

Minutes of the Palomar Mountain Planning Organization Meeting March 31, 2007

Board Members Present:

Thomas Burton, Robert Carlyle, Donna Dose, Elizabeth Getzoff (alternate), Bruce Graves, Jim Hamerly, Rob Hawk, Susan Humason, Jerry Johnson, Bonnie Phelps, Michael Pique, Alan Serry.

The PMPO Board Meeting was convened at 10:04 AM March 31, 2007, at the Palomar Mountain Volunteer Fire Department. The minutes of the January 13, 2007, meeting were approved with the addition that Alan Serry was elected to the office of Treasurer, replacing Tracy Dixon who has left the board, and the correction that the PMPO balance as of November 30, 2006, was \$39,698.86. Treasurer Alan Serry reported the balance as of January 13, 2007, was likewise \$39,698.86, since then no donations and expenses of \$215.74 (thank-you party) yielding a balance March 31, 2007, of \$39,483.12.

Old Business

Community Center of Palomar Mountain:

Tom Burton says the committee continues working. Earl Walls donated a double-wide trailer to serve as offices, meeting room, and weekend on-station bunkhouse for overnighing fire-fighters. PMVFD Chief George Lucia submitted an application for a \$50,000 community block grant for a breezeway to set the trailer properly and connect it to a planned modular pre-fab building.

Communications Meeting:

Fire Chief George Lucia explained the plan to tie the mountain together in emergencies by using ham radio and FRS/GMRS walkie-talkies. A first goal is everyone on the mountain being able to contact the Fire Department no matter what. A radio repeater is active already. Paul Fitzgerald is leading the project now.

Internet Access Survey: Jim Hamerly reported results from his Internet-conducted survey. There is very strong interest in, and willingness to pay for, high speed Internet access on the Mountain, including users that currently have satellite and wireless services. Of the 100 respondents to our Internet access survey: Current Internet Access: 43% use dial-up, 12% use satellite, 34% don't have any access. Interest in high speed access: 69% are strongly interested, an additional 14% somewhat interested in obtaining high speed Internet access, bringing the total to 83% of respondents. 73% of those with satellite Internet access today are still interested in new high speed access. Price Sensitivity: 13% are willing to pay more than \$60/month, 22% are willing to pay \$41-60/month, 51% are willing to pay \$21-40/month. Note: some users demand high speed access for their work, and cost is not an issue; some would spend more time on the Mountain if it were readily available. Response Demographics: 45% of respondents currently live full time on the Mountain, 82% of respondents live full, part-time, or plan to do so in 3-5 years. The survey graphical results can be seen at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/DisplaySummary.asp?SID=3179757&U=317975791054> .

Michael Pique has received email from Raquel Cinat of the California Emerging Technology Fund, one of whose goals is "to provide leadership statewide to minimize the digital divide by accelerating the deployment of broadband and other advanced communications services to underserved communities and populations" in three communities including "urban low income, rural, and disabled". The next meeting is Wednesday April 4; her email is raquel.cinat@cetfund.org

Yale / La Jolla Indian Reservation Cedar Creek project:

Tom Burton has sent Rob Hawk historical data from the Yoga center monitoring and production wells, whose depths-to-water ranged from 80 to 280 feet. These wells are northwest of the General Store, and we need wells monitored on the East Grade and Crestline. Bonnie Phelps suggested calling a well-owner meeting and publicizing it through the newsletter. Chris Kusek will help encourage the measuring. Michael Pique will send the URL for the county rain data. George Lucia said the PMVFD will soon reactivate its on-site well to keep the 50,000 gallon tank full.

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Newsletter:

Susan Humason says she has 20 articles planned for the 2007 PMPO annual newsletter, with two written. She needs the rest by the Friday before Easter. Susan has sold \$405 in advertising at the rates of \$180 full page, \$95 half, and \$35 business card. Schedule is for her to email proofs to volunteers mid-April, and have the folding and stuffing party 10 AM Saturday April 28, at the Phelps' roundhouse.

Highway 76 Corridor Expansion:

Jim Hamerly attended the RTA's (Reservation Transportation Authority) and Caltran's (California Department of Transportation) March 7th meeting on proposed improvements to State Route 76 corridor east of Interstate 15 to State Route 79. The purpose was to disseminate proposals and solicit community feedback. Palomar Mountain / PMPO is one of many listed stakeholders.

