

**LASSEN FIRE SAFE COUNCIL, INC.**

**GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

**March 20, 2024 5:30PM**

The Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LFSC) opened the public General Meeting at 5:40 pm on March 20, 2024, at the Susan River Fire Hall, Johnstonville. LFSC members present were Board Chair Ruth Morentz; Managing Director Cade Mohler; Projects Coordinator Kyle Herron; Wildfire Resiliency Coordinator Hailey Hanna and Board Members Kam Vento, Laurence Crabtree, Janet Sanderson and Chevi Amrein.

**I. Opening and Welcome** – Chair Ruth Morentz called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm

Sign in – A sign in sheet was passed around for voluntary sign-in.

Board members introduced themselves.

**II. Managing Director Report given by Cade Mohler**

**Active Projects**

A. Managing Director Cade Mohler provided the LFSC Projects Overview to the attendees (please see attachment with the Minutes) of all project updates.

B. Cade Mohler introduced the LFSC Wildfire Resiliency Coordinator Hailey Park to give updates on the Defensible Space Assistance Grant. Hailey stated there are currently 200 residents signed up with 30 residential inspections already completed in the Westwood area. Hailey stated there are still opportunities for residents to sign up on the website or by personally contacting her at the LFSC office on Main Street in Susanville. This program is designed to benefit disadvantaged families with low income; seniors; veterans; and those residing in high fire zones. The work will begin once the snow melts.

**III. Closed Out Grants** – See spreadsheet for detailed overview. Thompson Peak WUI Fuel Treatments are completed and LFSC is looking forward to showing the finished results, including maps at the next general meeting. Diamond Mountain Forest & Watershed Restoration Project treatments are complete with the closeout work and reporting still ongoing.

**IV. New Planned/Awarded Projects** – (see attachment with the minutes): LFSC is still awaiting a response from CalFire for the Lassen County Wide Assessment Project grant request, South Lassen Wildfire Recovery Project grant request, North Susanville WUI Treatment Project grant request and the LFSC Lassen National Forest Dixie Fire Hazard Tree Removal Project grant request. There are five additional grant applications submitted by the LFSC Team including 17 Road Fuel Break Project (Working SPI and LNF on establishing a fuel break on the 17 road from Hwy 36 to Hwy 44); Plateau/Shingletown Phase II (Working with SPI and non-industrial landowners to identify priority landscape level fuels reduction areas in WUI. Potential Communities of Shingletown/Viola/Manton); South Susanville WUI Treatment Project (Encompasses dead/dying/hazard tree removal, biomass fuels treatments, mastication and herbicide); Eastside Communities/Lone Spring Project (Encompasses 11 acres of hazardous fuels reduction in Lonespring project area of Eastside communities and the Sugar Fire Reforestation Project (potential project on the Plumas National Forest in the area south of Thompson Peak Initiative).

**V. Agency Updates**

**BLM** – Andrea Saltzman gave an update on staffing. Andrea stated they started the Doyle Fire Station Building with a groundbreaking ceremony held yesterday.

**CalFire** – Adam Mattos gave an update on the hiring of a new Battalion Chief. Stated CalFire has been involved in several pre-fire season meetings. Adam stated they are still working on the annual operations plan with intentions of burning 900 acres next week. They also have some burn plans on the Plumas and are working closely with them to establish burn plans. Glenn Schall is the lead on the Susan Ranch Park Project.

**SNC** – Not present

**NE CA Fire Prevention** – Not present

**USFS** – **Bobette Jones** with Eagle Lake Ranger District reported they are in the process of evaluating 2024 prescribed burn plans. The Eagle Lake District is hosting an open house on March 29<sup>th</sup> complete with an Easter egg hunt. They are hoping to introduce their new team members and attract a broad demographic “rain or shine”. Bobette stated they are working on many projects including: Timber side acre project West of Eagle Lake; Contracts for qualitative risk assessments and developing assets; PG&E collaboration to complete NEPA and planting in the Hog footprint as the seedlings have arrived. Bobette stated the Sheep Fire area has all been planted. She indicated there still may be future planting as they are still evaluating the Whaleback scar. She concluded with good news wherein the Hog and Sheep burn areas have been reforested in some places. And finally, the Eagle Lake Ranger District along with the Trout Unlimited Group is hosting a workshop on May 12, 2024. **Brett Matthews** was introduced as the new fuels Officer at Eagle Lake.

