

**MINUTES
FEBRUARY 3, 2020
WILDFIRE PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE
REGULAR MEETING**

Chair Chuck Page called the virtual Wildfire Public Safety Task Force meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and explained how the virtual meeting would be conducted.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Chair Chuck Page, Vice Chair Paul Hansen, Members Bill Cooper, Arun Venkatachar
ABSENT: Members May Lu, Michael Zhang (excused)
ALSO PRESENT: Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager
Chief Jason Falarski, Santa Clara County Fire
Eugenia Rendler, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Interim Executive Director

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS

None

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Public Safety Task Force Minutes

Recommended Action:

Review and approve the draft minutes from the February 3, 2020 meeting.

HANSEN/VENKATACHAR MOVED TO **APPROVE THE DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 3, 2020 MEETING.** MOTION PASSED. AYES: HANSEN, PAGE, COOPER, VENKATACHAR. NOES: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: LU, ZHANG.

2. Mobile LRAD for Emergency Communications (Work Plan Item)

Recommended Action:

Consider whether to recommend that the City Council allocate funds in the Fiscal Year 2020/21 budget to purchase a mobile LRAD to be used for emergency communications to the City Council.

The Task Force discussed use of mobile LRAD to supplement emergency communications, their use during evacuation scenarios, and compared stationary and mobile LRADs. The Task Force also discussed the value of visual instructions compared to audio instructions in an evacuation.

COOPER MOVED TO **RECOMMEND ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR DEVICES AT TWO FIXED LOCATIONS THAT COULD PROVIDE BOTH AUDIO AND VISUAL INFORMATION IN THE EVENT OF AN EVACUATION.**

Motion failed due to lack of second.

Chair Page proposed that staff provide some additional information about use of message boards and other visual alternatives to LRADs as well as the reasons LRADs were deployed by some organizations as a tool in evacuations.

The Task Force agreed.

3. Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Funding, Dead Tree Removal Program, and Expanded Chipping (Work Plan Item)

Recommended Action:

Consider whether to recommend that the City Council increase funding in the Fiscal Year 2020/21 budget for the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council from \$25,000 per year to expand services, offer a dead tree removal incentive program or other defensible space and/or home hardening incentive program, and increase chipping services.

The Task Force discussed the existing agreement with the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council and opportunities to expand services through an incentive program, like the dead tree removal program, or expanded chipping services.

Eugenia Rendler, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Interim Executive Director, addressed questions from the Task Force and provided information about the FireSafe Council's various funding sources and partnerships with other jurisdictions.

Chair Page requested that the next meeting include a comparison of the FireSafe Council agreement with the City of Saratoga, Palo Alto, and Los Altos Hills to allow the Task Force to review differences and perhaps recommend changes to the City's existing agreement with the FireSafe Council.

The Task Force agreed.

4. West Valley Cities Fuel Reduction Crew (Work Plan Item)

Recommended Action:

Consider whether to recommend that the City Council allocate funding in the Fiscal Year 2020/21 budget to share the costs of a Santa Clara County Fire Department fuel reduction crew with other West Valley cities and the Fire Department, including startup cost and ongoing annual costs.

Chief Jason Falarski provided an overview of the costs to establish and maintain an fuel reduction crew.

The Task Force agreed to take no further action on this idea and suggested that the FireSafe Council may be a good option for fuel break projects.

5. Wildfire Risk Mitigation Fund (Work Plan Item)

Recommended Action:

Consider whether to recommend that the City Council create a fund in the Fiscal Year 2020/21 budget to be used for wildfire risk mitigation efforts.

Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager, provided an introduction on various types of funds that could be created.

The Task Force discussed the concept of a Wildfire Risk Mitigation Fund, some of the ways that it could be used, and the different fund types in the budget.

COOPER/ VENKATACHAR MOVED TO **RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY COUNCIL ALLOCATE \$50,000 TO A NEW WILDFIRE RISK MITIGATION RESERVE FUND IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2020/21 BUDGET THAT CAN BE USED FOR ANY WILDFIRE RISK MITIGATION PROJECT OR PROGRAM WITH A BALANCE THAT WOULD CARRYOVER INTO FUTURE FISCAL YEARS.** MOTION PASSED. AYES: HANSEN, PAGE, COOPER, VENKATACHAR. NOES: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: LU, ZHANG.

6. Status Update on Wildfire Risk Reduction in the City Code (Work Plan Item)

Recommended Action:

At the February meeting, the Task Force finalized recommended City Code changes for the Planning Commission and City Council to mitigate wildfire risk in the City of Saratoga. Planning Commission review of the recommended changes was scheduled to occur on April 8, 2020. However, this meeting has been canceled due to the shelter at home orders issued by the County and State of California.

Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager, shared that the April 8, 2020 Planning Commission meeting had ben canceled.

7. Review Work Plan

Recommended Action:

Review the adopted Task Force Work Plan.

Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager, noted that the Task Force's progress on the work plan has been added to the work plan in the agenda packet.

8. Future Agenda Items

Recommended Action:

Consider agenda items for upcoming meetings. The next regular Task Force meeting is scheduled for June 1, 2020.

The Task Force agreed to hold a special meeting on May 4 to continue discussion on the Mobile LRAD and FireSafe Council services.

ADJOURNMENT

HANSEN/ VENKATACHAR MOVED TO **ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:46 P.M.** MOTION PASSED. AYES: HANSEN, PAGE, COOPER, VENKATACHAR. NOES: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: LU, ZHANG.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager
City of Saratoga