

Board Members Present: Mike Appelman, Cecelia Borland, Glenn Borland, Robert Carlyle, James Ewen, Elizabeth Getzoff, John Lesac, Katie Michelmore, Michael Pique, Yvonne Vaucher, Michael Walsh.

Board Members Absent:

Mary Ellen Harshberger (alternate), Rosemary Johnston, Rigel Rafto, Elizabeth Tainer (alternate), Linda Thorne, Jack Weisgerber.

The PMPO Board Meeting was called to order at 10:38 AM at the Palomar Mountain Fire Department, by Glenn Borland, chair. A quorum of Board members was present. Also present were Cliff Kellogg, Alan Serry, Burt Hulbert, Cal Fire Captain Dean Kowalski, and US Forest Service Captain Tim Gray. Glenn thanked people for coming out even in the rough weather.

Treasurer Michael Walsh reported our current combined checking and savings account balance is \$49,504, up \$1.41 since December 1, 2018. We have sold 5 more large Highway to the Stars signs to Cal Tech (\$195) and still have 15 for sale at \$39 each. The report was approved.

Secretary Michael Pique presented the minutes of the November 10 board meeting, approved as submitted (Feb 4 draft).

Old Business

Palomar Mountain Fire Department (PMFD):

Cliff Kellogg, PMVFD President and former Fire Chief, reported that the county still says construction on the new fire station will start "this year", perhaps mid-summer. There is firewood available behind the station, from the giant oak that was taken down to allow construction. Cal Fire Captain Kowalski said Cal Hendrie, our batallion chief, has been on medical leave for almost six months now from a serious hand injury, and will be out at least six more weeks. Robert Reynolds is our interim batallion chief.

Palomar Mountain Fire Safe Council (PMFSC):

PMFSC Board President Yvonne Vaucher reported that the Council has \$3230 in the bank. The San Diego Fire agency has flyers of benefits available for those over 62 years old. This includes a free smoke alarm and a Knox home door lock box, which could also be used on gates. Our evacuation plan mapping has changed intent. It will now be a county-wide general mapping, not community flyers. We will want to update our evacuation flyer in any case - also our Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) revision is due in March. We are looking into offering a basic CPR course (non-certified) through the Red Cross. Tim Gray says the US Forest Service burning south of Birch Hill was completed in November. We have 72 Barricade home-protection gel kits in the big conex storage box.

The San Diego Fire Safe Council has a bimonthly meeting, which recently had much discussion about fire insurance being difficult or impossible to get. Mike Appelman says Farmers Insurance originally issued him a policy, but came back, reinspected, and cancelled for "lack of inside thermostat". Burt Hulbert says his neighbors in the city of San Diego who live near canyons are being cancelled. Our ISO rating has improved, now 3 or 3X, but insurance companies do not always use that system. Captain Kowalski says they never ask our ISO rating when they call to confirm information on policy applications.

The FSC has posted a Snow Day announcement with phone numbers of sheriff and CHP to call if you see problems. Question - could we offer enjoyment and raise money by charging a few dollars for a place to park and play. Cecelia Borland notes the USFS Crestline Picnic Ground has a hill and parking; the State Park also, especially Silvercrest. Could we put up signs to direct visitors there? Captain Kowalski notes that people who come up are looking for something closer than the State Park.

Yvonne asks if we need a community siren system. This has been discussed in the past, with maintenance and activation questions not resolved and no study of how many stations would be needed. Cliff Kellogg says the siren on the station ought to be tested occasionally. Alan Serry notes it's hard to hear it far up Crestline.

Yvonne says Tim Gray's chain saw workshop was a success, with help for both novice and expert users. The PMFSC has received a grant from the San Diego County Neighborhood Reinvestment Program for six days of chipping work, and six dumpster days in 2019. Robert Carlyle has talked to Lee Sylvasy of Stumpmasters and he can offer us 7 1/2 days for the price of 6. Robert will coordinate - people need to stack their piles beside their roads or driveways and then call him to get on the list.

