

January 16, 2014 Lincoln County FireSafe Council Meeting Minutes

Prior to the regularly scheduled FSC meeting a sub-committee met to discuss plans for the upcoming Fireman's Rodeo. Attending this meeting were Mark and Terrie Peck, Lisa Osborn, Dawain Burgess, Steve Lauer, Ed Levert, Doug Turman.

Mark announced that June 7 is the scheduled date for the event at J.Neils Park. Since this was the initial meeting there were many ideas thrown around. This year's event seeks to expand from the fireman competition to include FireWise and to attract a larger segment of the public. The group felt they could condense parts of the program. Last years program had periods of inactivity and by the time the band started they had lost many attendees. Mark suggested setting up a fire camp with a ICS command so firefighters could stay at the park. He also said that it was important to have a demob plan so more folks could share in cleaning things up.

Mark suggested approaching Plum Creek Timber Co. to be a major sponsor. I said that I felt that the rodeo could be an excellent opportunity to promote the FireWise program and that we could use Title III funds to help sponsor. Last year's event raised over \$13,000 that was donated to the Firefighter Assoc.

Lisa said that we could invite me exhibits and vendors to set up. The new FireSafe Council trailer will be available. Hopefully the county fire departments would have a presence, bring an engine, etc. She said that last year Frontier provided hot dogs and we could get food vendors. A decision was going to be needed as to how many teams should be invited.

A planning team is being put together to work on the event. It was hoped that many of the folks that helped last year could help this year, but there was a need to spread the work around more so no one got stuck with too much. The next meeting for this group is Jan 30 at 9AM at the fire hall.

The handling of bills, receipts, etc. was a problem last year. Lisa suggested that perhaps Jennifer La Manna of FireSafe Montana might be able to help. I said I would check and see what might be involved if our local FireSafe Council wanted to have a 501© 3 designation. I also said that I thought we could provide scholarships to county firefighters to encourage their participation.

Regular Meeting

Attendees; Dawain Burgess, TFF RFD; Lisa Osborn, Three River RD; Ed Levert, Lincoln Co; Mark Peck and Doug Turman, DNRC; Lou Kuennen, Flathead Economic Policy Center; Vic White, Lincoln County Emergency Management; Kirk Kraft, Lincoln County Sheriff's Dept.; Steve Lauer, Libby RFD

Round Robin:

Osborn- The FireWise trailer message proofs are ready to review. As soon as she accepts the proofs Steve will get the trailer to Moyie Springs to have attached. The FS fire budget is not great, but it is better than earlier projections. They should be able to hire the same number of firemen as last year. There is no open burning now until March. Hiring has started. The Buckhorn EIS is about completed.

Kuennen Lou discussed the grant agreements status to date: Libby FireWise-22 grants, \$48,710 obligated, 84 acres, 6 verified. Lake Creek-7 grants, \$33,416 obligated, 65 acres, 1 verified. West Kootenai- 8 grants, \$34,744 verified, 48 acres, 2 verified.

Burgess- TFS had a house fire yesterday, but the house was saved. Good mutual aid response. New fire board meeting went well.

Lauer- Working on a contract for electrical work for generators. Working on 30,000 gal water storage facility on Parmenter. Steve has been doing a response map to tie in with BNSF milage markers. Training on-going.

Kraft- Kirk said that fire dispatch policy is currently being developed. There is good support in the sheriff's department for the FireWise program. Kirk is now the fire chief of the Fisher River RFD. Their fire department will be ready to do firewise assessments this spring and Kirk will contact me in about a month to arrange training for their firefighters.

White- The recent rains were a real concern for ice jams on Flower Creek. No problems were observed here although there was some minor flooding in Troy and Sheldon Flats. Empty sand bags(100) and a source of sand are available to threatened homeowners. Recent disasters with trains hauling crude oil have caused an increased height of awareness. Emergency Management has been receiving additional training from BNSF on hazardous chemical identification. Working on a response plan for such a disaster.

Turman- Working on getting fire operations plans to fire departments.

Levert- The Edgewater 10 acre fuel reduction project is underway. Tom Horelick is the contractor and the cost of the project is \$458/acre. This includes removal of 61 MBF of ponderosa pine logs, removing the understory and chipping and grinding the limbs and understory. All work must be completed by May because of the fear of Ips beetles in the larger limbs and tops.

I met with the Flathead Economic Policy Center folks to discuss the Libby FireWise Community grant. Much of the money has been going to Sanders County since they have been subsidizing the grant with Title III dollars. There is \$90,000 left and I hope we can find enough worthwhile projects here to spend the balance on. I am looking at several larger projects that lay in a critical area southwest of Libby. One is Mark Decker's 40 acres and he is interested in participating in the grant.

The Alvord Lake community forest grant proposal was sent in this Tuesday. This grant if successful would provide \$400,000 toward the purchase of 142 acres adjacent to the lake. Good local support for the project. I picked up the FSC calendars and they are being distributed.

Old Business

Education Committee- The focus of our discussion was the direction of our advertising for 2014. The thought is that we need to focus more on the evacuation end of the Ready-Set-Go program that would hopefully get the attention of homeowners more so than in the past. The objective is to get them to treat their fuels and prepare their house for a fire, but past efforts seem to fall often time on deaf ears. Lisa mentioned that someone had suggested we could send out a FireWise message with the tax assessments.

Another subject we discussed was the need for a county resolution regarding “Enough is Enough”. How much affect this will have on the residents is unknown, but the recent disasters and public discussions offer us a good opportunity to get out our message.

Mark Peck, Kirk Kraft, Vic White and my self are going to meet on Jan 28 to discuss a strategy that we can take to the fire departments at the next coop meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM.

Next Meeting- February 20, 2014

Ed Levert, Chair