**Stephaney Cox** elaborated on the upcoming April 16, 2024, Partnership Symposium for state and local agencies which will be virtual, so anybody can attend. She is available to be contacted for additional information. Stephaney indicated they are applying for a lot of grants and funding. Roadside hazard

removal is a priority in the Dixie Fire footprint. She was excited to inform the attendees that the Resource Advisory Committee “RAC” is being re-commissioned. There are 15 community members who make up the committee and want to do good work in the communities. The committee is currently in the process of reviewing project proposals for prioritization. The projects will be determined around May 2024. Lastly, Stephaney stated

Smokey the Bear is available to be scheduled for Firewise Community Events. Please have cover if the event is scheduled during inclement weather to protect their assets. Deb Bumpas, Forest Supervisor of the Lassen is on a 120-day detail and Kathy Allen from the 5 Rivers National Forest is filling in on the Lassen during her absence.

**Susan River FPD** – Not present

**OES Lassen County** – Not present

**SPI** – **James Haynes-Petty** reported there is a project of salvage logging going on Hwy A13. Also, the whole West side of Lake Almanor will be planted this year by helicopter.

**Honey Lake Power** – **Mark Shaffer** stated the plant is running well and they are accepting approximately 45 loads per day, 30 of them are a result of the ‘Boot Sole’ project. The plant is in good shape and they want to be able to increase fuels production.

**Beaty** – Not present

**Lassen County** – Tom Neely, Lassen County District 3 Supervisor was present with Sheriff John McGarva, neither had anything to report.

**Honey Lake Valley RCD** – Catherine Wooster reported on post-fire recovery efforts. They completed 780 acres of biomass on private land owner properties. They have plans to plant 75 acres in 2024 and an additional 540 acres in 2025. Catherine reported they have a good neighbor agreement in the works with the Lassen National Forest and Bureau of Land Management.

**SIR** – **Audie Noneo** reported they are currently working collaboratively with CalFire to complete a burn plan for 2024. He has hired a fire crew comprised of seven staff who will report to work on April 22, 2024. Audie stated he is waiting for an official answer on the status of previous grant applications. Audie also reminded the attendees about the Basic 32 training coming up in April in Greenville, California. He explained the SIR Elder Program which utilizes Lassen National Park available firewood via a contract with Tubit logging, wherein every elder received at least one cord of firewood and hoped to be able to continue that program. Audie concluded by informing the meeting he now has “two hats” as the SIR Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and the SIR Fire Chief. Congratulations were given.

**American Red Cross** – **Duane Taaffe** stated his organization will be hosting the “Sound the Alarm” event on May 4, 2024, and will be providing fire detectors to the Westwood community with a 10-year battery-less units. He reported he has attended and hosted several community presentations with an emphasis on childhood education and fire safety. Duane explained he is responsible for Lassen, Shasta, Modoc and Siskiyou Counties. He stated the Red Cross assisted families in six residential fires in the month of February 2024.

**Golden State Natural Resources** – **Laurence Crabtree** updated the NuBieber pellet plant. GSNR has a new partner Drax. Drax is purportedly the largest producer of pellets with operations in the state of Louisiana and Canada. GSNR and Drax entered an MOU. The project is still in the CEQA process.

**Firewise Communities** – **Ruth Morentz** updated the attendees on the progress of the Community Fund Committee and LFSC Board’s decision to gift monies to the Lassen County Volunteer Fire Departments and the Firewise Communities. Specifically, each Volunteer Fire Department will receive a gift of \$2,000.00 and Firewise will receive gift cards in the amount of \$500.00 to assist with their agencies’ current needs and/or fire season preparedness. Ruth also indicated that Firewise communities should be working on an event plan for Wildfire Community Preparedness Day May 4th. LFSC is looking forward to being present and assisting when requested.

**VI. Other** – LFSC is scheduling the May 2024 General Meeting at the Westwood Community Center and will post the information on the website.

**VII. Public Comment/Questions – None**

**VIII. Next meeting** – April 17, 2024 in Susanville

**IX. Adjournment of Meeting** – The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm

*Chevi R. Amrein*

I, Chevi Amrein, Secretary/Treasurer of the Board of Directors, Lassen Fire Safe Council, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a full true, and correct copy of the minutes.