

SHASTA COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL
1525 Median Avenue, Shasta Lake, CA 96073
(and via Zoom)
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2023

OPEN (Public) SESSION

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:34am by Francis Berg, President

Mission of the Shasta County Fire Safe Council:

The primary Mission of this Corporation shall be focused within Shasta County to help protect the citizens, property, and natural resources from the effects of catastrophic wild land fires.

Present: Board Members and Guests were welcomed.

Introduction of **Officers:** President, Francis Berg
Secretary/Treasurer (Acting) – Frances Belden
Executive Director – Pamela Bates
Pamela A. Mainini, CPA – CFO

Introduction of **Directors:** Vice President – Dan Adam (via Zoom)
Barbara Holder – Director
Steve Johnson – Director (via Zoom)
Steve Fitch – Director

Absent:

Dennis Possehn – Director
Jim Chapin - Director
Richard Karem – Director

Administrative Announcements & Agenda Additions and/or Deletions – None

Introduction of Guests & Visitors:

1. Ronald Rusten – SCFSC: County Coordinator
2. Kat Camplin – SCFSC: Social Media Consultant
3. Brandon Dethlefs – U.S. Forest Service, Redding, CA
4. Troy Velin – Cal-Fire
5. Bruce Ross – District Director, Office of Senator Brian Dahle
6. Catherine Joplin – Private citizen, Lakehead
7. Mary Rickert – Shasta County Board of Supervisors
8. John Livingston – Grant Writer/Consultant
9. Tony Hinchliffe – Firewise Lead – Shasta Forest Village (via Zoom)
10. Dan Doget – NVCSS – Emergency Preparedness Educator
11. Yvonne Bennett – Firewise Lead – Whispering Woods (via Zoom)
12. Tuli Potts – Sierra Nevada Conservancy (via Zoom)
13. Sarah Seiler – Western Shasta RCD (via Zoom)
14. Adam Zaharris – U.S. National Park Service – Whiskeytown (via Zoom)
15. Desiree LaMaggiore – Lower Salt Creek, Shasta Trinity (via Zoom)

Agency Updates

Troy Velin – Cal-Fire – Battalion 5 Chief

- Replacing Dan Bennett who was moved to fire crew in Happy Valley Fire Center
- 44 projects in the unit – 24,000 acres on contract
- This year burned 17,000 acres so far
- Crews at the Northern California Veterans Cemetery – should be done by mid-January – used National Guard crews
- 2 projects on board to get approved by April – Niles Canyon and Gore Ranch
- Now working on project in Shingletown – Bear Creek drainage
- Working with federal counterparts on Backbone Road to get ridge system tied in and maintained in the future.
- Discussion with about Backbone being a key ridge with several different agencies involved

Brandon Dethlefs – U.S. Forest Service

- U.S. Forest Service wants to do their part on Backbone Ridge
- Working on under burning on Green Mountain, Little Backbone Creek and Sacramento Arm
- Burning in Lakehead – piles near resort
- Operations by Silverthorn – 100-acre pile contract – thinning both sides of the road to resort
- Work started last week above Salt Creek – contract for 250 acres – thinning and piling to burn next year
- East side of Gregory Creek Campground – cleaning up from old Salt Fire
- Next couple of months – Salt Creek/O’Brien area – thinning/piles contract project
- Discussion about planned burns/air quality/wind change/smoke

Adam Zaharris – U.S. National Park Service – Whiskeytown

- Working on prescribed burns
- Focused on eastern boundary – 225 acres thinned and piled to open up ridge systems from Shasta Mine to South Fork mountains on north-end of park
- Focusing on infrastructure and road system
- Shared maps of thinning and piling
- Hwy 299 – north-end project – thinning and piling
- Discussion about 299 buffer and 299 stretch to Salt Creek, BLM and private land outside of park service boundary and getting ridge prepped

Tuli Potts – Sierra Nevada Conservancy

- \$35 million in Wildfire Resilience Recovery Funding – requests for over \$75 million for the program
- Will keep SCFSC posted if any are within SCFSC’s footprint
- Agencies here to increase collaboration with Shasta Lake/entire Upper Sacramento/McCloud River watershed
- SNC is updating 5-year strategic plan

