

Wrightwood Fire Safe Council Meeting Minutes

Call To Order: The general meeting for the Wrightwood Fire Safe Council (WFSC) was called to order by John Bauer on June 17, 2008 at 1900 hours local time, at 6000 Cedar, Wrightwood, CA 92397.

Roll Call:

The following WFSC Board Of Directors were present: Bob Fino, Bob Comperini, John Aziz, Al Morrisette, Joyce Harrison, John Bauer, Hank Hallmark, Vince Pulsipher, Kathy Smith and Miles Wagner. Absent was: Chuck Carroll.

The following WFSC community members were present: Dee Potter, Bonnie Ross, Ed Ross, Carol Goss, Karin Core.

The following agency representatives were present: Paul Camarena (CAL Fire), Roger Williams (USFS - SB National Forest), Julie Crick and Megan Foucht (Forest Care), Darrayl Felgar (SB County Fire Station 101).

Flag Salute: The flag salute was led by John Bauer

Review of previous month's minutes: The minutes of the May 2008 meeting were approved as written. Motion to approve by John Aziz. Seconded by Kathy Smith. Motion passed 10/0.

Cooperative Partner & Agency Updates:

USFS - SB National Forest: There was a 5 acre brush fire near Lone Pine & Hwy 138 today. No status on Helicopter Hill gate. No burns planned. Was made aware that someone has been taking Manzanita in the Lone Pine area. Boundary Ridge project to continue.

Forest Care: Megan Foucht, the new program coordinator introduced. Forest Care program still ongoing. Expanded up to 20 acre parcels.

CAL Fire: Participated in 5 major fires in last two weeks. Staffing is now set at "peak fire season" levels. Hwy 2 clearance program continues. Chief Foley promoted to South Area Division Chief.

LA County Fire: No report.

SB County Code Enforcement: Statement from Thomas Bradt read by John Aziz. 1187 notices sent to Wrightwood area. Increased notices mainly for weed growth, and increased enforcement effort. They are seeing less pine needle, forest debris, and dead vegetation violations. Notices for pine needles and slash piles decreased "dramatically" since last year. Wrightwood "vastly improved" over last year.

SB County Fire Station 101: Announced new staffing 5 people total, including 1 seasonal position. Seasonal position will go away in 6 months. John Aziz expressed concerns that we could still be in the position where the only engineer is away from station, leaving Wrightwood without an on-site engineer. Announced upcoming academy for firefighter/paramedics. Also responded to brush fire today.

Old Business:

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer's report was accepted and approved.

John Aziz: Maria Stella project: Mapping and marking of trees continues.

New Business:

None

Public Comments And Questions:

None.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2018 hours local time. The next general WFSC meeting will be held on: July 15, 2008

Minutes submitted by:

Robert Comperini, Secretary
Wrightwood Fire Safe Council

Statement from Thomas Bradt, SB County Code Enforcement:

I'll give you some numbers you can share and address what appears from my phone calls to be this year's issue.

I have sent 1187 notices to the Wrightwood area, this is more than usual but not due to a lack of attention on the part of the residents. Wrightwood has vastly improved over last year mainly the change I could see was far less forest debris and pine needles on properties. In comparison to last year the number of notices sent for needles or slash piles decreased dramatically. My thank you to the property owners and the community. The increase in notice count is largely due simply to an increase in weed growth this year and also partially due to an effort on my part to more diligently address brush thinning (removal of dead vegetation), limbing up of trees and chimney/roof clearance. This from my phone calls appears to be this year's big concern.

Please assure the community that I in no way intend to "bulldoze" through the area removing plants and trees etc. The intention is to continue with the removal of dead vegetation that was started last year and to address some routine maintenance issues that over the years may have slipped by.

Most property owners receiving notices for chimney/roof clearance for example are not being asked to do anything more than remove branches near chimney openings (10 feet) and to remove dead growth contacting or overhanging structures. Trunks of trees near the opening are not a violation so tree removal is not necessary just some pruning. As for the limbing up of trees this is done to hopefully prevent a ground fire from becoming a tree fire and also to provide better working space for firefighters in the event of a fire. If property owners will look at their properties with these two things in mind it should be clearer what trees and growth need to be addressed. A decorative tree in the yard free and clear of accumulations of material underneath is not an issue, a yard with trees unlimbed and growth that can no longer be passed through or even at times seen through may indeed be an issue. Throughout the area are beautiful examples on properties of thinning and limbing that greatly reduces the fire danger faced by that property owner without detracting from the beauty of the property or the natural look of the property.

My intentions in Wrightwood as well as the other communities I inspect is to lessen the extent of fire danger in the area as a whole and to lessen the dangers faced by firefighters in their efforts to protect. I realize that in doing so I will unfortunately upset some people but I believe if my co-workers and myself do our jobs with a fair balance of thoroughness and consideration we can truly benefit the places we work. I hope this helps and apologize for not being able to make the meeting this evening.

Thomas Bradt
CEO III
Fire Hazard Abatement
San Bernardino County
909-387-3087 909-387-4123