

Valley Center Community Planning Group
Emergency Evacuation Sub-Committee
June 23, 2022 6:30pm
Minutes



Committee

Delores Chavez Harmes
Chair / VCCPG

LaVonne Norwood
Vice Chair / VCCPG

Lisa Adams
VCCPG / Mobility

Sgt. Michael Davis
SD Co. Sheriff

James Gordon
LAFCO/Community

Chief Joe Napier
Valley Center Fire

Chief Rick Johnson
Deer Springs Fire

DC Robert Reynolds
Cal Fire

Jim Courter
Great Valley Center
Fire Safe Council



Representatives

Adrienne Selekmán
District 5 Representative

Lt. Jim Emig
SD Co. Sheriff

A. Attendance: Dee Harmes, Lisa Adams, Sgt. Michael Davis, Chief Joe Napier, James Gordon, Chief David Morrison, Chief Robert Reynolds, Chief Adam Gettman.

B. Pledge of Allegiance: Meeting called to order at 6:45pm having waited for members to join to attain quorum.

C. Welcome & Introduction of Guests: Deer Springs Fire Chief David Morrison.

D. Approval of Minutes: May 26, 2022, minutes moved to approve by Chief Joe Napier with a second by Sgt. Michael Davis. Motion passes unanimously.

Public Comments: None

E. Action Items:

- Chair's Report:** Dee Harmes reported a code compliance received a complaint on the property next to the former Pointed Deli on Old Castle Road, with concerns about the forthcoming sports park. Residents are concerned with lights, parking, noise, etc which are all part of a sports park. County code compliance responded to the property and found that no grading was being performed, rather weeds and debris were being cleared. Currently, the VCCPG has not received any plans for approval of a sports park. However, Mr. Dragos who is leasing the property from the owners, has called three times inquiring about the process to obtain a permit.

Supervisor Nathan Fletcher was asked if he would approach the cannabis issue in the unincorporated areas of the county differently? He stated that smoking cannabis was no different than going to a bar and having a cocktail or two and venturing out on the road. Currently there are no plans to amend or adjust the cannabis ordinance for the unincorporated parts of the county.

- VCFPD-Chief Napier:** Meeting was held today with Team Rubicon (national organization that builds homes and works in lower socio-economic areas) on winter work on our evacuation routes. GVCFSC is doing remarkable work with writing grants, chipping days and making sure we continue to get the word out for evacuation routes, keeping defensible space to 20ft or 30ft by the Valley Center ordinance. Team Rubicon can provide help during the winter months by coming on to private easements, private properties and tribal lands so we can work in direct concert with CAL Fire on some of the direct funded projects Chief Mecham has identified. VC touches many different agencies and it's important that we don't work in conflict with our fire partners.

Two grants denied – Fire Safe Council denied grant request for Urban Corp to come through to perform what Team Rubicon is now doing. High Resolution Aerial Imagery was also denied. Aerial imagery reduces the number of boots on the ground needed DSI requirements. Chief Mecham shared the state has some programs in place for aerial imagery and will work with us to move this need forward. The best chance of saving structures is through real defensible space initiatives.

Aging homeowners with large properties, and who's children have since moved away, endure an economic hardship in trying to take care of their dead/dying crops. This is where non-profits come in to help these homeowners clear their property, as well as other demographics i.e. disabled veterans, etc. Although these two grants were denied, we will continue to reapply and press on for this very critical need.

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Minutes (cont.)

Chair Harmes shared the importance of examining senior housing in Valley Center. It's important to be able to provide a community where seniors, who have lived here for so many years, raised their children and now have properties they cannot manage on their own, are able to stay in the community they know and age in place in smaller homes in Valley Center. VCFPD would encourage responsible growth to include senior housing and senior involvement in the community to include some jobs.

- CAL Fire Update Station 71-Division Chief Reynolds/Gettman:** Some changes have been made including Chief Dave Morrison assuming the position of Chief at Deer Springs Fire District. He will be a great addition to Deer Springs, San Diego Fire and CAL Fire. Additionally, Chief Adam Gettman has replaced Robert Reynolds at CAL Fire station 71. He has worked in the Valley Center area for a good part of his career. Both will be great additions to our team.

Station 71 has moved to peak staffing with 27 engines in the unit. A new fire center has been started at Camp Fox, near the La Jolla reservation, with 2 crews daily, Rainbow fire center has 3 crews daily (previously staffed with inmates). Valley Center and Rincon stations are staffed with 2 engines each.

Chief Gettman reports he is thrilled to be back in the area he calls home. He has spent much of his career in this battalion and is excited to be part of our team. His areas of responsibility are Battalion 3317 – Valley Center, Rincon, Pauma Valley and Palomar area. Will also be in direct contact with HQ, etc. Deer Springs is not in his area.

- Deer Springs Fire Protection District-Chief Morrison:** Very excited to have assumed the position of division chief. We are knee deep in DSI and working with fire safe council on road clearings. Final two positions have been filled.
- San Diego County Sheriff-Sgt. Mike Davis:** Sgt. Davis will be transitioning next week to the Sheriff's Emergency Planning Detail. Sgt. Tyler Skills will replace Sgt. Davis. Compliments to the subcommittee for all the knowledge and insight gained during his time on this board. Fire Chiefs have provided an extremely valuable education that will transfer over to his new assignment. Sgt. Davis will share the great work being done here.

Question was asked if VCFPD has suspended burn permits for the year? Burn permits have been suspended until weather changes and/or rain. Likely not till January or February 2023.

- Community Risk Reduction-Chief Reynolds:** continuing with roadside clearances throughout the county. The La Jolla truck trail, which drops down from the Guejito Ranch, will have work starting soon as well as Paradise Mtn and the Hell Hole Canyon area.
- Greater Valley Center Fire Safe Council-Jim Courter:** The next chipping day will be July 23, 2022, thanks to a grant from the San Diego Regional Fire Foundation. More grants have been applied for. Meetings on evacuation route fuel reduction were attended. Details will be forthcoming.
- LAFCO-James Gordon:** No meeting in June.
- Community Action Network (CAN)-Lisa Adams:** Representative from the State Insurance Commissioner Office addressed problems consumers might be having with their fire insurance cancelled, high premiums, claims dissatisfaction, etc. they should contact the California State Insurance office. Instructions are posted on their website on how address these issues. Insurance companies are not legally allowed to cancel people's insurance. \$130 billion in insurance premiums just in California. State can't remedy the problem if complaints are not brought forward.

F. New Business:

- VCCPG Meeting:** During the June meeting of the VCCPG, the Valley Center Road Corridor Plan, discussion on roundabouts ensued addressing the slow emergency response times fire, CHP and sheriff experience when navigating roundabouts and how the subcommittee of Emergency

Evacuation have serious concerns regarding the proposed concept plan for Valley Center Road with four roundabouts. Steve Hutchison, A planning group board member who also sits on the Valley Center Fire Protection board, dismissed this concern stating, "It is a well-known fact that Chief Napier is not a fan of roundabouts". However, Chief Napier was not the one who expressed his concern for roundabouts during the emergency evacuation subcommittee meeting. Sgt. Davis also suggested to bring CHP into the conversation. It is important to note the number of accidents that occurred at the Hwy 76 roundabout. The County will present their concept plan on July 21st, 2:30 at the middle school.

2. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 7:26pm

Next Meeting: July 28, 6:30pm

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