

**Town of Los Altos Hills  
Community Relations Committee**

**Teleconferenced Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, January 26, 2021**

**1. Roll Call; Committee Membership**

The teleconferenced regular meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM, by chairman Roy Woolsey. Present: Members, Lana Einschlag, Karen Emerzian, Roy Woolsey. Associate members, Barbara Cannon, Ron Knapp, Medha Rishi. Town staff, Sarah Robustelli. Council liaison, Lisa Schmidt.

Roy Woolsey led a discussion of Committee membership, noting that Roger Burnell's term on the Committee recently ended and he has not renewed, so we have an opening on the Committee and a vacancy for Committee Vice-Chair. Roy believes Council should ask if applicants plan to: (1) attend all meetings (given the Committee's prior quorum problems) and (2) serve a term as Committee chair. Roy also noted that all five associate members want to continue their membership, and that Nena Price had missed three consecutive meetings. Barbara Cannon said she will be in Town more now, and would be interested in becoming a full member. Perhaps Barbara and Nena should exchange roles.

**2. Introduction of Members of the Public; Public Comment.** Kjell Karlsson. Roger Burnell, former Committee member. New resident Maddie Cheng, prospective Committee member recently retired from her engineering job, joined the meeting later, as did J. Logan, General Manager of LAHCFD.

**3. Review and Approval of Prior Committee Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Karen Emerzian, seconded by Lana Einschlag and passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the last meeting, as distributed in draft form.

**4. Review of Prior City Council Meetings**

Lisa Schmidt is the new Council liaison for the Committee. She spoke of her goals of increasing Council communication with residents, perhaps with a bi-weekly newsletter, and dealing with wildfire preparedness. At the last Council meeting Capt Urena spoke about policing, with burglaries going up in Town.

**5. Report on Recent Town Activities**

Sarah Robustelli reported on Town activities, including a virtual crime prevention program 6 to 7 PM tomorrow, the pop-up picture frame that was at Town Hall and is now at Edith Park until about April, inspirational printed community banners designed by the community, hopping hounds (still a fundraiser for pets in need, but this year a take-home kit, to donate \$10 or more), pathways run self-challenge, Covid 19 testing on Monday, February 1 by appointment or walk-in after 2 PM, and a shred event March 20.

**6. Welcoming of New Town Residents**

Roy Woolsey reported that files for printing of new resident welcoming letter mailing labels were sent to Town Hall for mailing the welcoming letter from Council to the 31 new residents in Town for November and December, and for the follow up letter from the Committee to the 20 new residents for September and October.

**7. Discussion of TEDx Program**

Medha Rishi led a discussion of the draft TEDx presentation that she produced and Roy Woolsey edited. Lisa Schmidt recommends discussing what neighboring communities have done. The Union City TEDx that

Medha was involved with will replace Mountain View College. Roy stated that he contacted Mayor Kavita Tankha and City Clerk Deborah Padovan regarding scheduling this presentation for an upcoming Council meeting, perhaps as soon as the February meeting, in the presentations and appointments section of the agenda. Kavita replied, "looking forward to it." Roger proposed corrections: "sample" topics and "wine-making" hyphenated. Ron suggested adding "vintage car collection." Sarah mentioned innovators event done by History Committee a few years ago with an overflow crowd; John Swan was chair at the time and could comment on getting the people together. Sarah suggests off-line meeting regarding organizing the event.

## **8. Los Altos Hills Town Picnic**

The Committee discussed a Town Picnic in 2021. Sarah talked about the Covid situation with in-person meetings not allowed, and that planning should only take place for activities approved under current guidelines. A picnic as it was done in past years won't be able to happen this year. Last year the Town had 4<sup>th</sup> of July caravan in place of the parade or the Picnic's live classic car show. We should call an event some kind of gathering rather than a Town Picnic, and discuss further in a month or two, keeping in mind that things don't look too promising. Ron noted he arranged same band as last year, and we just have to confirm a month before.

## **9. Wildfire and Emergency Preparedness**

Roy Woolsey noted the recent Youth Commission's presentation to Council, including a 2020-2021 virtual leadership conference with the planned theme of emergency preparedness. Sarah Robustelli said the conference will be on March 7, 2021 and will involve Capt. Gluhan (Ret.) and Mayor Tankha.

The Committee then had lengthy and at times heated discussion of wildfire preparedness. Ron Knapp said last summer there was concern about unrest and possible disturbances in the community arising from the death of George Floyd, so Ron coordinated with Sarah on emergency contact and evacuation information. Ron developed slides showing a hose on roof to help keep it from catching fire, and wrote article for "Our Town" regarding house-saving things one could do. Ron located little spiral-bound fire safety booklets, found the publisher and got a quote for about \$3 each, with front and back customized for LAH. Ron hopes the fire district will provide inputs, since the fire district has the expertise and credibility. Ron said George Tyson spoke with J. Logan who said that LAHCFD was overloaded and didn't have the bandwidth to handle, but noted the booklet was published 2014, updated 2018, has good information about landscaping around one's house and evacuation plan, but may not be fully up to date. There are several links to important information. Sarah said Central Fire advised that the booklet is no longer produced, but Ron said it is available now. Ron commented about drones and webcam to spot when fires begin, and is concerned about protecting one's home.

J. Logan joined the meeting and said Supervisor Simitian nominated Mayor Kavita Tankha to LAHCFD commission and she was just appointed. Logan said it is important to work closely with the Fire Safe Council and Central Fire; both have excellent publications on wildfire preparation and evacuation. LAHCFD does not write documents but uses documents written by fire experts; she is happy to recommend good documents that are up to date. Fire science is changing rapidly, so keeping publications and online information up to date is important. She could send publications for our review that are focused on early preparation for evacuation and how to make property safe from fire. She is concerned that Ron's ideas have not taken hold from a fire science point of view. She said we must follow fire science, and be very careful to provide consistent information to residents rather than mixed messaging, and to provide information written by fire experts. Ron said he included references to fire experts in his PowerPoint presentation. Karen Emerzian moved and Lana Einschlag seconded and it was agreed to table the discussion until next meeting, at which time we should be able to review LAHCFD's recommended documents and LAHCFD's view on Ron's slides.

## **10. Additional Items or Contributions from Committee Members. None.**

## **11. Date for Next Meeting and Adjournment**

The Committee agreed to meet on its next regular meeting date, February 23, 2021, at 7 PM. Karen Emerzian moved, Lana Einschlag seconded and the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn at 8:46 PM.

Minutes prepared by Roy Woolsey, January 29, 2021.