

Santa Clara Community Organization
Executive Board meeting
May 6, 2021 (via Zoom)

Those in attendance – total 19 (7 Board members, 12 others)

Board:

Tim Foelker
Jerry Finigan
Michael Nieman
Dawn Lesley
Kate Perle
Louie Vidmar
Matt Vohs

Community members:

Gary Haliski
Mary Leontovich
Peter Thurston
Jerry Mohr
Joel Robe
Peter Thurston
Martha Johnson
Todd Weaver
Rod Graves
Ron Lamie
Kamau Gatson

guests: Tom Peck

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by the chair, Kate Perle. She called for introductions of those present.

Kate introduced Tom Peck of the Eugene Wildfire Preparedness Coalition who presented a sixteen minute video mainly featuring the Holiday Farm fire and highlighting the weaknesses in the system to warn and prepare communities for fast-moving fires. Following the video Tom talked about how the prevailing east wind made the situation so unexpected. He said Santa Clara is probably most threatened by the grasslands to the north. He said a good start in preparation is to expand our map-your-neighborhood efforts to make sure vulnerable people are protected if a fire threatens. He said people need to reduce fuels close to their houses – to create a defensible space of at least five feet. Also keeping a “go bag” ready in anticipation of limited warning is a good idea. Map escape routes, though this has historically proved problematic as roads immediately get clogged with escaping cars. There should be a designated meeting spot where families can re-gather. Tom said there are many other resources available that can be found on-line. He said there is not really a team available to assess home vulnerabilities yet, though teams are currently being trained to make that available soon. Joel brought up the air quality problem that arose last summer and Tom said some HVAC systems might have the capability of mitigating this and that it might be a good idea to have some individual respirators available when you go outside. Michael asked how to get our arms around such a huge problem and Tom said to begin at home – map your neighborhood and research escape routes. Assessment training will be offered by OSU and maybe one person in each neighborhood could send a person to be trained as a resource for their neighborhood. Tom said his group and others are working on this. Tim asked if the emergency communications was activated last year and Tom said it was in a few areas. The problem was the limited communications in such a rural area: There are many more options in urban areas. Rod said the neighborhood has been proactive in organizing. Mary asked if the video Tom showed is generally available and Tom said he would send it and to check out what OSU has available. Kate asked what Santa Clara might be most concerned with and Tom said generally it is the large stretch of grasslands to the north. Tom’s presentation closed at 7:55.

Rod Graves announced that he would like to serve on the Santa Clara Water Board and asked that community members write his name in on the ballot for position #5 – currently

with no one running. There was a discussion that there is little information about this board. Kate reported that she knows of one member – Beverly Henderson – who lives near her. Tim asked if there is some way of weighing in on rate increases and Rod said he needs to get involved first to be able to respond to that. Dawn thanked Rod for stepping up to serve the community.

Dawn moved the April minutes be approved as submitted, Matt seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

The proposed mission and vision statement for the nascent Santa Clara Community Foundation was presented to the Board for adoption. Dawn moved it be adopted, Jerry seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Kate announced that the application for the Foundation Board seats is available. Mary asked if there are any prospects at this time and Kate said there is one submitted and another pending. The goal is to form a board of five.

New Business: Dawn presented the SCCO Bias Response Team – Purpose and Processes for input. Michael said he had some questions about some of the phrasing he found cryptic and would contact Dawn about them. Joel said the group did a good job and am glad the group used the River Road bias response statement as a guide as it would mean continuity between both groups. Martha suggested that the mission statement under #1 be replaced with the SCCO diversity statement—Dawn said that makes sense. Tim suggested that the document makes it clear that the SCCO team will not become involved unless it is requested by involved stakeholders. Martha said she would rewrite 3b to reflect this.

Peter said that he is working with the elders at St. Matthews and Huerto de Familia to come to an agreement on a contract governing the Santa Clara Community Garden. The biggest issue is the size and location of composting operations in the garden. Possibly it could be moved to the west side of the garden. Kate said if it is necessary for it to be off-site, her farm could be used. Another issue is that the Church wants SCCO to have liability coverage for the garden. Peter said this could be purchased but a better solution, if it can be worked out with Huerto, is our liability be attached as an conditional insured certificate, to Huerto's policy. Peter moved, Tim seconded, that this idea be pursued. Motion passed unanimously. Michael asked if it was typical that a community garden have a landlord like this. Jerry reported there are several other gardens in the area using church lands. Sometimes the City is the permittee for gardens. Also there was a question about how transport would be set up for compost if it was located at Kate's place.

Announcements: Kate announced that there is one vacant Board seat and asked for nominations. There were none at this time. Kate said the seat would be filled at the next general meeting and if anyone is interested, let her know.

Michael had proposed a formal land use committee for SCCO. With time short, Kate asked Michael if he would bring back a proposal at the next meeting; Michael agreed.

Updates:

Dawn said there is nothing new to report from the “bat phone”. She said she will be out of town for a couple of weeks and asked if anyone might monitor the phone while she is gone. Tim said he could do that.

Gary reported on the Awbrey Park Wildflower Walk. He said it was a great success with wonderful weather and probably an attendance of 150.

Kate reported on land use applications. There is a requested partition to divide one lot into three at Wilkes and Scenic Drive. There is a request for zone confirmation at 60 Division Street to confirm a C-2 zone: she's not sure what that is all about. Gary reported that Wild Rose Estates adjacent to Awbrey Park apparently has broken ground.

Dawn reported from the Social Justice Committee. The committee would like to share some of their Upstander-Bystander training at future SCCO meetings. The basic process is "Notice, Emotionally get grounded, Assess the situation, Take action" (NEAT).

Jerry said that, to save time, rather than report on complex subjects at the Neighborhood Leaders Council, he is sending minutes from these meetings to the Board Plus. If any has any questions about subjects discussed at these meeting, he would be glad to elaborate.

Dawn said she and Kate had been in discussion as to how to create "fun" activities for SCCO this coming summer. A few ideas floated included possibly a concert in a park as the City is not currently doing that, maybe an "art amble" as art is presented along a designated route, maybe reprise the idea of an outdoor movie. Tim said that there are already designated bike ride routes through Santa Clara and we might coordinate with GEARS to facilitate a community bike ride. Michael suggested "a taste of Santa Clara" identifying routes to access small farms and food trucks.

Kate asked people to suggest future program ideas

Meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Submitted,

Jerry Finigan