

Minutes of the Palomar Mountain Planning Organization 2002 Annual Meeting

Saturday, May 25, 2002 at the Palomar Mountain Lodge

Board Members Present:

Terri Bailey, Thomas Burton, Robert Carlyle, Steve Clark (alternate), Russ Day, Tracy Dixon, Donna Dose, Elizabeth Getzoff (alternate), Bruce Graves, Susan Humason, Elliot Miller, Bonnie Phelps, Michael Pique, Robert Sterner.

The annual general PMPO meeting was convened at 11:01 A.M. Saturday May 25, 2002, with about 60 in attendance. The Chair Bruce Graves thanked the Palomar Mountain Lodge owners Dale and Angelique Norton for again hosting the Pancake Breakfast and Annual Meeting, Donna Dose for organizing the breakfast, and Susan Humason for editing and producing the newsletter.

Old Business

Secretary's Report (Michael Pique):

The minutes from the May 26, 2001, annual meeting were distributed and approved.

Treasurer's Report (Tracy Dixon):

As reported in the PMPO spring 2002 annual newsletter, our expenses, totaling \$1,658.79, were \$44.75 for bank checks, \$535.02 for the newsletter, \$391.50 for newsletter stamps, \$392.61 for breakfast food, supplies, and grill rental, \$68.91 for photocopies, \$26.00 for post office box rental, and \$200.00 for Smith Mountain Road clearing. The total donations from our members came to \$5,966.70 and \$308.35 receipts from the 2001 breakfast, giving us a balance of \$26,948.98. The treasurer's report was approved.

Palomar Mountain Volunteer Fire Department (PMVFD):

PMVFD Chief Karl Bauer said the last year had been a busy one, with lots of projects started and many completed. Both a new fire engine - Palomar Mountain's first ever - and rescue vehicle are operational, and a \$140,000 water tender is on order to arrive about November. This will complete the apparatus upgrade directed in the 1997 master plan. Karl thanked new members, including Bruce Graves as our first Auxiliary Team member, and master planning team of Bob Thicksten, Steve Ewert, and Bill Pepper. We have audacious service goals for a volunteer effort, goals achieved thanks to community support. Now need a new plan to address current and future community needs: please have a voice in our future.

The new water tender may make fire insurance more available and affordable. The area had previously had an Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of 10 on a scale of 1 to 10: i.e., effectively no protection. This was in 2001 raised to ISO 9, which may make insurance easier to get, even if it is at the same cost as before. The goal now is ISO 8, which could yield a 10% to 30% drop in rates. ISO 8 would require being able to "first roll" with 4400 gallons of water. The water tender will help in achieving this.

Karl said that dead or dry brush needs to be cleared 100 feet from houses, the idea being to remove 50% of native fuel. Bill Pepper explained that the PMVFD was out scouting areas to put their equipment and to lay hoses, not looking for code or clearance violations.

PMVFD Board President Gretchen Spencer announced that the PMVFD is holding a rummage sale tomorrow. The Chili Cook-off will be July 4 and the Barbecue August 31. Help is needed for the BBQ: booths, prize donations, and setup the night before. Raffle tickets are now available and for sale, see her or Bonnie Phelps.

Karl reminded residents needing help to call **911** and ask for the PMVFD, they are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Palomar Mountain State Park:

Jeffrey W. Lee, Ranger, said the park was in its third year of specialized funding for maintenance, about 1.5 to 2 million dollars. They have upgraded the Cedar Cove campground and the Silver Crest picnic area, and are dredging and rehabilitating Doane Pond. This fall, they will repair

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Doane Valley campsites, improve campfire rings, re-roof the interpretive shelter, and put in new tables at the Silver Crest picnic area. Their resident ecologist is collaborating with the Audubon Society on a bird survey, with goals being to displace the Purple Martins and to support the Laguna Skipper butterfly, two of which were just found at the Observatory Campground. The park staff continues to work on public safety upgrades, and Mr. Lee thanked the PMVFD for medical response. Finally, he noted that the May 2002 issue of Sunset Magazine listed Palomar Mountain as one of the 28 best State Parks in the United States.

Cedar Creek Water Project:

George Ravenscroft reported that the drought is in its third year, with downtown San Diego suffering its driest year since record-keeping began in the 1850s. The average rainfall the past three years has been less than any one year's except 1861-62, 1876-77, and 1961-62. The pine bark beetle has moved from pines to spruce, and the virus on the live oaks has reached south to Palomar Mountain for the first time. Elliot Miller said he measured only 11 inches of rain on Palomar all year, usually it has been 42 inches or so. The dryness has lowered the underground water table at the same time that moisture loss by evapotranspiration is high, stressing the trees further. Spring flow is down to half of what it usually is this time of year. Some mountain wells have dried up and almost all have dropped; Bruce Graves reports his Birch Hill well has dropped 80 feet.

