



OPEN MEETING
LOCATION: HOSE COMPANY BUILDING
TIME: 10:00 AM-12:00 PM
DATE: SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 2024
APPROVED COPY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES 6/29/24

AGENDA

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

1. **Establish Quorum:** Karen Burridge, Richie Fesler and Uri Driscoll were in attendance. There was quorum. Steve Hobson was absent. Felicia was able to attend via cell phone.
2. **Approve Agenda:** The agenda was approved with some changes.

B. SECRETARY REPORT

1. **Approve minutes from prior meeting:** The guest speakers were given priority to speak out of order and first rather than as stated on the agenda. The speakers were Charlie Miller, Chief, McCloud Fire and Joseph Rodarme, our new Forest Service District Ranger.
2. The minutes were approved by all members present with no changes.

C. FINANCIAL REPORT: Checking Account /operating account balance as of 6/28/24 is \$161,566.53. Major road improvement fund balance is \$129,455.25. Total is \$291,021.78. The Edward Jones account balance is \$323,996.58. 2024 reserve study payments were completed: \$68,544. Checking account activity since last BOD meeting: monthly checks for rent, phone, administrative assistant salary were paid. Office supplies were purchased. Attorney: \$11,340. was paid to regain control of 9 lots in April & May. Karen shared a related letter.

D. CORRESPONDENCE: None.

E. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **ROADS COMMITTEE:** The committee met with 5 contractors to discuss proposed work, including a Cold Springs drafting pond (unit 4) in lieu of Widow Springs (800 g. per minute). It will provide a way to draft water for individual properties fire suppression/watering roads. The first project is Cold Springs Expansion Project. Second & third projects are removal of rock on Ridge Drive and Echo Drive. On Widow Springs and Lava Drive all rock in the drainage ditch will be moved and hauled to hose company unit one. After additional work on Lava, it will be capped with specific rock (3/4 minus base) from Louie pit quarry. After additional work on Widow Springs, the pot holes will be destroyed. Pot holes on McCloud Drive will be addressed. After the rock is removed (as stated above) the POA will hopefully be able to use it on Red Fir Drive. The committee is working to grade all roads in the POA and then will focus on getting ready for winter. Hotlum Drive will be chip sealed according to the reserve study plans; a date is not known at this time. Additional details and time for discussion were provided. Gerard Pelletier provided some information about the road projects.

2. **FIRE SAFETY COMMITTEE:** Uri re-capped many issues already recorded in these minutes. He recommended everyone carry the 2 ½ class A fire extinguishers discussed or 5g water cans. It can be filled from a hose or water truck: purchase on Amazon.

3. Richie said the POA needs volunteers to help with driving 25 miles of POA roads looking for signs that are down, missing, completing an inventory of what needs ordering, Richie cannot do this job by himself. **PLEASE VOLUNTEER!** Alternatively, members can tell the office what signs are missing: please tell the office what is missing! If you see one that is down, *get your screw gun* and fasten it to a tree. Discussion occurred. Felicia has signs she will get to the office.

3. DRC COMMITTEE: No report.

4. TECHNOLOGY – COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE: No report. Discussion related to the facebook page occurred. A member liked the information and name change.

5. EVENT PLANNER COMMITTEE: Felicia made a report. She is working on plans for the annual picnic/pot luck/meeting on 8/31/24 at the Hose Company. Need volunteers for clean up and set up the weekend prior: call the office to coordinate. There will be games, prizes, etc. Signs have been posted about the event. She discussed the possibility of a flea market in the fall: is anyone interested at the Hose Company? There is interest, and Felicia will plan it for the fall meeting for POA members only.

6. LEGAL COMMITTEE: Karen reported that our attorney sent a letter and read it. Our attorney was on leave of absence, and then resigned. Jacob Wright will take over for him. She hopes we will acquire the 9 lots in litigation very soon. Members were asked to call the office/tell the Board if they see anyone growing marijuana so it can be investigated because the legal expenses are astronomical.

F. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Election Update – Failed Election due to zero nominations: The POA was prepared to use the *acclimation process* in the case of a failed election. However, no candidates volunteered for the 5 seats. Even the current board did not complete candidate forms. There will be no votes on this at the annual meeting. This board needs a break: new volunteers please! Richie summarized the ideal scenario and process for an election. An election costs \$8,000. We need a quorum of 25%, 195 valid votes to be successful. No mail in ballots any longer according to CA law. Discussion occurred. Voting must be in person or by proxy.

G. NEW BUSINESS: 2 Guest Speakers

1. Forest Service District Ranger – Joseph Rodarme:

Joseph stated: He is based in Mt. Shasta, but is responsible for McCloud and the area of concern to MSFPOA. He spoke about concerns related to safety on Pilgrim Creek Road; stating the recent closure was for a week and it was re-opened as fast as possible. The USFS may have to close it again due to mud, but for now it is open. He asked people not to stop on the bridge. He stated the USFS long-term plan is to pave Esperanza Rd. Securing funding is an issue: if Congress passes one type of budget, it will happen soon, possibly this fall. If not, there may be a 3-4 year delay. He briefly mentioned bureaucratic concerns and policy related to paving and decommissioning roads. It is required that if Esperanza is paved, then Pilgrim Creek Rd. is required to be decommissioned, or closed after the paving. A NEPA process is required. The cost of paving is 3-4 million dollars. The Forest Service recognizes the wildfire dangers of the area and the need to open or close Pilgrim Creek Road quickly. He is *trying to* arrange for the MSFPOA to have a key to the gates should it become necessary to open the gates [if they are closed] during wildfire danger. He expects the permission to be forthcoming. Meanwhile, some temporary upgrades are being considered for Esperanza.

As thirty people were in attendance at the meeting, and there were many who spoke, a summary of the comments and questions follows:

- The federal regulations require the USFS provide only one access road in and out of the area. However, due to concerns related to emergencies, they are trying to arrange for permission to give a gate key to MSFPOA.
- Joseph agreed that it would be best if the area had additional back-up exit routes, and he will work towards that difficult goal by trying to get permission to upgrade the current condition of some of the dirt roads.
- Discussion occurred related to home insurance rates, which are lower if residents use Pilgrim Creek Rd, because it is shorter.
- Rachel Burke and Doug LaMalfa are communicating on these road issues.
- Joseph will do everything possible to keep Pilgrim Creek Rd. open as long as possible.
- Tire situation on Esperanza: it's not safe for tires. The USFS is keeping Pilgrim Creek open to provide a short-term alternative to Esperanza. There is no current plan to make Esperanza safer, but it is a priority. Joseph will see that more speed limit signs are posted which should make the road safer but it is still no guarantee.
- Road dust is a health risk if breathed. It's a risk that comes with being in the area.
- The problem with Pilgrim Creek is not the road or the bridge; it's the mud.
- Gerard Pelletier stated a maintenance program must be performed each spring up to ¼ mile each spring to keep Mud Creek in its channel. A co-op to share financial expenses could facilitate such a program. Joseph is willing to talk more with him or others about the road problems. A meadow restoration project is being considered to assist with this problem.
- Is there an appeals process? No. An easement or Road use permit may be a possible solution on Pilgrim Creek.
- Decommissioning a road usually means taking out the pavement. Joseph is looking into possible variations with his legal team.
- Rehabbing a meadow above the bridge to improve mud creeks flow and keep it in its channel more effectively (working with other community partners) to keep Pilgrim Creek Road open and spending money on getting a better safer roads surface on Esperanza may be a better option for the POA, because we get to keep BOTH roads open. Additionally, there are other important priorities served by proceeding with that plan and there is money at this time allocated for meadow restoration. A meadow will help filter mud from the water as it flows downhill. Uri provided this summary as a better solution for MSFPOA because a NEPA process wouldn't be needed and the POA would get 2 access roads. Pilgrim Creek Road is better for emergency first responders because it is quicker. The MSFPOA Board prefers this option because it is less adversarial with the Forest Service, and probably more productive.
- It's possible that the majority of Glacier melt and run off has run its course, decreasing the problems with Mud Creek for now.

