**MINUTES**

**Inverness Ridge Association Board meeting**

**July 11, 2020**

**Via Zoom**

**Present:** Sydne Bortel, Ron Bennett, Helen Chapman, Ken Drexler, Jennifer Howard, Lean Light, Julie Merk, Michael Ongerth, Tim Stanton, Marcus Thygeson, Jon Wurtzel, David Wilson

**Absent:** Chris Eckert

May Meeting minutes: Approved after minor corrections.

Treasurer’s report: Stanton/Wimpfheimer

The balance as of April 27, 2020 was $9,088.33. Since then $600 in dues and $1,850 in chipping fees have been collected with $0.05 in interest accruing May through June, for total income of $2,405. There have been no expenses. The balance as of July 11, 2020 is $11,538.38.

Announcements:

* NMWD tank replacement – One week behind with pour but completed. No problems apparent with trucks. Weekly updates provided to Wynne Furth and others. Workers smoking at site—a problem. Property manager says they have been starting at 7 and swearing and this is a problem for tenants. Carmela said they will talk to workers. NMWD has spoken to workers and we need to see if this has any effect. A concern was raised that PRE does not have an ongoing relationship with workers and lacks authority to modify their behavior. We also need to post signage re smoking because we have properties with temporary tenants who are not aware of fire dangers on the hill. It was suggested that we have a group of residents and/or fire department personnel talk to workers re dangers. There was consensus on having the fire department speak to them directly to give background information. Some discussion ensued about providing ashtrays or asking workers to smoke only in cars. Tim Stanton and Jennifer Howard volunteered to visit fire department to set conversations in motion.
* Burn piles along Drake’s View Trail – Stanton. The NPS has assigned someone to work on this. They were going to meet with Tim along with Ron and Maury Wolahan but Pierce Pt. Fire prevented this. Responsible parties have been notified and they have been responsive.
* Chipping program – Ongerth. 53 identified tickets worth of piles (some multi-tickets). Orange flag = okay to chip. IGS is contractor proposed price = $67/ticket and chipping will be done this week. 2+ days for whole job. Chips will be put on trucks and put in designated community piles. Most people have paid but a few more need to do so. Patty has been very helpful on this. Measure C event will be the next event—this year’s money will be in form of August 26 chipping day. No details are yet available but the date is firm. Frustration about this has been expressed because of problems in planning. Will it be that we have to bring material to be chipped to a central place or will they send trucks to individual properties? Sydne thinks the latter according to Marin IJ. Murray Wolohan has been dealing with burn piles. We have scheduled a September (after labor day) chipping day—awfully close to August 26 date. Should we cancel or reschedule for early October. We cannot get any more fire prevention work done this year by Marin Fire Safe. Jon suggested using our resources for additional measures and not having added chipping day. We need to work on how to have measures accomplished. Need to have history of our expenditures and discuss what will go forward…see David Wilson’s email. Julie Merk raised a concern re August 26—we have built expectation re what we are going to do. Could we ask Marin Fire Department to deal with piles at top of hill—but chipper cannot get in so this is no go and it is on national park land? Again we do not know details and cannot plan or ask sensible questions. We should not expect Marin Fire Safe to deal with our problems and don’t know how well our needs will be met by Marin Fire Safe chipping. There was discussion about the merits of keeping our chipping day but delaying it. We need to see how much residual need there will be after August 26 and then go out to bid etc. IGS bid (not contract but handshake) already specified the rate per pile/ticket. Discussion to date with IGS doesn’t commit us to a second chipping day. We can discuss all of this at September board meeting. We will inform community about 8/26 when we have more information.

