

MOSQUITO FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

MINUTES

1/18/2024 6:00 pm

6367 Log Cabin Lane, Placerville and Zoom (z)

1. Meeting Called to Order: 6:01
2. Roll Call/Verification of Quorum: Board Members Present: Karen Pullin, Wayne Gregson, Jane Gregson, Paul Beacham (z), Ken Joseph (z), Jerry Pullin (z), Mary Joseph (z). Quorum met.
3. Approval of Agenda (action item) Motion Karen, 2nd Wayne, passed unanimously
4. Approval of Minutes 10/24/23 (action item) Motion Karen, 2nd Paul, passed unanimously
5. Approval of Financial/treasurer Report (action item) Motion Karen, 2nd Jane, passed unanimously.
6. Open Forum: None

7. Old Business:

- a. **Review of EDCFSC Veterans Day Breakfast:** The Veterans Day breakfast was very thoughtful and 100% focused on our EDC Veterans. MFSC took a lead in organizing and coordinating this event with other Associate FSCs on behalf of EDCFSC. A special thank you to Johnny Valenzuela for doing the marketing and programs for this event and organizing the gathering of the Associate FSCs. Thanks to Diamond Springs FD and their Firefighter Association Memorial Hall for the use of their facility and the raising of the flag. US Forest Service came with an engine and surprised us with 4 of their firefighters who jumped right in serving, cooking, participating and clean up. What a great addition they were. We had a number of Associate FSCs whose members helped in every area. Special guests, Supervisor Lori Parlin and EDC Veteran's Post Commander McAdams. We welcomed Quilts of Valor (presented 4 quilts to deserving Veterans), among the Mosquito Veterans that attended we had special Mosquito guest, Veteran Glen Lewis and his wife Debra. Without them, we would not have known about their Veteran hall's inability to have their monthly breakfast due to last year's storm damage. We recognize how important the social event would be to our veterans. EDCFSC has been asked to make this an annual event. Over 250 were served. Thank you to all who helped make this event possible!
- b. **Update on Volunteer Property Fire Safe Assessment/Evaluations and upcoming FSC continuing education training course:** With the holidays and weather,

voluntary evaluations have slowed down for many of our trained assessors/evaluators. We expect that to change. The purpose of the voluntary evaluations is to assist homeowners and educate them on defensible space and home hardening. EDCFSC had training for 70 members who completed 2 full days of training by CalFire, EDH FD and other agencies in order to have everyone trained in the same consistent manner. EDH FD is doing some mandatory inspections right now in Texas Hill Estates. They are not out to be punitive, they are looking to protect homes and lives. Our assessments and evaluations are to assist our residents in knowing what they can do to prepare their homes and properties. Special thanks to Wayne, Jerry, David and Dawn for having given up 2 full days to attend the classes and training and getting certified, and of course for giving up more time to conduct these evaluations. The Fire Chiefs Association in our county have reported they are very supportive and encourage these evaluations for their communities.

From EDCFSC: There will be another two day training defensible space class in April for fire safe councils.

Cal Fire has agreed to conduct Field Maps training on 2/27 for all who attended any of the three Defensible Space Training classes last year.

c. **Update on Mosquito Neighborhood Radio Watch program: Wayne Gregson:**

1. Bylaws were done and uploaded to the Mosquito Neighborhood Radio Watch webpage and the MFSC website.
 - a. **Board Members:** Wayne Gregson: Chair
Reese Willer: Vice Chair
Guy Barritt: Secretary
2. **Member numbers have not changed.**
 - a. Membership drives will start up soon.
 - b. We have Scheduled March 2024 to migrate our members over to our own network (Mosquito)
 - c. This will allow better coverage and quicker check-ins. In fact we will run check-ins at 6 pm on the first and third Thursdays of each month.
 - d. A repeater has been installed at Reese Willer's home on a temporary pole. We will be moving that to a permanent pole on Reese's property.
 - e. We will spend February finishing up the coverage map and programming member's radios to our Mosquito Network. We will announce dates, times and locations of where our members can get their radios programmed.
3. In 3 – 4 months, give or take, we will be moving to a commercial band and moving away from the GMRS band. A second repeater installed hopefully in the spring time. Commercial band will not require a GMRS license.
4. **Mosquito Fire Department** wanted their radios programmed to our neighborhood networks. They were denied. The reason for the denial is this is a grass roots program, neighbor to neighbor. No other fire department in the

county has access to neighborhood radio networks. This is not what this program is about. We will allow membership to all Mosquito/Swansboro community members regardless of who they are. If members of the support group, full time/volunteer firefighters want access to our network, that is acceptable as long as they do not, under any circumstances represent themselves as the fire department, they own an authorized radio and they follow the rules of the Mosquito Neighborhood Radio Watch.

