

# Alpine Fire Safe Council

**Approved Minutes**  
April 24, 2006  
**6:00 pm, Markleeville Fire Station**

The meeting of the Alpine Fire Safe Council was called to order by David Griffith, Chair, at 6:15 pm at the Markleeville Fire Station, Markleeville, CA 96120.

**Present:**

David Griffith	FSC Board	Woodfords Resident
Kim Chatfield	FSC Board	Woodfords Resident
Steve Yonker	FSC Board	Woodfords Resident
Shirley Taylor (6:55 pm)	FSC Board	Woodfords Resident
Jeff Brees	Coordinator	Markleeville Resident
Kerry Radelfinger	Administrator	Woodfords Resident
Gene Weatherby	Weatherby-Reynolds-Fritson Engineering and Design	
John Benoit	Local Agency Formation Commission of Calaveras	
Dennis Dickman	Dennis Dickman and Associates	

**Absent:**

Don Jardine	FSC Board	Markleeville Resident
Al Moss	FSC Board	Woodfords Resident

**I. Call to order**

**II. Introductions**

**III. Approve minutes of March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.**

*Motion to approve.*

*Motion: Steve Yonker*

*Second: Kim Chatfield*

*All ayes. Motion carried.*

**IV. Administrative Committee**

David Griffith reported that he and Shirley Taylor had been into the bank to make the changes necessary to add Taylor and Kim Chatfield as signors on the checking account. Chatfield will go by the bank this week to sign the papers. Kerry Radelfinger reported that there is a non-profit checking account available that would eliminate the \$5 monthly service fee on the account. The service fee would be waived for maintaining a \$100 minimum daily balance

and receiving online bank statements. It was agreed that Taylor would call Wells Fargo to take care of changing the account.

**V. Education Committee**

**VI. Government Committee**

**VII. Treasury and Audit Committee**

**VIII. Old Business**

- a. Update on Mesa Vista/River Ranch water study public meeting date and discussion of plan options.

Jeff Brees stated they had held off setting a date for the public meeting until the Council had received input from the Woodfords Fire Department. Brees and Chatfield attended the meeting of the Woodfords Fire Department and most of the department members had not had a chance to review the study so, they did not have much input at that point. Brees will speak with Buck McClelland and Jim Haen and get their input on the study. Brees will send out an email to schedule a date and arrange it with Nick Zaninovich.

- b. Update on chipping program grant from the State Clearinghouse.

Jeff Brees submitted the final application for the chipping program grant that has been awarded to the Council. Brees spoke with Martin Goldberg, with Lake Valley Chipping Program, and they received their grant through the State Clearinghouse, and the Alpine Fire Safe Council is included in that grant as well. The grant that the Council received is for November 2006 through November 2007. The Lake Valley crew will be scheduled in Alpine County for one week this summer with a possible call back for additional chipping needs. Griffith asked for clarification on matching funds for the Lake Valley Chipping Program, which Brees stated was \$1000 of administrative support. The Council was awarded \$23,706 for the State Clearinghouse grant with a \$1500 match. Brees also reported that the Council had applied to RAC for a chipping grant, but it might be possible to convert those funds to mastication as another means for a fuels reduction project. He does not see the need for additional chipping, since the Council received two other chipping program grants. Griffith asked for the status of the RAC meeting. Brees reported that Franklin Pemberton has asked for the RAC committee to work out a meeting date. Brees will check on the status of the meeting and report back to the Council.

- c. Update on committee to promote adoption of the Eastern Alpine County Fire Services Plan.

David Griffith reported that there had not been a lot of progress, but the committee will be meeting this week. The committee would like to firm

up the dollar figures found in the Fire Services Plan. Griffith and Don Jardine talked with the County Treasurer about the Transient Occupancy Tax. On the East Slope the Transient Occupancy Tax raises \$155,000 based on a rate of 10%. If that is raised to 12%, the 2 percentage point increase would raise \$30,000. The other area they wanted to check on was available funding in the County budget that could be used to pay the Benefit Assessment District fee for the County and school buildings. Jardine was going to look into this issue.

- d. Update on Hot Springs Road Fuels Reduction Project.  
Jeff Brees reported that he was attempting to get a hold of Mary Huggins of CDF to arrange for her to meet with him, Ted Bacon, and Rick Edney on the project. Brees spoke with Don Hittenmiller who wanted to see what Bacon decided before committing to anything.
- e. Update on Board of Supervisors action on a Fire Marshal.  
This item will be continued to the next meeting as Don Jardine was not in attendance.

