

FBM Board Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2022 (4:00 – 5:00pm)
Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Ed Sylvester, Chuck Staetz, Susan Sanders, Jeff Peach, Diana Abrell, Ann Westling, and Susan Luhman

Apologies: Andrew Wilkinson and Chip Wilder

Ed called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes

Ed called for a motion to approve the February 17, 2022 minutes. Chuck made the motion to approve the minutes. Ann seconded it and all approved.

Treasury Report

The organization has \$538.04 in its checking account; there is \$13,276.41 in savings. FBM has a balance of \$13,814.45. Jeff reported there are still 2022 membership renewals coming in.

Jeff made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Chuck seconded it and all approved.

Evacuation Meeting with County and Poll Recommendation

Ed and county officials have been meeting to discuss fire evacuation routes and other safety measures. Additionally, the Nevada County Board of Supervisors have been meeting with various Nevada County businesses to discuss ways to improve life for Nevada County residents. The Nevada County Economic Resource Council in conjunction with Sierra Business Council has created a survey asking certain county residents to respond so the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy can update its data.

Ed wants to encourage all FBM members to respond to this survey. Jeff would email the survey link to our members. All agreed this would be valuable

information to share. Before sending the email, Ann suggested adding clarifying language about how the data will to be used.

The Board also wants to encourage members to complete the “*My Nevada County- Preparing for the Future*” survey as well. This survey focuses on ranking emergency services.

Ann will draft some text to go out with the surveys.

Idaho Maryland Mine Review and Response - Report Out

The board congratulated Susan Sanders for the outstanding job she did researching and writing the Idaho-Maryland Mine Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) letter. Ed sent this letter on behalf of FBM to Matt Kelly at the Nevada County Planning Department.

Susan reported the planning department had received thousands of comments on the Draft EIR. She estimated the review process could take as long as a year to complete, and it is possible the DEIR will need to be recirculated.

Diana asked if the planning department is required to review all comments. Could the department just decide on its own to deny Gold Rise permission to re-open the mine? Susan said the planning department is legally required to review and respond to all comments and provide the responses in a Final EIR. Once the Final EIR is issued the public has an opportunity to review, then it goes to the Planning Commission which makes a recommendation on the project to the Board of Supervisors. The board will have another public hearing and then it will make a final decision on the project.

FBM Free Chipping Program

Ann reported nine Banner Mountain neighborhoods participated in FBM’s free chipping program. There is one neighborhood left to get this free service (up by where Banner Lava Cap and Red Dog roads meet).

She reported there were two neighborhoods where the Fire Safe Council (FSC) chipper missed a couple of homes. Ann will ask FSC personnel if they will return and finish chipping these piles.

Ed asked for an estimate of how much money has been used for the program. Ann guessed about \$1500.00 so far. She was not certain of the total dollar amount since all the invoices have not been received.

Jeff suggested FBM keep the subsidized chipping program year-round. Or at least during fall/winter. Jeff pointed out that this kind of activity brought neighborhoods together. The neighborhoods using the free service were very pleased.

Ann made a motion for FBM to maintain the annual chipping subsidized program. Susan Luhman seconded and all approved. However, before definitely deciding to make this a permanent program, Ann suggested meeting with FSC to see if there were any issues that we need to mitigate. Jeff will accompany Ann.

Signs, Brochure Boxes and Flyers

Diana wanted the board to know she is storing the following FBM items:

Signs,
Covered plastic boxes, and
500 fliers (undated so they could be used again)

FBM Annual Meeting

The board has been discussing whether to hold an in person annual meeting. Ed will seek legal guidance to see if a Zoom meeting would meet the requirements for FBM to meet 501c3 guidelines.

Diana suggested using the concert area at Pioneer Park. People could bring their own chairs. While a good idea, it appears there is not enough time to get a number of speakers to commit.

Jeff said the Fire Coalition was planning a Zoom meeting. Jeff will check with the Coalition and determine if FBM and perhaps Firewise Communities could join and count that as FBM's annual meetings.

Fuel Reduction on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) - Report on meeting with the FSC and discussions with Sierra Streams Institute (SSI) and Yuba Watershed Institute (YWI)

Ann met with FSC staff to see if they have any interested in working with us on a BLM fuel reduction project.

As Ann reported previously, the YWI in concert with SSI has been working on an analysis of the BLM property on Banner Mountain. They are assessing the biological, cultural, and hydrologic functions of the acreage as a part of the Little Deer Creek drainage grant. They received the grant for this work from Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

The FSC was very interested in working with us to find funding and develop a proposal for the area. And in conversations with SSI and YWI, Ann mentioned that FBM would like to be involved with the project design. Our primary concerns are fuel reduction, especially along Banner Lava Cap and Gracie roads. She also suggested that project designers look at the possibility of having a phased project so that emergency work could be done along both evacuation routes to reduce the fuels as quickly as possible - perhaps even this year if funds/authorization could be found. The FSC was supportive of this. Ann also advised these groups that FBM would be very interested in helping to design the project proposal as well as could support their efforts to communicate with locals through FBM's newsletter. She asked for a presentation to either the board or the Firewise community from YWI once their study is completed later this year.

After all the protocols and project plans are in place, the next step is to get funding to do the work. The FSC offered to watch for various grants and would be our financial operative.

New Business

Local ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Services)

Ed and Ann mentioned there is a local Radio ARES (Ham) Operators group that is assisting neighborhoods set up radio communication systems for use during fire season when internet, cable, and cell phones are unavailable. Mark Triolo is the contact person for those interested in more information about setting up this system in a neighborhood. Ann is helping them with the PR effort.

Fuel Reduction in Woodpecker Preserve

Jeff asked if Susan Luhman had responded to a members's email regrading all the fallen trees on the Woodpecker Preserve. Susan offered to contact the Bear

Yuba Land Trust to see if they had plans to clean up the fallen trees. She would then respond to the member's email.

Jeff made the motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Susan Sanders. All approved,

Ed adjourned the meeting at 5:00 pm.