D. FireWise Designation: Our renewal application was submitted on September 29, 2023 for the 2024 Calendar year. All renewal applications are due by Nov. 17, and will be accepted or denied by Dec. 31. **Our renewal was approved on November 29th for the 2023-2024 calendar year.** We had to do a new 3 year action plan and will have to do a new 5 year assessment plan to renew for the 2025 calendar year. We received a nice congratulatory email from our District Supervisor Lori Parlin. Ms. Parlin has always been supportive of our work and efforts. I did let her know that our designation would not be possible without our community members being so active with their defensible space and home hardening practices, including turning in their voluntary time and expense logs to MFSC. Our FireWise Certificate is on our webpage and available to be downloaded. The flag banner at the top of the Certificate will show “2023”, as it is approved in 2023; the base paragraph identifies that the certificate is good for the entire calendar year of 2024.

E. Update on MFSC Fuel Reduction Grant: Jerry Pullin and Ken Joseph

The US Forest Service Grant was awarded to Mosquito Fire Safe Council. As with our past grants, El Dorado County Fire Safe Council will be our fiscal sponsor (meaning all income and expenses will flow through the county accountant and treasurer to handle all the money), no money from the grant income or payments will be made by MFSC.

Karen Pullin as the chair of MFSC, Mark Egbert as the project manager from RCD and Ken Pimlott, Chair of EDCFSC as our Fiscal Sponsor all signed the contract.

In November, Alex Stephen from RCD, Jerry Pullin/Ken Joseph MFSC Grant Coordinators, MFSC Grant Committee members, Wayne Gregson, Wayne Holley and Johnny Valenzuela along with guests Capt. KC Moore and Battalion Chief Ed Dwyer reviewed treatment map/CWPP and went on a treatment plan drive. The treatment area had already been determined by MFSC representatives and the walk thru verified the plan and needs.

Ken and Mary Joseph are handling the Right of Entry forms. So far all but 4 residents have been contacted. The 4 that have not had contact do not live on their properties and will be mailed their right of entry forms.

The treatment area will be both sides of La Paz and includes areas of Swansboro. This will give better access for emergency vehicles on La Paz which has only one way in and out. This treatment will additionally add a fire break to slow fire movement and give a layer of protection to the Buckboard, Lawyer, Gold Trail and Dyer area.

F. Update on formal complaints made by MFPD Chief Jack Rosevear and MFPD Board Members against Mosquito Fire Safe Council and a false accusation made against a MFSC Board Member by the spouse of an MFPD board Member.

MFSC Meetings on zoom and phone are all recorded and saved. We have been advised, due to the continued and constant flow of complaints made by the MFPD board and Jack Rosevear, that we document everything. We continue to follow that advice. **I do not want to spend much time during this meeting or any other time on their constant complaints.**

At the Dec. 28, 2023 MFPD Board Meeting, Board Member Dan Hunt reported **“they were not getting any traction from their complaints against MFSC” but declared they will “not let it go”**. I am assuming they are referring to their complaints to EDCFSC, BOS and CAFSC and all the additional contacts they put on their emails. **Mr. Hunt and Board President Don Stever said they will not work with or have anything to do with any organization that associates with or works with a specific individual. I video recorded their declarations.** Their complaints seem to focus on their perception that we don’t invite them to events and that we associate with a volunteer that they don’t think we should. We have asked to meet with the chief on many occasions (we have texts messages and emails dating back 1 ½ years to previous and current board members) that document this. The complaints date back to 2022 when MFPD made inaccurate comments in their board packet (specifically the chief report) regarding the relationship between MFA and MFSC and the dissolution and distribution of MFA assets.

At the 12/28 MFPD board meeting, a false statement (by Board Member Dan Hunt) that MFSC attended the RFA meeting and offered to do design work on a patch. I tried to correct that statement clarifying MFSC did not make any offer, an individual who is not a board member with MFSC made the offer; I was met with hostility (I video recorded the exchange) by board members Hunt, Stever and Ugglä. To be clear, no one from MFSC made any such offer. Mr. Stever, MFPD Board President further reported that “he advised all RFA board members about the patch and designer and they will not be considering the patch that was presented by the individual. He reported that no further communication would be needed because the RFA board was clear they were not to consider the individual’s design.

