up of a sign  Description automatically generatedA collage of a group of images of a town  Description automatically generatedTo COMMENT on these proposals go to: [OurVillageArt.org](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=79f389f09d&e=13e034e6d4) DEADLINE for Comments is **May 30**A green and yellow shield with a tree  Description automatically generated[5 9 24 3Echo Prescribed Burn south of Flagstaff](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=1c3b85f086&e=13e034e6d4)[5 13 24 Prescribed Burns North & West of Flagstaff](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=3736e62920&e=13e034e6d4)[5 13 24 Wolf fire Operations wrap up](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=eb11ae6787&e=13e034e6d4)For additional information and the latest news on the Wolf Wildfire - Click on the following USFS linksQuestions?  2024.wolf@firenet.gov | 928-640-2774[inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/azcof-wolf-fire](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=054ca300d8&e=13e034e6d4)A logo with green and purple lines  Description automatically generated**5th Annual MOONSHOT Rural Arizona PITCH COMPETITION** **Friday, May 17, 2024** - Cottonwood Recreation Center, 150 S 6th St, Cottonwood, AZ 86326 Time: Participation 9am-5pmClick [HERE](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=11361149e3&e=13e034e6d4) for additional information & [SIGN UP links](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=498c13777d&e=13e034e6d4)A logo of a large rock formation  Description automatically generated**BIG PARK REGIONAL COORDINATING COUNCILMEETING HIGHLIGHTSMay 9, 2024**[A video recording of this meeting is available](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=b24fd225fb&e=13e034e6d4)President Susan Barber called the meeting to order at 9:00am with 15 member organizations present and 8 guests.  2 additional guests arrived shortly thereafter.She then introduced Coconino National Forest (CNF) Fire Management Officer Travis Maybery to speak on a process for creating a wildfire buffer zone adjacent to VOC communities.  Susan explained that the request was based on a recent insurance survey showing that many cancellations and non-renewals of insurance due to wildfire risk were for properties adjacent to CNF land.A map with many points  Description automatically generatedShe noted that many properties within VOC are Firewise® and called upon Mary Pope as representative for La Barranca II, the first Firewise® community in the area.   Mary drew attention to the red pointers on the map within La Barranca II, noting that despite continuing to do all that was possible to protect homes from wildfire, insurance policies were being cancelled due to wildfire risk alongside of the forest.Big Park Council is looking to the Forest Service for help, with one idea being the creation of a buffer zone between the forest and the community.   At this point, there were questions on how to become a Firewise® community.  Chief Dori Booth of the Sedona Fire District (SFD) explained that Firewise® is a program sponsored by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) who officially recognizes communities for being Firewise® when required actions and processes have been met.   SFD actively assists with this process. Chief Booth noted that insurance cancellations appeared to be a company-by-company issue that is a double-edged sword with incentives being offered at the legislative level.  She explained that risk projection software is proprietary and expensive, and risk is not limited to wildfire, as it includes all natural disasters.  The best that the Fire District can do is to create fire resilient communities so that claims aren’t filed.  **USFS Fire Management Officer Travis Maybery's presentation cannot be summarized at this time.**  He spoke on the process for creating wildfire buffer zones adjacent to VOC Communities.  As per Roberts Rules of Order, the Big Park Council can only publish presentation summaries that have been approved by the presenter and with the Wolf Fire and other pressing obligations, the USFS hasn't been able to review the summary yet.  To hear all of his remarks, click on the [video recording link](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=84854280d0&e=13e034e6d4) . During Q&A following Travis' presentation, Paul Sullivan recalled that several years ago, the Sedona Westerners and the Forest Service were able to come to an agreement that permitted the Westerners to trim along published trails, after having received instruction and training.  Paul suggested that something similar be done with the communities adjacent to the forest to minimize the potential spread of wildfire into the community.  Another speaker reminded everyone that Jacks Canyon Rd is one way in-out, adding to the severity of the wildfire and evacuation dangers, also noting that it’s been more than 16 years since the La Barranca fire, and nothing has been done in the forest to reduce the danger of another fire.   Jim Blanchard noted that at his property in Idaho, within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA), the Forest Service issues firewood cutting permits to allow residents to remove deadfall and do limited trimming in adjacent forest areas.  Travis agreed with the danger that deadfall fuel creates and agreed to talk to Acting District Ranger Schlueter about these ideas, noting that firewood cutting is being done within the Oak Creek Canyon.President Barber thanked Travis for his presentation noting that he was welcome to address the Council with updates as they are available.She then called the business meeting to order at 9:34am and Mary Pope called the roll confirming a quorum of 15 member organizations.   The meeting agenda was approved by acclamation on a motion by Mary Morris, seconded by Pat Robles.  Susan skipped the President’s report noting that she’d add her comments as appropriate during other presentations.Secretary’s Report: Mary Pope began the Secretary’s report by asking for any revisions to the Draft meeting minutes of April 11.  Hearing none, minutes were approved by acclamation on a motion by Carolyn Fisher, seconded by Pat Robles.  Mary then reported that the Annual Report for the Arizona Corporation Commission has been filed in advance of its due date.  Next, Mary reminded the council that the Policy on Committees was updated in accordance with the new Community Plan Committee purpose and scope.  The Policy was approved on a motion by Mary Morris, seconded by Carolyn Fisher.Treasurer’s Report: Patty Reski gave the Treasurer’s report noting that there was no income in April and the normal $11 expense for MailChimp was paid.  A second invoice has been received from Earthrise, which will be paid in May.  The invoice is for $4300 for time spent January through April.Unfinished BusinessADOT 5 Year Plan: Susan reported that Dave Norton submitted the BPC Resolution in person at the recent ADOT meeting.  Sedona Mayor Scott Jablow will send a letter to ADOT separately supporting the BPC resolution.  