Yvonne has submitted a grant application to Cal Fire to make a 60-foot firebreak along Birch Hill easement road 32J and its connection to Conifer Road and the East Grade. The application was for \$409,000; we will hear this spring. Captain Kowalski says the rains have made the 11E route impassable.

Yvonne needs property owners to pledge fire clearance work, which is credited as "matching funds" at \$28 per hour. She urges everyone to sign up for emergency alerts:

(<https://www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego>)

Neighborhood Watch:

Katie Michelmoresaid when she gets reports from State Park ranger Jessica Murany she posts them onto the Next Door service. Loose dogs have become a problem: one bit someone at the county park. Katie says she has become a *de facto* dog catcher and returner, but she doesn't know every dog on Palomar. Katie wants to get every Palomar dog microchipped; she can get the chips and we can do a clinic for locals to get their dogs chipped. The board approved a motion to sponsor a microchip day for dogs; cost estimated to be \$5 per dog.

Katie does have a dog trap and kennel, but has had to deal with dogs abandoned in snow storms - is there an area we can use until county animal control comes up from Carlsbad. Robert Carlyle offers a 15x15-foot fence pen he's not using. Michael Walsh says the State Park or fire station are not good places to hold dogs for return or for animal control pickup. Perhaps volunteers could take turns keeping the kennel for a year.

Snow Days:

Alan Serry says today and tomorrow may see snow; the snow emergency plan was activated yesterday. The CHP will have officers up here this weekend (2 new). The sheriff sent no one up last time; he's sending one deputy up today. The US Forest Service will open the Crestline Picnic Ground for the day, including the the two restrooms, but will have no personnel there.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT):

Cliff Kellogg, reporting for CERT program manager Bill Leininger, says CERT is conducting a multi-casualty training class today, and radio training soon.

Palomar Mountain State Park:

Michael Walsh, reporting for Rosemary Johnston, says the "Friends of the Palomar Mountain State Park" raised \$11,000 in November and December. They were able to hire a second ranger (Adam Borello, overlapping with Jessica Murany for law enforcement) for the first time in seven years, along with a full-time maintenance person for the Park. The interpretive ranger, Will Meyst, hired by the Friends will now be on year-round. He presented 23 campfire talks and other programs for 206 people in August alone. The Friends' next project is to install a modular office building for paperwork and phone calls. Rosemary is now the president of the Friends' board, with Sharon Dahl vice-president, and Chuck Black, a biologist with a weekend house on Crestline, a member-at-large.

PMPO Web Site:

Katie Micheltmore has the www.pmpoinfo.com account information and passwords from Mike Chesney. Both of the web site managers Katie contacted consider the job too small to take on, so Katie will do. We need to pay the domain name registration fee and the site hosting costs as of August. The board approved a motion to spend \$350 per year for these charges. Michael Walsh suggested we thank Mike Chesney for his years of creating and operating the site, and reimburse his expenses. The board approved a motion to do so; Katie will ask him for what invoices he has.

Traffic Safety:

Burt Hulbert says speed limits will soon be imposed on the South and East Grades - tentatively, 30 MPH on South Grade (S6) and 40 MPH on East Grade (S7). Where no signs are posted, the California limit is 55 MPH, even in residential areas like Crestline that have no curbs or controlled intersections within a half-mile. Burt assures us that drivers won't be ticketed for going 41 MPH in a 40 MPH zone, but the speed limits will allow tickets be issued for, say, 50 MPH in the 30 MPH zone. Alan Serry says we should expect the signs up in a couple of months. Many accidents 'avoid' being reported, especially on the South Grade, so the traffic statistics are incomplete, and about half of the South Grade is technically in Pauma Valley, not Palomar Mountain. A team put the data together, started the process in September, and got a favorable vote by the county supervisors in January. They will now be able to do radar enforcement with the 30 MPH posted.