I want to acknowledge the support we have received from EDCFSC and so many Associate Councils, Agencies and partners. Our door is always open to meet with the chief, but thus far, he has refused our offers.

I also made clear that unless myself or someone else begins a comment, statement or social post that clearly states they are representing MFSC, they are speaking/posting as an individual.

The MFPD board reported at their 12/28/23 meeting (I video recorded it) they will not work with our organization (they do not like an individual that we and other fire safe councils and other organizations use) or any organization that utilizes this person’s talent, nor will they work with anyone that publicly criticizes the FD, the Chief, or their board of directors.

I want to express my appreciation and dedication to our MFSC Board for remaining professional and neutral.

All Boards are considered leaders in the community, this does not mean we are not allowed to have a voice and state our opinion as individuals. It does mean that in our positions as board members, we **MUST** remain neutral at all times when conducting business, which means we cannot let personal feelings dictate how we conduct ourselves and decisions we make as board members. There will always be people that we as board members find difficult and offensive personally, but we cannot and will not tell any other boards who they can utilize or be personal friends with. If they don't want to work with MFSC because of an individual they don't like, that is a reflection of their board of directors and their lack of leadership, not ours. Mosquito Fire Safe Council will ignore further complaints as instructed and continue with the positive work and community engagement.

Addressing the false accusation. Board member Jerry Pullin was accused (by XXXXX XXXX, spouse of a sitting MFPD board member) of telling her to "shut up" during a previous board meeting held at the Dyer Pavilion. After reviewing all documentation and interviewing board members and attendees, it was determined that the words "shut up" were never spoken by anyone on our board. The accuser was heard to be badgering our board member trying to get him to commit to a day and time to perform a voluntary evaluation (he repeated he did not have his schedule with him and would contact the requestor (who was not the one doing the badgering)).

This behavior seems to be an extension of the attacks made against Mosquito Fire Safe Council by MFPD board.

All our board meetings are recorded even when one person (or one board member) is logged on to our zoom. Zoom is now offered at every open board meeting we conduct.

8. New Business:

- a. **Update on EDCFSC programs:** Some programs are on pause while the contractors catch up and while awaiting grant funds to become available.

For 2023:

Chipper Program: 777 jobs were completed, 1517 acres of chipping done. \$316,000.00 paid to contractors for chipping. Over \$30k was spent on Mosquito/SCPOA residents.

Veterans/Seniors/Low Income program: 341 properties assessed, 308 of those properties were cleared. \$337,000.00 paid to contractors for the clearings.

88 Veterans were serviced

238 Seniors serviced

100 Low income homes serviced

18 Disabled homes serviced

Hazard Tree Removal: 633 trees have been identified for removal, 41 trees removed, \$111,000.00 paid to contractors.

The tree removal program is new and is taking a lot of time, but they will remove all trees that have been identified, it will just take time.

All programs are open to all El Dorado County residents. The programs are set up to be used primarily when no other resource is available.

OWPR: Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience will be adding FireWise community recognition to their maps. Updates on Insurance challenges.

Updates from Cal Fire and County

Discussion with Bruce Dickenson: Homeowners/Property and like associations must have their 5 year Wildfire plans in place per 5105. Implemented in 2019 and completed and in action by May 2024. Documentation of what they are doing to contribute to wildfire mitigation for their community, common areas (especially undeveloped common areas). Further discussion in the near future.