Sarah Seiler – Western Shasta RCD

- Biggest project is a fuels reduction project with the U.S. Forest Service starting at O’Brien mountain area – will treat over 3,000 acres
- Finishing fuels reduction on BLM land recreation area
- Starting implementation on Whitmore pilot project partnership with SCFSC/Cal-OES/Cal-Fire home hardening and defensible space for low income and disadvantaged communities
- Fuels reduction treatment in China Gulch area off Hwy273
- Working on agreement with NRCS helping them write Forest Management Plans so private land owners can apply for cost-share funding thru NRCS

- Working on small grant restoration projects on private properties that burned from wildfires over the past few years – seeding and erosion control in Salt Fire scar, Zoggs and Igo

Mary Rickert – Shasta County Board of Supervisors

- Attended CEC Meeting at GAIA hotel – information about the meeting discussed

County Coordinator Report – Ron Rusten

- Ron and Katie did Silverthorn Firewise orientation
- Shasta Forest Village put on an education meeting day
- Working with CAL-FIRE liaison re Firewise re-certification
- Giving Tuesday brought in enough to cover registration
- County-wide Fuels meeting yesterday was well-attended and successful. Attendees included Cal-Fire/BLM/Lassen Fire Safe Council/ Western Shasta RCD/Shasta College GIS Professor/McConnell Foundation hosted meeting at their beautiful campus. Identification to strategically plan to focus and build on what other agencies are doing
- Shape files/GIS mapping will keep us up-to-date on what everyone is working on

Social Media Consultant – Kat Camplin

- Kat played promotional video she designed for SCFSC – great reviews – length 2:11 minutes
- Video discussion – video should include SCFSC’s key role as “promoting coordination among our partners” - coordination role is key and very important

Education & Outreach Committee Report: Barbara Holder

- Complimented Aaron Hathaway – extremely helpful with Firewise Communities – we ought to figure out how to recognize him and those who step-up. Mary Rickert made a suggestion to have a “SCFSC Honoree of the Year” where people are nominated and one is picked annually
- Yvonne has been thinking hard about evacuations and what you can do in advance to prepare
- Quarterly Firewise leaders shared what they’ve been working on and their frustrations – these quarterly meetings should be continued - helps them get to know each other, update each other, and help each other with ideas and suggestions
- Next quarterly Firewise meeting would like to focus on Fire Marshall’s list of building materials – this is a leadership opportunity for us to get out an updated list of these specific materials. Bob Wilson could add to this agenda in finding suppliers – he knows the requirements and struggles of getting these materials
- Shasta Forest Village has some of the strongest Firewise leaders resigning after many years and we need to keep that community going – it is a high-risk high-cost area. Carl Skinner participated and provided great information.
- Completed our Inwood field trip with Ron Rusten and Jim and identified ingress/egress needs – main concern this is right next to emergency collection site

Grants & Projects Committee Report:

- Jim, Frank and Steve drove through a project that would be a strategic 3-mile buffer between the City of Shasta Lake and the 3M property and the railroad easement. It would be a valuable buffer if we can get the funds for it. Will be applying for a fuel reduction grant for that area through Cal-Fire. We need a good railroad contact to get a letter of support and possible financial support.
- There is a fuel-break project that Dennis working on for Happy Valley
- Working on the Planning Grant for Hwy 299W
- Working on a Block Grant for the Firewise community groups – talked to Cal-Fire about this and they were very supportive

Executive Director's Report - Pam Bates

- Cal-Fire Wildfire Mitigation program for home hardening and defensible space that we have been working on for two years – finally had our first home visit and job walk in Whitmore with 6 general contractors and 3 defensible space specialists. Cal-Fire and CAL-OES attended. Total of 25 homes in the Whitmore program - starting with a few homes – but as it proceeds the plan is to batch the homes to maximize the efficiency
- Three locations have been selected in the State for this Cal-Fire Wildfire Mitigation program – San Diego and Lake County and Shasta County
- Bullskin Ridge Fuel Break – Jim and Evan did site visit and Evan reported he has completed 80% of the flagging on the Phillip's property – layout will be complete next month
- Cal-Fire Chipping Grant- we have been awarded the Grant, but all Wildfire Prevention Grant agreements are on hold State-wide – pending executive decisions on terms and conditions - hope to have language resolved by end of year
- Grant discussion among the board members
- Need to take before, during and after photos