IF PILGRIM CREEK RD. MUST BE CLOSED UNEXPECTEDLY, THE USFS WILL NOTIFY THE MSFPOA THROUGH THE COUNTY: Siskiyou Alerts.

2. **Charlie Miller, McCloud Fire Department Chief:** Aaron Bennett, Engineer with CalFire came to the meeting with Charlie. McCloud Fire Dept is responsible to take care of the homes in the area through a contract with the County of Siskiyou. CalFire is the responder related to wildfire. The forest is covered with 2 engines at the Hose Company and every equipment staged in McCloud. They also respond to all medical emergencies. They employ 3 paid medics. The McCloud Fire Dept will immediately ask for a helicopter if the emergency is medically related. They do have a few sites they can land that aren't the best,

but are far better than driving the Esperanza Nightmare. **Charlie strongly emphasized that it is time to get very political, very fast with the USFS and support keeping Pilgrim Creek Rd. open.**

The Fire Department needs drivers for the engine! Training is provided for this volunteer work. It does not automatically involve firefighting; it could be just talking on the radio and driving the truck.

Fire Safety: Aaron and Charlie want to pass on information needed for everyone to be ready for a fire in the MSFPOA. Referring to the documentary on the Paradise Fire, he stated that anyone living in the Forest should be prepared *for anything*. **Sign up for Siskiyou Alerts!** Go to: ReadySiskiyou.Gov /Charlie will sign up anyone who can't figure out how to do it.

Ready-Set-Go: *Is a status designation that tells people what type of readiness they should be in. Ready means: might have to go somewhere. Set means: You might have to go at this moment—be ready. Go means: Get the hell out because the emergency crews are coming!* The CalFire website will give instructions on what to do for each designation.

After a question, Charlie stated that whatever the Hearst family [Chris] wants will happen. The community will be wise to get them on board with keeping Pilgrim Creek Rd. open. *He recommends getting them involved asap.* However, their main concern will be to focus on the bridge and lower on Pilgrim Creek. Charlie believes maintenance to prevent gigantic mud flows is critical to keeping the road open.

*****Johnathan from CalFire states that due to conditions, we are in a burn-ban. No illegal burning! There was an illegal burn last week in the POA. Burning affects air quality, a summertime concern.** Exceptions for a religious, ceremonial, cooking, warming fire are allowed: but if it escapes the owner's control, the owner is financially responsible. No fireworks.

Water-based fire extinguishers are available: everyone should have one in addition to powder fire extinguishers.

For burn permits call: 530-842-8123. If permitted, water and a shovel must be present.

Phone CalFire to get a sign to identify your property if you don't have an address. They can use the sign to location your property in the event of an emergency. Having a water-tender truck stationed at the Hose Company Building permanently was discussed, and the funding for it. Many other issues were discussed. If anyone hears gunshots, the procedure is to call 911.

H. NEW BUSINESS, DISCUSSION, POSSIBLE ACTION:

1. **Selling of Culvert Pipe:** Much clean up and maintenance must be done in the POA, and it costs money to perform the tasks, even for volunteers. About \$800. per year to burn slash and garbage. A lot (approximately 50, of various diameter) of culvert pipe is waiting to be disposed of, and it is very expensive to break it down and transport it. The Board would like to sell it at \$50.00 per stick. The money would be used for common area clean up at the end of the season. One 18" culvert pipe sells for \$20.00 for each foot, approximately 500.00 for a standard length. Discussion occurred.