Old business:

* Road re-paving task force update – Drexler. The Task Force will meet next week. The repaving plan has been developed but the cost estimate needs updating because the current estimate is 18-24 months old. We need review by county redevelopment agency. How to handle this will be discussed next week. Completed plan will be available soon!
* PRERAB update – Ongerth. Weed whipping contract at county for approval—with IGS. Hope for approval next week with work in about two weeks after that. Not all roads will be done due to vegetation management provision sunsetting in 2017 and PRERAB reserves have been used up. So Drake’s View Drive will be done for areas where owners haven’t carried out appropriate maintenance, East Robert, Douglas, lower Dover, Dover to 90 (Andersons do rest) all of Sunnyside and the first stretch of Buck’s Point and Behr Lane. Some work that we usually do on maintenance will be postponed because soil is too dry and we will wait for moisture, ditch clearing, drop box work. Some grading might take place along with reprofiling some water bars, removing washboarding from speeders. PGE has been aggressive with tree work so there few trees that we need to deal with.
* Firesafe Task Force and Measure C – David Wilson sent the following email:

It seems we need to make an immediate decision: with Measure C money, we have been scheduled for a chipper day on August 26 (details available from John Hansen at 415 847 7155).  I explained to Christie that we are in the midst of a self funded chipper program and that we need to figure out how to mesh our efforts with the Firewise program.

She discouraged my suggestion that the Aug 26 date be changed so that it would replace day #2 of our program (now schedule for   
September).   I’ve since discussed this with Mike O who agrees that we ought to hold our September date in abeyance, so we can take advantage of the MWPA funded chipper day on August 26. As soon as Mike O gets the details from John Hansen, everyone should be notified. Inevitably this revised plan may involve some refunds or credits, but we do need to take advantage of the MWPA program.

On bigger issues, I pressed Christie on my concern that PRE would not get its fair share of Measure C proceeds. There is also the issue of persuading voters to approve veg management assessments over and above what they will now have to pay under Measure C.

Christie explained some of the complexities of Measure C funding (now estimated at $19 million/year). The proposed 2020-21 budget totals about $11 million, including $850,000 in startup costs, $500,000 for chipper days, and “Agency Allocations” of $4,000,000. In contrast to Inverness (whose Board rep is Steve Marcotte), PRE has no direct representation on the joint powers Board and along with other unincorporated areas must look to MFD to protect its interests. While giving no guarantees Christie tried to assure me that MFD would keep our interests in mind.

Dennis Rodoni, who had volunteered to be President of the Fire Prevention Authority, will be Vice President, and the County rep on the MWPA Board. Other key folks from our standpoint are Christie Neal and Jason Weber (Marin FD technical advisor and Board rep, respectively).

My own feeling is that we need to put together a strong written presentation  describing immediate and long term fire protection needs, and sell it to the bureaucracy. I discussed this with Mike O. yesterday and we agree to talk with other Firewise Committee members about key projects needing MWPA funding. An example would be to identify severely overgrown privately owned spaces where owners might be incented through matching funds to eliminate accumulated deadwood.  We need also to devise a long term plan for annual roadside veg management  (Mike indicates that the current year is less critical in view of PGE work, weed whacking by homeowners, and a one time allocation from PRE reserves).

Discussion of these points focused on the need to try to break even with JPA and what WE put in—all suggestions welcome and email David. A San Geronimo group got substantial grant and we might want to find out what they did. Christy said an Inverness group got a grant and this is what David wants us to work on a proposal to get this for us as well.

* IRA annual dues structure. Dues have not been raised in 20 years. Recommendations for increases range from $10-$50. The rationale is partly that there has been no raise over many years, partly that we need funds for safety work. The suggested increase is not over large and we will be asking later for a big road repaving endorsement. We ask residents to pay for chipping which is new (but subsidized somewhat for dues payers) and we can point to this support for chipping. Note: We can’t spend road board money except for the 10-foot easement limit so the IRA pocket is different and can be used for more purposes but needs to be kept separate. There are about 10 people each year who make additional donations above and beyond their dues payment. It was moved and passed that we raise dues to $50 at the next annual meeting and work on a good rationale for doing so, giving history and current/future needs. We need to perhaps have a look at proportion/number of property owners who actually pay dues. The number of unique property owners (including vacant lots) is 126.

New business:

* Community engagement – Thygeson. Marcus and Michael haven’t yet huddled so we will discuss this issue at our September meeting.
* Resident request for large “No Smoking” sign at bottom of DVD and short-term rentals - Stanton and Howard. See John Levy’s proposed signage. Should be good-sized, attractive, and clearly visible. Leah Light and Ron Bennett will work with John Levy on this. The goal is to have a large sign at the bottom of Drake’s View Drive plus multiple additional no smoking signs.

Next meeting:

* Date: September 12.
* Venue: Zoom most likely