Public Comments – None

Public Dismissed – Break

Break/Lunch

Section II: Administrative (Closed) Session

Chief Financial Officer's Report – Pamela Mainini, CPA

- The Financial Reports were distributed to the Board and were reviewed by the members present.
- Welcome to Barb March – she and Pam B. are happy to have the extra help – billing portion developing the accounting is springing into full action
- Closed 512B from CAL-OES
- Sent report for 103 County Coordinator grant
- Sent in report for 901
- Pam opened 3 additional savings accounts for new funds coming in
- Board discussion – Grants typically hold a 10% retention during closeout. SCFSC will eventually receive, but can be delayed up to 3 months or longer. Need to think about “retention” and how to manage the flow as we go through the closeout of grants. Must build a pool of funds that doesn't have restrictions so we can use it while waiting to get paid the retention funds or if in between advances.
- Need a reserve/operating reserve of 2-3 months operating expenses
- Billing indirect is contributing to the revenue for Admin
- Budget vs. Actual – made a commitment to revisit the budget mid-year. Pam M. is coming out in January to work with Pam Bates on budget revision to adjust 23/24 budget
- Lassen Fire Safe Council books reconciliation remains a priority. \$26,000 has not been transferred – still reconciling
- Tax return extension is now due in May 2024
- SCFSC needs to solicit an auditor – does anyone know of a firm? Should send out 5 requests in the Sacramento area – does not need to be local, can work remotely
- Discussion on indirects – getting complicated as more grants awarded
- Francis had question regarding Zogg fire money – will not receive until possibly June 2024 – these funds to be used for maintaining our organization. \$500,000 in funds – most likely will not receive it all at once

Executive Director's Report - Pam Bates

- PG& E Chipping grant - \$3,500 left over – must use funds by end of term 12/31/23. Jason Snider will use for GIS mapping
- County-wide mapping project is becoming profoundly important. All agencies see great value in the mapping. Francis commented this might be a good time to increase Jason Snider's hourly rate to \$45.00/hour.

Approval of Jason Snider Hourly Rate Increase

Motion: Moved by Francis Berg, and seconded by Barbara Holder, to approve the hourly rate increase for Jason Snider to \$45/hr. Motion carried.

Votes in Favor: 6
Votes in Opposition: 0
Abstain from Vote: 0
Directors Absent: 3

- CWMP grant 512 closed out advance. Reconciled timesheets and invoices – completed and submitted.
- Shasta County grant report – used for capacity building. 1st year spent \$89,000 – but brought in 1.3 million – heavy start-up costs
- Note on fund raising – SCFSC now on CFNS as an organization that can receive donations. Received first donation from BrightFunds in the amount of \$1300

Grants & Projects Committee Report:

- Steve - discussion on homeowner's defensible space. Need to ask "what is our role in defensible space" before we get into big block grant. Define how much we want to take on – 3 scenarios:
 1. Do not take on the responsibility of doing defensible space for the homeowner – but to educate them and keep the homeowner responsible and facilitate and assist
 2. Continue role of County Coordinator and grant provider, but using others such as Western Shasta RCD or the CCC or even Firewise to do the work and we fund them
 3. Become the doer and have a few trusted contractors that we work with and take on supervising and coordinating contracts which brings on potential liabilities. Would the homeowners come to us even though we have contractors?
- Look at others and see how they are handling defensible space and what they have come up against
- Discussion from Barb H. about good example - Whispering Woods
- Home hardening has a lot of liability risk – hold harmless clause and high insurance needed
- Discussion on defensible space and the Whitmore project
- Discussion on grants and ranking for funding
- Discussion on implementation grants
- Railroad grant project – north of Mountain Gate. Start by old Indian Cemetery on BLM and go up to Tunnel Road. Fuel break will vary in distance from road. Has a lot of support from Forest Service, Mountain Gate, BLM and Shasta Lake. What Shasta Lake is doing will add and compliment this project
- Hwy 299W – per Rich Whiskeytown is actually planning work from Visitor Center down below Old Shasta to Cal-Fire station and Paramount Road. Down side is there are a lot of small parcels along this area – lots of trailers and brush growth - may be challenging getting parcel owners on board. Contacted Tom March, environmental contact, at Cal-Trans – he will write letters of support for this project – ready to go
- Discussion on how do we decide which grants SCFSC should apply for? Need ranking system
- Barb H. brought up Kat's video to put on our website and YouTube. All in favor of moving forward with buying the video. No motion needed – less than 5K

