

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MENDOCINO COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL, INC.

Monday, December 17, 2007, at 5:30 p.m.

Ukiah Valley Fire District, 1500 S. State Street, Ukiah, California

President Colin Wilson called to order the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council (MCFSC) at 5:35 p.m. Directors present were Colin Wilson, Suzanne Guido, Robert Bruce, and Steve Leonard. Also present was Executive Director Julie Rogers ("Staff"). Absent were directors Ronda Gott, Mike Jani, and Hal Wagenet. The order of the agenda was changed due to absence of a quorum for part of the meeting.

The Minutes of the October 24, 2007 meeting were unanimously approved as written.

Under Officers' Reports, Julie Rogers began with the following items:

- Review and report on MCFSC's books. Larry Restel of the Coastal Mountain Group, reviewed the books in November and found the bookkeeping procedures adequate. He particularly noted that Quickbooks Pro software is being used well to track various funding sources and projects. President Wilson and Staff are working to implement his suggested improvements.
- Applications for 2009 BLM funding. Staff intends to submit two applications by the Grants Clearinghouse deadline of February 15: Gorse Removal in Caspar and a County-wide Chipping Program. The gorse application, the priority, was first submitted last year. Gorse is a highly flammable weed which has overtaken Caspar.
- Membership in Catalyst. MCFSC is now a member in this organization which assists local nonprofits, and will soon be the beneficiary of its services.
- 2006 tax returns. IRS Form 990 and California Form 199 for nonprofits were prepared by Staff and timely filed (with granted extensions). A report was also filed with the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts.
- Allen-Heath Memorial Foundation. MCFSC has received a \$20,000 grant for its work in 2008. Huge thanks to Chuck and Liz Phillips Heath of the Foundation for their fourth year of substantial support.
- California Fire Safe Council trademark issue. In July 2006 the California Fire Safe Council, Inc., applied to the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office to trademark the term "Fire Safe Council." If granted the trademark, the California FSC would have legal control over the term. In October the MCFSC board submitted a letter to the Patent Office opposing the application. The USPTO accepted and filed MCFSC's letter, which supports a formal opposition filed by the Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council. A year-long review of the California FSC's application is now in process. Other local FSCs have also submitted letters in opposition.

President Wilson reported on a December 10th meeting of MCFSC's Budget Committee, which consists of himself, Vice President Steve Leonard, Director Ronda Gott, and Julie Rogers. The purpose was narrowing the current \$17,000 gap between assured projected income and

projected expenses in 2008. The committee agreed to recommend the following, which reduced expenses by \$17,000: 1) cut all costs as much as possible, including exclusion of a part-time assistant, 2) eliminate health benefits for Staff (but continue repaying a \$300/month debt owed), and 3) reduce Staff's hours and wages by 25%. It was acknowledged that the reduction in Staff's hours would significantly impact MCFSC's ability to function at its previous level.

President Wilson then presented a draft fundraising letter. The board voted unanimously that Staff use it to carry out a fundraising letter campaign to MCFSC current members, and authorized postage not to exceed \$100.

Discussion of other fundraising possibilities ensued. President Wilson described a lucrative out-of-area fundraising event which may be moved to Boonville. Local entities including MCFSC could become sponsors and recipients of the proceeds; he will keep the board posted. Various local organizations and individuals were identified as potential donors, to be pursued by Staff and board members, using required application forms or the letter mentioned above.

In Treasurer Mike Jani's absence, Staff gave the Treasurer's Report. As of December 12, 2007, total funds in all accounts were \$30,903.00. Subtracting trust funds of \$2,303.99 being held for Pine Mountain and Robinson Creek FSCs yields an MCFSC fund balance of \$28,599.01. Restricted grant project funds are \$5,375.74 (Pine Mountain), funds tentatively held for chipping and address signage are \$1,760.00, and operating budget funds are \$21,463.27. Details are included in the Financial Summary and Notes, Balance Sheet, and Statement of Income and Expenses.

The board then considered the reduced 2008 operating budget proposed by the Budget Committee (see above), voted unanimously to approve it, and directed that careful budget reviews must be carried out quarterly.

As membership dues are an ongoing source of operating budget funds for MCFSC, the board unanimously approved raising the yearly membership dues from \$20 to \$30 in 2008.

Suzanne Guido, Membership Committee Chair, reported three new memberships since the last meeting.

The next board meeting was set for Wednesday, January 23, at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Dated: January 13, 2008

---

Suzanne Guido, Secretary