Burt says he was tired of seeing Palomar Mountain featured in Yamaha motorcycle ads and U-tube videos showing plainly illegal and dangerous activity. Wes Ruise (US Forest Service ranger) said he chased the photographers off of La Jolla Indian Reservation property on the South Grade. Burt said the statistics indicated about 2-3 accidents per week with fatalities monthly. Alan said that a community consensus had grown over decades that we needed to get the South Grade safer - this may be what we've wanted. Mike Appelman says that's true but it's a process that should have had more community participation. The decisions were done by the Traffic Advisory Committee at the county without real community involvement, even without PMPO input: only Pauma and Pala were offered a say. Jim Desmond, our new supervisor, told Mike Appelman it should have gone to the community for comment. Instead, the effort was kept under wraps until the supervisors had voted. Burt first heard of the speed limit idea from Alan, after Alan saw a radar speed measurement trailer and called the county and CHP to find out what was going on. Mike said the Traffic Advisory Committee worked only with one East Grade resident who requested the speed limit, triggering the county's three month traffic study. Mike is concerned about the precedent of this being done without the PMPO being involved, or even informed.

Michael Walsh says we have several heroes in this story, but it was Bruce Druliner who wrote a letter. The Traffic Advisory Committee then got involved and came up with factual measurements and a proposed solution. Alan Serry and Mike Pique have records of 25 years of inaction by the county. We do need to fix how it was done - along with thanking God for the result. He asks what does the PMPO board want to do, knowing what we know now?

Mike Appelman says the Traffic Advisory Committee and the county engineers somehow skipped the PMPO. We might be able to stall the process now and get it back to the PMPO. Glenn Borland says we have to insert ourselves into the process we were bypassed in. Mike Appelman says the normal process *should* have included us, Alan pointing out we *do* represent the community, by election. Glenn says this should be re-sent through the PMPO board after we're re-recognized as a planning/sponsor group, to strengthen the enforceability. He and Mike Appelman are re-applying for the PMPO to have this community advisory group status, which we lost sometime in the past. Katie Micheltmore asks if we stall the process, will it go back to where we would be consulted? We should rewind it so it goes through officially. Mike: the speed study would not need to be redone, just our community input would go in. Katie: What will the PMPO do when it comes back to us? Glenn: the board could put the matter on the agenda for the Annual General Meeting, or do a special meeting any weekend. Mike: if I hear from the county that they'll re-run the process, I'll let Glenn know. Yvonne: call a public meeting as soon as possible after PMPO group approval, with the county speed limit proposal. Michael Walsh: Ask the county engineer or Traffic Advisory Committee to come.

Alan Serry says all the Traffic Advisory Committee meeting minutes are public; he will try to get them sent to the board. The study did suggest limits of 35/45 not 30/40 MPH but because of the history of fatalities, the county engineer dropped them both by 5 MPH. When Alan made all the calls and asked about the radar speed meters, he was told of the study. Michael Walsh concluded the discussion with his belief that it's imperative the board move aggressively to get a vote on the matter, not to put it back in the pile, because of the governance issue.

S6 "Highway to the Stars" Road Signs:

Alan Serry says the delayed security bolts were installed to secure the signs to their posts but someone dug up and stole a whole sign, post, and concrete base. The county says we are supposed to purchase a \$200 right-of-way encroachment activity permit to replace the sign.

2019 Pancake Breakfast, Annual Meeting, Election of Officers, and newsletter:

Cliff Kellogg will ask permission of Captain Kowalski for use of the station and kitchen for the May 25 breakfast. Cecelia Borland will supervise the breakfast setup and cooking. Five board members' terms will expire in May (Mike Appelman, James Ewen, Rosemary Johnston, Katie Michelmores, Jack Weisgerber). Katie Michelmores agreed to send out prompts for newsletter articles, drafts to be done by mid-March.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 PM.

Next meeting is the Annual General Meeting, Saturday May 25, 2019 (8:00 AM breakfast; 10:00 AM meeting time).

Michael Pique, Secretary (email: secretary@pmpoinfo.com)
Minutes approved by PMPO board August 17, 2019.