2. **Leasing Green Waste Disposal:** Richie is proposing that a contractor be engaged to help with this to help make the POA money to be used for maintenance/clean up in common areas. Members could engage their own contractor to bring **green waste** to the site, burn for disposal, and then the POA's contractor

would manage the waste and dispose of it. Richie thinks this program could save the POA \$2-3000.00 annually. Members wouldn't have to take their green waste to the dump; it would be a convenience. Cost: \$8-9.00 plus gas/transportation at local dumps, v. less expensive program here. Any profit could be used to pay for POA picnic tables, etc. Discussion occurred.

Richie made a motion for both items, Uri said he supported it, and all Board members voted yes to both items 1 and 2.

- I. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD-** limited to 3 minutes - action may not be taken on issues presented, unless authorized by a majority of the Board, but may be placed on the next meeting's agenda. The Board meeting is to discuss corporate business and will be conducted as such. Members are encouraged to participate in the Public Comment Period and may, after being properly recognized, be allowed comment during Board deliberations at the option of the Chair. Emotional outbursts which disrupt the proceedings will cause the Chair, at his or her sole discretion, to recess the Board meeting, clear the room and reconvene the meeting with only those members not party to the disruption. PLEASE BE COURTEOUS.

Re: Abandoned school bus--- No one reported this event to the office. Richie discovered it about 10 days after it had been posted on facebook. Highway Patrol came and made a report. Felicia and others discovered a name---so it is known to the Board who abandoned it. This person will be contacted to see if he is picking the bus up. If not, it will be towed to his property *and* he will be billed. A contractor has been engaged and it will happen quickly.

Since Brandon Criss was in the meeting, a question & answer period occurred with members about members related to Siskiyou County. Air B&B: Brandon didn't know the specifics, but some rules were passed. He had to recuse himself from that aspect of the meeting because of a potential conflict of interest and didn't have the information. He will send the POA a link to the outcome.

What is the County's position on the Esperanza/Pilgrim Creek Rd. issues? The office of Emergency Services and LaMalfa's meeting are involved. The County wants as many exits out of the POA as possible. The decommissioning of Pilgrim Creek to pave Esperanza is a problem. Re: "Feds are required to provide only one exit" --- Does a state rule trump the federal rule? Was the AB 99 an ex post facto law? Discussion occurred. *The POA is asking the FS not to remove a second exit, not to create a new second exit*; big difference. Most fires (excepting lightening) start near a roadway therefore it's critical to keep both exits open. Richie stated the Board's position is to keep both Pilgrim Creek and Esperanza open. **It is not acceptable to the POA close Pilgrim Creek after paving Esperanza (or as a stipulation to paving).** Much discussion occurred. Advocacy was discussed. According to the FS, they were not open to easements, but that may have changed. If the POA can get onto an easement with the timber companies, then the POA would like to discuss that option. To date, the FS has not indicated this as a viable possibility for us.

Uri mentioned that the wisest way for us to advocate is to do it as a group with Hearst and as many other groups as possible: when the FS can divide us into groups with different needs, it's not as effective for us. Uri told everyone that the FS had the stipulation for Pilgrim Creek attached to the paving of Esperanza for 2.5 years and no one told the POA: the FS wanted us to write letters to advocate for the paving, without telling us. It was Joseph Rodarme who informed us of that very negative clause. The POA is still struggling to get information from the FS; it has not been easily forthcoming. Much discussion occurred.

J. NEXT MEETING

1. **Type: Regular Board Meeting –**

2. **Location: Picnic Area, Hose Company**
3. **Date & Time: August 31, 2024 10 AM**

K. ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING

Motion to adjourn: Karen motioned to adjourn the meeting. Uri seconded. All voted yes in favor.

EXECUTIVE MEETING: No Executive Meeting Today

**Richie Fesler,
President, MSFPOA**

Transcribed by Marsha Yates, Administrative Assistant on 8/12/24