- b. **RFA December Meeting:** (Regional Fire Authority) Georgetown, Garden Valley, Mosquito and Rescue FD working together and sharing training opportunities, sharing usage of mechanical repairs, insurance, procurements, etc. Utilizing the opportunities to get better prices and training. Each individual FD can sign on for different opportunities but are not obligated to commit to all. The individual FD can pick and choose what is best for their district needs.
- c. **Communication Received by MVFA:** At our October MFSC meeting, when discussing the complaints by MFPD. I reported that both Ken Joseph and I had offered multiple times between May thru July to work with the other community organizations to put on National Night Out at the fire station on Aug. 1. We were advised by MFPD Board President Don Stever that it was “too soon for the organizations to work together” and he (Mr. Stever) could not make them. We, MFSC, Ken Joseph and I disagreed. We felt it would be a perfect opportunity to work together and show the community that all organizations could come together, especially because MFSC stepped up in April to move relationships forward. We were denied each time by Mr. Stever. National Night Out had previously been held at the fire station and hosted by MFSC and MFA. In response, Mosquito Volunteer Fire Association (MVFA) sent an email to MFSC advising that Mr. Stever does not speak for them and in the future, we needed to send requests directly to them, MVFA. We agreed and thanked them for the communication. We will add their correspondence to our official records.
- d. **Request from SCPOA:** We received a request from Scpoa to remove the chipping request form from our webpage. Our understanding is they are making a new form and requiring that all scpoa members utilize the county chipping program prior to requesting the use of the scpoa chipping program. This will need to be verified in writing from

someone on the SCPOA board of directors. Jerry explained how the chipping program for scpoa originated and how successful it has been for 5 years while still lowering the dues. I also spoke with our county grant administrator so I am clear on how the program works. Jane will reach out to Scpoa Chair Karen Paul and we will try to resolve their understanding of the program and responsibility and work with them to set up events for chipping that have to go thru MFSC. The grant administrator advised they only have 1 contractor willing to come up to Mosquito/Swansboro to chip. Additionally, we will try to work out something with them for the community with our Green Waste Dumpster Day. Karen is available to assist Jane if needed.

- e. **Follow up on the request for unused Workbooks:** Karen asked MFPD Board Member Mr. Hunt if he followed up on the case of Mosquito Wildfire Workbooks he requested for MFPD. I had reported to him that that we were aware they (MFPD) did not hand them out to anyone because Mosquito Fire Dept. was not named in the book and we were advised from a person within the MFPD that they were instructed to “throw them in the dumpster”. We have not seen them since nor were they ever in photos with other materials being distributed at their events. At my original request, Mr. Hunt said he would follow up on it (he was picking up workbooks that the EDCFSC had made; they too didn’t include the district FDs). At the Dec. 28, conclusion of the MFPD meeting, I asked him if he followed up as he said he would. He stated “when you tell me who the firefighter is that told you he was instructed to throw them out, he would then look into it”. That is inappropriate and unprofessional. MFSC paid for those book and would like them back since MFPD is not distributing them. They are only distributing the county workbook.
 - f. **Possible event for Associate Council Board Members and Key committee members:** Possible event to create an opportunity to spend some social time getting to know each other, improving inter-council relationships, team building, sharing of information, outreach, coordination and collaboration and provide a more relaxed environment to speak to and engage with EDCFSC Executive Board members and key committee members such as outreach and grant committees. Karen will be presenting at EDCFSC at future meeting.
9. **Board Member Comments, concerns or questions not on agenda:** None

Comments made via text, chat on zoom and by in person attendees during the meeting:

- (1) Can’t find the current FireWise certificate on the webpage. The current certificate is 2023 in the center banner, and center paragraph states the certificate is good for entire calendar year **2024** (community member)

- (2) They (MFPD) can continue to complain, and we (MFSC) will continue to ignore the complaints and continue to take care of business. We have a lot of work to do in order to make our community wildfire safe, informed and educated; we should not waste time on this nonsense. (MFSC BOD board member)
- (3) We appreciate that Capt. KC Moore indicated that he was looking forward to working with us. (we have since learned he is no longer with MFPD) (MFSC BOD member)
- (4) Are they (MFPD) wasting tax payer money spending time making all these complaints? They are making our district look so bad and many in the county have commented on it. Keep up the good work MFSC. (Community member)
- (5) Why is the MFPD Board of Directors even involved in this and making complaints? Is this in their job description or Brown Act item or operations? When did they determine they get to control who others work with. (Community member)
- (6) Why are they republishing all the things they supposedly find so offensive. (MFSC BOD board member)
- (7) Why do the MFPD board members think they can dictate who MFSC works with, utilizes and are friends with? We don't tell any other board who they can work with. MFPD BOD has a double standard. MFPD doesn't allow others to criticize them, but the Chief and his board actively criticize and attack MFSC and refuse to sit in a room and discuss the issues the Chief complains about. We need to continue to ignore them. (MFSC BOD member)

MFSC Board Members did not respond to the comments 2-7.

Meeting Adjourned: Next meeting TBD