Supervisor Donna Michaels will also write a letter of support.Big Park School Committee: Susan then introduced Carolyn Fisher to speak for the Big Park School ad hoc committee.   Carolyn noted that the information was very preliminary, and a formal committee meeting hasn’t been held.  The committee will be comprised of Carolyn Fisher, Dave Norton and Bob Marriott with Greg Williams, Sam Blom and Richard Sidy also agreeing to join.   As the group gathers preliminary information, Carolyn attended the SOCUSD meeting and requested any engineering studies that might have been done on fixing and maintaining the school buildings as well as costs associated with that.  She also asked about the outstanding bond issue remaining and how a sale of the school property would address it.  In addition to fact gathering, Carolyn expressed a desire to survey the community on what uses would be desirable in that space to serve the community.  She hopes to have information available before the November ballot which includes a request for permission to allow SOCUSD to sell the property to a private party.   Randy Hawley, President of the Governing Board of the SOCSD, questioned the purpose and goals of the committee.   He expressed concern that the school board hadn’t been involved in the work of committee, as they were pursuing similar paths.  He was assured that representatives of the school board were welcome to join the committee.   BPC Secretary Mary Pope clarified that the Big Park School committee is actually only a task force at this time, and it was gathering information in order to propose a Purpose & Scope to the Council.  Once a Purpose and Scope were agreed, an ad hoc committee would formally be created.  Many of the questions being asked would be clarified during that discussion as the committee’s purpose and scope were agreed.  Other council members emphasized that the intent is to form a committee to collaborate with the school board on a mutually beneficial basis for the school district and the community.  Tom Swaninger, Superintendent of Schools added his support to the goal of collaboration for the benefit of the school district and community, with the understanding that there is no one perfect solution for everyone and that the school board must pursue primarily what’s best for the district.  New BusinessHybrid meeting survey:  Susan noted that the survey went out to Representatives and Alternates only on May 1 and will close May 21.   She summarized results received as of May 6 from 19 people.   Most felt comfortable attending meetings in person, but 36% couldn’t do so due to work, travel or other personal commitments.   84% said that Zoom participants should be able to speak during an in-person meeting discussion. 95% felt it was important to see/hear presentation materials and 79% felt it was important to be able to see each other.  79% expressed no preference for either of the potential meeting locations with 62.5% supporting the expenditure on equipment.  It was noted, however, that cost is a concern.   The final survey results will be reported at the June meeting.Committee Reports:APS Subcommittee:  Joe Skidmore reported that Mike Dechter, Regional Forester, has again updated the scheduled time of release of the Final Environmental Assessment (EA) on the proposed APS Transmission line.  It is now due September 5 and it is felt that will be the actual date of release.  Release of the Final EA opens up a 45-day objection period.  If above ground power lines remain in the final EA, the BPC will file a formal objection.   In the interim, Joe Skidmore and Mark Matousek (Committee co-chairs) are scheduled to meet with Acting District Ranger Alex Schlueter and Regional Forester Mike Dechter on May 17 to specifically discuss wildfire concerns.  Prior to that meeting, Mark is reaching out to his contact in Alaska with the Forest Service, who is heading up an initiative specifically regarding wildfire response.   His recommendations will help guide the discussion.Community Plan Committee:   Joe noted that the previous work of the committee is stored in a Dropbox file, and he is in the process of sorting through the information.  The original work on several areas is more advanced than others.  The committee will therefore prioritize work on land use, water, and cost of development.  Although energy use is also advanced, they will wait until the APS transmission line issues are resolved before moving ahead, as that will effect next steps.Art in the Roundabouts:  Rolf Funk reported that the reveal event May 1, was very successful with 115 attendees.  Posters were on display at the Village library until May 8 and 196 comments have been received.   Comments can continue to be made until May 30 via the website at [Artwork Proposals | VOC Art Roundabouts (ourvillageart.org)](https://bigparkcouncil.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1d84ec59cba91b5dec0eec85b&id=32e6b7ec39&e=13e034e6d4).  After the comment period closes, two of the five proposals will be selected for fundraising and installation.  Specific roundabouts for the selected artworks have not been chosen.  In answer to a question on the absence of a proposal using the Western Heritage theme, Camille Cox noted that although that was one of the approved themes (Early Ranching/Farming), no proposals were submitted for it.  After the two selected artworks are installed, there may be another call to artists.Planning & Zoning:  Nancy Maple reported that the P&Z committee would meet on May 17 at 3pm via Zoom for Citizen Serve training.  Six volunteers have signed up others are welcome to join.  The training will cover how to look up permits and what’s coming down the pike in planning and zoning for the county. ANNOUNCEMENTS:Verde Valley School:  Head of School Ben Lee announced a Farm to Table event, Sunday May 19 including farm tours of the one-acre regenerative organic farm and food tastings, including wine pairings in collaboration with Jesse’s craft beer and wine store in the village.  They’ll also be making wood-fired pizzas.Sister Cities:  Don Groves announced that Sister Cities has finalized an agreement with its first sister city, Canmore, Canada.  Both city councils have signed the agreement and first meetings have been held.   Volunteers are welcome to join the Sister Cities organization by emailing donandjangroves@gmail.com .  Additional cities are being explored specifically with respect to environmental preservation, sustainable tourism, transportation, and businesses. We are in the initial stages of adding another sister city, Jaslo, Poland.  Sedona Sister Cities is a Verde Valley-wide organization with four board members living in the Village.  Sedona Fire District:  Chief Booth announced that Saturday, May 25 from 10am-2pm there will be an open house for the 50th anniversary of EMS week at the Fire Station in the VOC.  Chief Mezulus will be cooking hot dogs and hamburgers and there will be CPR training. Meeting adjourned at 10:20am.  |

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