- Barb H. discussion regarding Carl Skinner and all of the work he has done – 6 hours of lectures on our website that we use - \$100 gift card and a Thank You card. Certificates recognizing those who step-up such as Firewise leaders and volunteers
- How do we want to handle informational talks – how can we get information out regarding WUI certified materials in a bigger way? Presentations at Firewise meetings.
- Discussion on State and County approved WUI materials for decks/windows/doors – companies/contacts/models/ratings and where to purchase

Francis Berg

- Proposed amendment to the Bylaws – SCFSC has had lots of changes to administration. More complex. Made some suggestions. It will take a motion to amend the Bylaws.
- Discussion regarding out-of-pocket expenses. Where do we draw the line? Especially regarding mileage. Approvals before purchases.

Secretary/Treasurer’s Report – Fran Belden/Barb March

- Monthly expenses report handed out to review
- Email all reports in this Board meeting to all Board members

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: Moved by Francis Berg, and seconded by Barbara Holder, to approve the Minutes of the October 18th, 2023, Shasta County Fire Safe Council Board of Directors Meeting, as amended. Motion carried.

Votes in Favor: 6
 Votes in Opposition: 0
 Abstain from Vote: 0
 Directors Absent: 3

Secretary/Treasurer’s Report: Frances J. Belden, Secretary/Treasurer and Barbara March, Executive Assistant prepared the Treasurer’s Reports. It was reviewed by the Board members present, and approved for filing as submitted.

Motion: Moved by Francis Berg, and seconded by Barbara Holder, to approve the Treasurer’s Reports as submitted. Motion carried.

Votes in Favor: 6
 Votes in Opposition: 0
 Abstain from Vote: 0
 Directors Absent: 3

Last Discussion

- Mary Rickert requested a letter of support from SCFSC regarding the wind turbines. Did we write letter? It’s a political fight between the County and the State.
- CEC is seeking private and public agency’s views - each agency giving their view on their specific area
- Should SCFSC write the support letter? Steve Johnson’s opinion was asked – if written, it should be limited to issue of fire safety – this is not viewed as lobbying or inappropriate. It’s appropriate if asking “does this project increase wildfire risk or not.” Wind turbines are tall and if there are wildfires it affects aerial firefighters. Letter to be completed in the next 30 days
- Shasta County has an ordinance that does not allow large wind turbines within the jurisdiction of the County

Approval of Steve Johnson to Draft Letter of Support

- **Motion:** Moved by Francis Berg, and seconded by Steve Fitch, to approve Steve Johnson to draft letter to the CEC with the help of Jim Chapin and Steve Fitch on the proposed wind turbine project for Board to review and make final decision.

Votes in Favor: 6
Votes in Opposition: 0
Abstain from Vote: 0
Directors Absent: 3

Meetings coming up:

Grants & Projects: Rich Karem/Jim Chapin/Steve Fitch
(Every 1st Weds. of each month)

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

9:30am – 11:00am

In-Person Meeting in the SCFSC Office at 1181 Hilltop Drive, Redding

Education & Outreach: Barb Holder/Ron Rusten/Pam Bates/Katie Komnenich
(Every 1st Weds. of each month)

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

11:00am – 12:00pm

In-Person Meeting in the SCFSC Office at 1181 Hilltop Drive, Redding

Board of Directors Meeting:
(Every 3rd Weds. of each month)

Wednesday, January 17, 2024

9:30am – 2:00pm

In-Person Meeting at 1525 Median Avenue, Shasta Lake, CA 96019

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:49pm.

Submitted by:

[Barbara March](#)

Executive Assistant