David Griffith reported that the issue of setbacks from properties for building a house had come up at a previous meeting. There is an application for a variance for the Planning Commission's meeting for a house in Markleevillage requesting a reduction of the setback to 10 feet from the road. Griffith questioned how important setbacks are to the Council in increasing the risk of fire danger. Brees stated if there is a structure fire the radiant heat could catch the neighboring house on fire. Griffith queried whether the Council wants to get involved in this issue. Yonker stated that this could be an educational opportunity about the fire dangers of houses in close proximity to each other. Chatfield agreed that the Council should comment on variance requests to regulations that are set to reduce the risk of fire. It was agreed that Griffith would write a letter from the Council to the Planning Commission stating concern for reducing spacing between buildings by reducing setbacks without considering impacts of one house fire spreading to another house.

**IX. New Business**

- a. Discussion of Benefit Assessment Engineering Analysis with Gene Weatherby of Weatherby, Reynolds, and Fritson Engineering and Design. David Griffith stated that Gene Weatherby, John Benoit, and Dennis Dickman were present to discuss the Benefit Assessment Engineering Analysis that is needed to create a Benefit Assessment District. The Eastern Alpine County Fire Services Plan outlines the cost of a consultant to complete the required report to be about \$45,000. Weatherby, Reynolds, and Fritson Engineering and Design gave an estimated cost of \$15,000 to Judy Molnar, Assistant to the Board of Supervisors. Griffith stated that the Council wanted to be sure the scope of work for the

estimate received by Molnar was the same as what was needed for a Benefits Assessment Engineering Analysis. Weatherby stated that he made a proposal, as requested by Molnar, to provide information for a Benefits Assessment District. John Benoit and Dennis Dickman will be working with Weatherby under one contract with the County. They have received various reports and need more information on what the exact needs are for the Benefit Assessment Analysis. Griffith stated that there are regulatory requirements for preparing an engineer's report prior to property owner's voting for a Benefit Assessment District on the East Slope of Alpine County, excluding Bear Valley and Kirkwood, to determine how much each property owner will benefit from the proposed assessment. The requirements for the engineer's report are laid out in the legislation. Benoit stated that his understanding was that the goal was to form an independent Fire Protection District. Griffith stated that it would be a Benefit Assessment District, not a Fire Protection District. Benoit questioned who would be the governing board for the Benefit Assessment District. Griffith stated that the Board of Supervisors would probably be governing this district and the funds would be used to support the County Fire Department on the East Slope. Benoit was under the impression that a separate entity would be formed for a special fire protection district. Griffith stated that the hopes are for it to be a County department, with the Chief reporting to the Board of Supervisors, but will work under the Office of Emergency Services. Part of the funding would come from the Benefits Assessment District. After some discussion on a Benefits Assessment District, Weatherby, Benoit, and Dickman stated they had a different idea of what was needed out of the engineering study regarding the type of district to be formed and scope of work. Weatherby queried when they would like the engineering study to be complete. Griffith stated that the need to get the political support before putting it on the ballot. He does not believe they will be ready for the November ballot. Weatherby stated that he did not think they would be able to complete their report by that time either. After much discussion on the Benefit Assessment District, Weatherby stated that they will need to regenerate their direction based upon the new understanding of the scope of work for the Benefits Assessment District.

- b. View Acorn DVD from Thornburg Studios.  
Jeff Brees presented the Acorn DVD to the Council. Nancy Thornburg is in the process of making a better copy of the DVD which will include a voice over.
- c. Request for authorization to hire Steve Harcourt to provide RPF services for Draft Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) update.  
Jeff Brees requested authorization to hire Steve Harcourt for RPF services for the CWPP update. Brees met with Harcourt who estimated \$2500 for the actual ground-truthing. Griffith stated that the funds have been

allocated for the project. It was agreed that Brees could move forward with this issue.

d. Staff Reports

Kerry Radelfinger reported that she had left a message with Richard Peters checking on the status of the Council's 2005 tax returns, which are due on May 15<sup>th</sup>. She will continue to try and reach him and see how he is progressing.

David Griffith questioned how the Forest Service grant funds were coming through. Radelfinger stated that they have been receiving the funds. The final report for the Mesa Vista/ River Ranch water study grant has been filed. Radelfinger questioned whether the Burn Pile grant should be extended. It was agreed that it would be extended until the end of the year.

Brees reported that he had not had a chance to do much work on the Hot Springs Road Evacuation Plan. Brees met one of the authors of the Park Hill Evacuation Plan who will be a good resource. Brees will meet with the Sheriff and Under-sheriff as well as the Disaster Council to get their input on the issue.

Brees commented that the public displays of fire safe literature might be better presented by creating a wildfire preparation kit that would include all the important literature in one easy to grab packet. The Building Department could also use this new packet to hand out with building permits. It was agreed that Brees would put an organized packet together for the public displays.

**X. Adjournment**

- a. Set next meeting at Woodfords Fire Station at 6:00 pm on Monday May 29<sup>th</sup>.

*Motion to approve.*

*Motion: Kim Chatfield*

*Second: Steve Yonker*

*All ayes.*