

MINUTES
Inverness Ridge Association Board Meeting
March 11, 2023

Present: Sydne Bortel, Joe Burgess, Ken Drexler (for the Road Paving Task Force), Chris Eckert, Jennifer Howard, Leah Light, Julie Liss, Julie Merk, Michael Ongerth, Tim Stanton, David Wilson, Christian Winslow

Absent: Jim Wagner, Patty Wimpfheimer

Minutes: Leah Light

The minutes of the IRA Board Meeting of November 12, 2022, and the General Meeting of January 21, 2023, were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Tim Stanton for Patty Wimpfheimer

Our previous balance was \$25,628.04, including \$15,000.00 in restricted funds donated to support our repaving project. Income since that includes \$4.67 in interest and dues payments from several sources (\$550.00 in checks, \$300.00 via PayPal, and \$450.00 via Venmo). We had one expense of \$11.20 in PayPal fees and returned \$50.00 in overpaid dues. The current balance is \$26,871.51.

One question is whether dues payment is occurring at the same rate as in previous years. Tim will ask Patty Wimpfheimer to provide a list of residents who have paid in 2023.

Announcements: Tim Stanton

Tim announced that Jerry Meral, on behalf of the Inverness Association, has requested that we distribute a survey about attitudes towards short-term rentals in West Marin to PRE residents. There is currently a moratorium on short-term property rental, but this has proven quite controversial and will be taken up again by the Marin County Board of Supervisors. Discussion of this issue centered on motivation for the survey, the adequacy of the design of the survey, what the position of the Inverness Association might be, and whether the IRA Board should take a stance on this matter. Board members expressed concerns that short-term rentals reduce the availability of much-needed long-term rentals in the area, increase road traffic, and lead to problems in adhering to community norms (e.g., trash disposal). Tim will circulate the survey to board members for evaluation and further discussion of whether to invite PRE residents to participate in the survey.

Road Paving Task Force: Ken Drexler

Ken reviewed the next steps to be taken in the road paving project. He has approached three firms that might be interested in managing the project; one has declined and we are awaiting responses from the other two. Tim Stanton, Jennifer Howard, and Randy Merk are working with County officials to determine the interest rate for the loan we need to take to fund the project. Details for the scheduling of actual borrowing and repayment need to be worked out. The project manager, when selected, will need to learn the details of the project.

PRERAB: Mike Ongerth

Although roads are in relatively good shape given the severity of recent weather conditions, new potholes have appeared on Drake's View Drive from the bulletin board to Sir Francis Drake. Some residents have taken advantage of the gravel piles on Drake's View Drive and Douglas to fill potholes. We also have two culverts that are plugged up and others that are not in good shape. Some slides have occurred; care is needed in clearing these lest removal of the slide material encourage more serious earth displacement. Mike is preparing specifications for bids to repair potholes, deal with blocked ditches and culverts, and perhaps ameliorate washboarding.

Emergency Preparedness Committee: Jennifer Howard

We had a successful evacuation drill in 2022 and were hoping to have another in 2023; however, this has been cancelled. Mark Brown (Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority) will meet with residents on May 6 at 10:30 to discuss wildfire behavior in topography like ours; residents are invited to gather at the parking lot at the intersection of Limantour Road and the Bayview trail. MWPA will also conduct a focus group on March 23 as one step in preparation of a survey to assess perceptions of wildfire risk and available resources among county residents. Members of the Emergency Preparedness Committee and others from the IRA Board and community residents will participate in the focus group.

Firewise: David Wilson

We have qualified for status as a Firewise Community for 2023. One benefit of this designation is that some insurance companies may reduce rates for clients whose homes are in a Firewise community. Proof of our certification will be posted on the IRA website.

Measure C work on Sunnyside, Dover, and Drake's View Drive has been completed. We had anticipated that work would also be carried out on the various Robert roads, but due to a hitch in the approval process this did not happen. We have been told that this work will be a priority for next year but need to monitor this activity. It was suggested that a video documenting the work that was carried out would be useful in coming years when we need to conduct similar work to maintain the shaded evacuation corridor created this year.

The Tomales Bay State Park website has information about plans to restore Bishop pine habitat. There are also plans to include prevention of out-of-control wildfires.

One MWPA project important to our community is a projected West Marin shaded fuel breaks. Twelve PRE homes are adjacent to state park land that is at high fire risk.

Road Sign for the Bottom of Drake's View Drive: Tim Stanton

Ron Bennett has purchased materials for the sign and expects that it will be ready for placement at the bottom of our hill in a few months.

PRE Community Gathering: Tim Stanton

We look forward to a summer gathering at a to-be-determined location. Tim Stanton, Joe Burgess, and Julie Merk volunteered to serve as a planning committee for the event.

Reorganization of PRE Neighborhood Liaisons: Christian Winslow

Christian reviewed our existing neighborhood liaison program and described a new model that will better suit our needs for emergency preparedness and response and will have the added benefit of promoting a stronger sense of community.

We have been part of the Point Reyes Disaster Council with a Neighborhood Liaison program since 1982. PRE is a valuable partner for the PRDC and the Fire Department. Our goal is to maintain and cultivate these important relationships while improving our own emergency response. We have had nine zones, with neighborhood liaisons assigned an average of 16 houses. The zones do not currently reflect the topography of our community, with properties often strung out in a linear fashion along the hill. In the new model, there will be 18 zones with neighborhood groupings around road intersection points. Neighborhood liaisons will now be called “neighborhood leads” or NLs and will be assigned 8-10 houses on average. The goal is to have a “buddy system” with at least two people in each zone sharing tasks and having different areas of expertise (e.g., radio communication, first aid skills, prior training as a fireman).

The Fire Department relies on the NLs for information about our neighborhood’s needs during a natural disaster (fire, floods, earthquake). NLs should know their neighbors and keep their neighbors up to date on any emergency event. They are the main points of contact before, during and after any emergency events that might happen. All PRE NLs report to the PRE-Area Coordinator (AC) who is responsible for central communications, ensuring response readiness from the team, coordinating any training opportunities, and helping with PRE’s overall emergency response. The AC reports to the head of the Point Reyes Disaster Council. The NLs, in coordination with the AC, communicate as needed with the Fire Department and emergency services.

Christian reports that he has had considerable success in recruiting neighborhood leads although a few zones still need volunteers. In the past, the neighborhood liaison program was not integrated with the Inverness Ridge Association; going forward, it will be integrated with the Emergency Preparedness Committee and will report to the Inverness Ridge Association Board.

Board members were very positive about these proposed changes and voted unanimously to adopt them.

Siren: Christian Winslow

At one time, we conducted monthly tests of our emergency warning siren but this is no longer done regularly. Because it is important to have multiple warning systems in times of danger, we discussed resuming this practice.

Chipping Program: Tim Stanton

No IRA-sponsored chipping days are projected for 2023 at this time because we anticipate two days of Measure C chipping.

Election of Board Officers: Tim Stanton

The following slate of officers was elected for 2023:

President: Tim Stanton
Vice-President: Christian Winslow
Secretary: Leah Light
Treasurer: Patty Wimpfheimer

We discussed how the roles of president, vice-president, and immediate past-president of the IRA Board should be conceptualized to guarantee both continuity of leadership and greater sharing of responsibility. We will try out, as an experiment, a system in which the expectation will be that the vice-president, after a year or two of working with the president, will assume the board presidency, with the immediate past-president serving in an advisory capacity. If this proves a useful model, we may recommend changes in the IRA By-Laws to reflect a new structure.

Next Meeting

Date: May 13, 2023

Place: Bortel residence or Zoom or hybrid meeting