Elizabeth Getzoff reported on the status of William Yale's proposed commercial development along the East Grade Road to pump and sell well water from his 7 acre parcel. Mr. Yale has submitted his draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) as the next step in receiving the Major Use Permit he applied for in August 1999 (P99-021). The PMPO requested in September 1999, and the County agreed, that an EIR be required to address the biological and long-term hydrological consequences of Cedar Creek drawdown, the traffic safety issues, the pollution and noise from the planned propane-fueled generator, as well as the precedent-setting taking of water resources from other peoples' property. A September 1993 48-hour pump test on the well reduced Cedar Creek stream flow by 25% in 10 minutes.

The PMPO's consultant Jerry McLees has been monitoring the county offices. He said that ever since the PMPO convinced the county that the EIR was necessary, the county has granted Mr. Yale a series of three-month extensions for submitting the final EIR. The latest extension is until June 1, 2002.

Dual Government Survey Problem:

Michael Pique explained how the recent US Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service resurvey of Palomar Mountain section 14 has resulted in the Forest Service gaining 18 acres at the expense of residents, and may have disrupted the boundaries of all parcels in this section, which includes Crestline and Birch Hill. Jack Norvall is in charge of office and field research, with Palomar Mountain resident and attorney Bob Haase coordinating the PMPO's legal and technical discussions. The PMPO has continued to study old records in an attempt to find the remains of stone survey monuments set in the 1885-1930 period. The PMPO still needs old maps, particularly of Crestline, and field notes that might help clarify survey issues.

County 2020 General Plan Update:

Tom Burton described how the 1993 "Forest Conservation Initiative" (FCI) required 40-acre-minimum parcels within the region of the Cleveland National Forest, which includes Palomar Mountain. A few years ago, the county notified us that the FCI had forced re-zoning of "The Summit" (general store, Mother's Kitchen restaurant, Yoga Center) from General Commercial to Rural Residential Commercial. A Planning Commission study said the summit could be granted an exception from FCI if Palomar Mountain were deemed a "Country Town". We think we meet all four qualifications listed for a Country Town, but the county staff has blocked the action, suggesting instead that the issue be addressed in the "2020 General Plan Update" now being prepared.

A PMPO sub-committee led by Tom Burton is representing the "North Mountain Area" in the San Diego County Department of Planning and Land Use comprehensive year-2020 update of

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the general plan. Actual progress has been very slow, the planning staff we meet with are always different and have been able to give little help. Bruce Graves and Karl Bauer have also met with Supervisor Horn's land planner to try to arrange a meeting with county planners and the county counsel to discuss what specifically bars Palomar Mountain from being declared a Country Town.

New Business

Election of PMPO Board Members:

The Chair announced that there are five open seats on the PMPO Board, with incumbent Steve Clark leaving the board because he has moved away. The four incumbents running for re-election were Robert Carlyle, Jack Norvall, Bonnie Phelps, and John Tainer/Elizabeth Getzoff. Nominations were received from the floor for Pat Jones and Alan Serry. After statements by the candidates, an election was conducted by Russ Day. Robert Carlyle, Pat Jones, Jack Norvall, Bonnie Phelps, and John Tainer/Elizabeth Getzoff were elected.

The complete board member roster is:

(terms expiring May 2003):

Terri Bailey, Tracy Dixon, Elliot Miller, Michael Pique, and Robert Sterner

(terms expiring May 2004):

Tom Burton, Russ Day, Donna Dose, Bruce Graves, and Susan Humason

(terms expiring May 2005):

Robert Carlyle, Pat Jones, Jack Norvall, Bonnie Phelps, and John Tainer/Elizabeth Getzoff

General Announcements:

Palomar Mountain Views III: Bonnie Phelps said she is hoping that a third volume of the popular history paperbacks can be produced, with Susan Humason offering to help republish volumes I and II. Recently, a gentleman gave Bonnie a big box of papers from the best friend of Palomar photographer and author Robert Asher. We now have an entire chapter on Iron Springs, in manuscript form, Need volunteers to edit and proofread it.

Motorcycle Problems: Supervisor Bill Horn's office was contacted about the unsafe motorcyclist problems. It might be possible to change the speed limits on the South and East Grade Roads, and if the Vista jail can be convinced to take in offenders, they could be taken there. Possibly the roads could be closed to motorcycles on certain days. Bob Rios said the problem impacts us all for safety and tourism, we've had many accidents here. All of us are involved; we must take up this issue and do what it takes to support it. Gisela Koestner asked if the unsafe activities fall under the drag-racing ordinances; Bob Rios said they do, but that the unsafe motorcyclists quickly communicate any Highway Patrol presence.

Communications: Bonnie Phelps invited all interested to join her free Palomar Mountain news electronic mailing list, by emailing a request to **PalMtnNews@aol.com**. The mailing list now reaches over 500 readers. Susan Humason invited people to see her to be added to the mailing list for the PMPO annual newsletter. Michael Pique invited people to look at his **www.PalomarMountain.com** web site and send comments and suggestions.

Bruce Graves Honored: On behalf of the entire PMPO, Elliot Miller presented Chair Bruce Graves with a plaque and certificate thanking Bruce for his eighteen years of service - so far - on the PMPO Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:28 P.M.

Michael E. Pique, Secretary

Minutes approved by PMPO membership May 24, 2003.