

CAMBRIA FOREST COMMITTEE

TO CONSERVE AND MANAGE THE NATIVE FOREST OF CAMBRIA

Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2016, 6:30 PM

Cambria Rabobank, 1070 Main Street

Call to Order and Establish a Quorum: Directors Crosby and Laura Swartz, Julie Jorgenson, Connie Gannon and Christine Heinrichs. Vari MacNeil of NCAC and BCA; Laurel Stewart, NCAC environmental alternate; Tony Church, Kathy Seaman, Kermit Johansson. Kathe Tanner of The Cambrian.

Public Comment and Ask the Experts Q&A: no questions were raised.

Approve Minutes of April Meeting: approved as amended.

Treasurer's Report: Laura Swartz reported the current balance is \$2,199.98. \$101.05 was spent on the At Home in the Forest brochure. \$495.15 is left on the CCC grant. One outstanding bill for \$50 remains, to Lynn Singer, who prepares the annual financial filing.

Sub-Committee Reports

Education/Planting/Mitigation/Operations

Fire Safe Fair: Laura, Crosby and Christine Heinrichs worked an information table with the interpretive sign, brochures and a sign-up sheet. Although it was an interesting event with good exhibitors, attendance was low. Crosby and Laura enjoyed talking with other exhibitors, including CSD director Jim Bahringer and Supervisor Bruce Gibson. Over 100 attended.

At Home in the Forest Brochure: Everyone admired the work Vari MacNeil did to design an attractive and useful brochure. Laura had several hundred copies printed up. Forest Committee members will distribute them to the community and explore other avenues to reach the public: Realtors, architects, neighbors.

Website Updates: The web site is up and working, but the general email for requests delivers only to Crosby, not Christine. The domain name still needs to be transferred to Crosby and Christine. We will continue working with Amanda Rice to conclude the transaction.

Forest Management

Weed Abatement in Forest Preserves: Kermit Johansson is concerned about the invasive thistles that are having a good year. He is cutting and spraying them where he can. He suggests having two weed abatement cuts, one in March to cut the thistles before they bloom, then a second cutting later to eliminate second bloom of thistles and grasses. Connie Gannon said that early spring cutting can interfere with low-nesting birds. Thistles are easy to recognize. Individual property owners can be encouraged to remove thistles. Kathe Tanner encouraged committee members to write Letters to the Editor and Viewpoints explaining what thistles are and why individuals should remove them.

Crosby and Laura noted that all the lots in Fern Canyon are on the CSD's weed abatement list, even though many of them are protected by conservation easements. They have observed weed abatement down to four inches on lots that are exempt by virtue of their preserve status. Weed whacking on native vegetation can allow invasive weeds to grow. Crosby will confer with Dan Bohlman of the Land Conservancy as to the legal protection of their conservation easements. The new fire chief, William Hollingsworth, has run the Weed Abatement Program in the past but will probably assign it to someone after he takes on his new responsibilities later in May.

In the pasts, Greenspace has held workshops for vegetation workers to help them identify native plants and do their jobs better. Executive Director Connie Gannon said she will explore whether funding for bilingual workshops is possible from the current grants.

Cambria Forest Health / Greenhouse Gas Project Implementation: The Western States grant has been received. Cal Fire will implement fuel removal.

Fiscalini Ranch Preserve: FFRP has gotten permit approval for the trees already taken down and proceed with the rest of the project description. Cal Fire will send crews out to work on the three one-acre test plots.

Report From Fire Safe Focus Group: Requests for Proposals will be sent out for the LHMP in hopes of getting a contract signed before the end of the fiscal year on June 30. They also hope it can be done for less than \$25,000 so that it does not get delayed by having to be considered by the Board of Supervisors.

The CSD has changed course and is now willing to allow the All Power Labs prototype Biomass Generator to be located at the wastewater treatment plant site.

They continue to work to increase fire safety awareness in the community.

New Business

Guidelines for Annual Weed Abatement Program in Forest Preserves: deferred to June meeting.

Unfinished Business

Recommendations to NCAC on Orellana Permit Application: The Forest Committee will submit a letter recommending that this permit not be approved due to water restrictions and current restrictions, including the Building Moratorium. Draft will be written and circulated to directors in the coming month.

Agenda Items and Speakers for Next Month: Sarah Bisbing has not confirmed as a speaker for June 8.

Adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Next Meeting June 8, 2016