What is being proposed are near-term (1-2 year) improvements, mostly focused on the west end of SR 76 (but east of I-15). Proposed improvements are what Jim terms 'minor', consisting mainly of curve straightening, addition of a small sections of passing lanes and/or lengthened turn 'pockets', improved signage, line-of-sight improvements, etc. Funding for such improvements has NOT yet been approved, and he would estimate total cost to be in the range of \$10M+, or approximately \$1M per improvement area.

Details on traffic patterns, accident reports, and traffic volume were reviewed for all critical intersections, as well as anticipated growth forecasts. The major intersection affecting Palomar residents is the intersection of SR 76 and Valley Center Road. Although there is a desire to make that intersection a proper 'T', that is out of the scope of this effort because it requires the acquisition of additional rights-of-way, which are beyond the scope of studies.

What is perhaps most disturbing are long term traffic forecasts, for which there are no plans in any time frame to accommodate. SR 76 has a road capacity of of 16,000 cars/day, which will be reached in 2013, and traffic is expected to reach 23,000 cars/day by 2035. Even a possible long-term plan to widen to 4 lane will not accommodate the anticipated traffic.

Jim doesn't think this project requires more than additional monitoring, which he plans to do, but other opinions are welcomed.

More information: Project Manager: Bo Mazzetti (951) 308.1442

New Business:

Annual Meeting and Pancake Breakfast:

Will be held at the Fire Station May 26, 2007, Donna Dose in charge. The board approved spending \$100 for two 50-cup coffee makers. Bruce Graves will ask Glen Secola if he can help cook again this year.

Interest Bearing Account proposal by PMPO Treasurer:

Alan Serry has proposed moving the PMPO account to an account that would pay interest from it current location at California Bank and Trust in Valley Center. Bruce Graves noted we have had excellent service from them and their president Vickie Lovejoy. After discussion, the board approved a motion by Tom Burton that 1. the PMPO excess funds be invested at interest; and 2. the Treasurer be authorized, empowered, and directed to negotiate such. Checks written will require two signatures, with Bruce Graves, Alan Serry, and Jim Hamerly to be authorized to sign.

Safety of Commercial Helicopter Operations:

George Ravenscroft expressed concern over commercial helicopter operations on Palomar, flying out of the helicopter pad near the General Store or other locations. He asked about safety considerations when many visitors are up playing in snow or in the trees near the pad, and also about the nuisance of helicopter overflights along the East Grade road. Alan Serry said the pad is owned by Phillips Reid, an East Grade part-time resident, owner of Silver State Helicopters.

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Alan said he understood Mr. Reid to have no current commercial plans for the pad. George Lucia said the pad is approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and that Mr. Reid is currently going through a county major-use permit process to put fuel and water reserve tanks there and make it available for emergency operations. He said landings and takeoffs from there already require a qualified operator to be on the ground there, in contact with the pilot, to make sure the field is clear of people and obstructions. George Lucia and Alan Serry will get more information on the plans and check with the FAA about the rules and about notification about the major-use-permit application to residents.

Unsafe Motorcyclists:

George Ravenscroft points out that highway easements are granted for use as a road, not as a racetrack. He suggests reducing the speed limits on the East and South Grade Roads, and asks if this would enable confiscation of vehicles traveling at twice the speed limit. Alan Serry says the roads could be temporarily closed [by authority of the Fire Chief??].

Legal Access to Land Parcels:

Bonnie Phelps notes that Crestline and Birch Hill have many tiny public roads on their subdivision maps, but not all of those roads really exist, and many that do are not located exactly where the maps indicate. In Julian, after the 2003 Cedar fire, a major rebuilding issue was existence of legal easements between public roads and land parcels. She wants Palomar Mountain to deal with landlocked parcels before a disaster, that none of the subdivisions, even Bailey's, meet current standards.

Rob Hawk said he talked to the county Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) and was told you can rebuild on your property as the legal description has its location (not necessarily where you were built before) and providing you can show legal access easements.

Tom Burton suggest we need a San Diego real-estate litigator, preferably one who would help pro-bono. One way that has proved difficult is to obtain new deeded easements from all owners along an existing road. Rob Hawk suggests a class-action that would turn prescriptive easements into deeded easements; George Ravenscroft points out the problem affects not only rebuilding but refinancing and effects of new setback rules on structures and wells. Bonnie and Rob will write up a newsletter article and speak briefly about it at the Annual Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:46 AM.

Michael Pique