

**MINUTES  
JUNE 1, 2020  
WILDFIRE PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE  
REGULAR MEETING**

Chair Chuck Page called the virtual Wildfire Public Safety Task Force meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and explained how the virtual meeting would be conducted.

**ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Chair Chuck Page, Vice Chair Paul Hansen, Members Bill Cooper

ABSENT: Members May Lu, Arun Venkatachar

ALSO PRESENT: Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager  
Chief Jason Falarski, Santa Clara County Fire  
Eugenia Rendler, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Interim Executive Director  
JR Call, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council  
Lauren Pettipiece, Public Information Officer

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS**

Darrell Miller proposed mandatory battery backup for cell towers in areas at risk for wildfire.

Vice Chair Paul Hansen spoke about a demonstration of the fire defense system in the Arrowhead neighborhood.

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

1. Public Safety Task Force Minutes

**Recommended Action:**

Review and approve the draft minutes from the May 4, 2020 meeting.

COOPER/HANSEN MOVED TO **APPROVE THE DRAFT MINUTES FROM THE MAY 4, 2020 MEETING.** MOTION PASSED. AYES: COOPER, HANSEN, LU, PAGE, VENKATACHAR. NOES: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: NONE.

2. Firewise Communities (Work Plan Item)

**Recommended Action:**

Discuss and consider how the City of Saratoga can encourage participation in Firewise Communities through publicity and outreach, targeting certain communities to participate in the program, and collaborating with Neighborhood Watch.

Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager, introduced the item.

Lauren Pettipiece, Public Information Officer, shared proposed plan for outreach related to Firewise Communities.

JR Call, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council, discussed support that the FireSafe Council provides for neighborhoods that are looking to become Firewise Communities.

Chair Page suggested that outreach efforts include clear information about where to find more information and who to contact for assistance.

The Task Force discussed whether any neighborhoods could achieve Firewise Communities status before the Task Force sunsets in November 2020.

Eugenia Rendler, Interim Executive Director of the FireSafe Council, shared a status update on several neighborhoods in Saratoga working towards becoming Firewise Communities.

3. Wildland Urban Interface Ingress/Egress

**Recommended Action:**

Consider City of Saratoga Wildland Urban Interface Area ingress and egress points.

Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager, introduced the item.

Task Force Member Cooper shared proposed evacuation maps that he drafted and suggested directional signage to assist the public during an emergency. He explained that one benefit of evacuation signage is that it will raise awareness of evacuation routes.

Chief Falarski shared information about how evacuations typically are managed.

The Task Force discussed timing of installation of signage, whether signage would be visible all the time or only during emergencies, and process for recommending the Council consider directional evacuation signage.

HANSEN/COOPER MOVED TO **RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY COUNCIL ALLOCATE \$5,000 FROM THE FISCAL YEAR 2020/21 BUDGET FOR DIRECTIONAL EVACUATION SIGNAGE TO BE INSTALLED UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF THE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE.**

Chair Page requested an amendment to the motion to request that staff contact wineries in the City to confirm that they have no concerns about the signage before presenting the recommendation to the Council. If there are concerns, the Task Force will re-evaluate the recommendation. Additionally, he suggested that the Task Force make the

recommendation without a specific amount as the total cost for signage may be below \$5,000.

Vice Chair Hansen and Task Force Member Cooper accepted the amendments.

HANSEN/COOPER MOVED TO **RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF TO INSTALL DIRECTIONAL EVACUATION SIGNAGE UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF THE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE WITH FUNDS FROM THE FISCAL YEAR 2020/21 BUDGET; IF WINERIES IN THE CITY OF SARATOGA EXPRESS CONCERN REGARDING DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE TO CITY STAFF THEN THE RECOMMENDATION WILL BE BROUGHT BACK TO THE TASK FORCE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION.** MOTION PASSED. AYES: COOPER, HANSEN, LU, PAGE, VENKATACHAR. NOES: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: NONE.

4. City Council Final Report

**Recommended Action:**

Begin development of a final report out to the City Council to be presented to the City Council before the Task Force sunset in November 2020.

Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager, introduced the item.

Chair Page noted the challenges of fully addressing the risks of wildfire within an 18-month period. The report prepared by the Task Force could capture efforts that the City Council should consider following the Task Force's sunset.

Task Force Member Cooper commented on the importance of signage.

Vice Chair Hansen contemplated continuation of a Task Force and suggested future work efforts.

Task Force Member Venkatachar commented on his experience with the first Task Force and asked if there are ways to ensure recommendations are followed.

Chair Page suggested that the quarterly public safety postcard include wildfire safety information, particularly during fire season, and noted that a postcard dedicated to wildfire safety may be warranted. He also proposed a bi-monthly postcard on wildfire safety to residents in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) during the wildfire season.

Task Force Member Venkatachar concurred.

Chair Page asked that the next meeting include a draft report that clearly indicates any recommendations that were raised one-on-one with staff.

5. Review Work Plan

**Recommended Action:**

Review the adopted Task Force Work Plan.

The Task Force reviewed the work plan.

Glenda Aune and Darrell Miller commented on the work plan.

Chair Page asked that the draft Final Report include City Council consideration of changing its Code Compliance policy to allow anonymous complaints and proactive enforcement.

6. Future Agenda Items

**Recommended Action:**

Consider agenda items for upcoming meetings. The next regular Task Force meeting is scheduled for August 3, 2020.

The Task Force agreed to include the Final Report and directional evacuation signage, if needed, on the August 3 agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT**

HANSEN/COOPER MOVED TO **ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:38 P.M.** MOTION PASSED.  
AYES: COOPER, HANSEN, LU, PAGE, VENKATACHAR. NOES: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT:  
NONE.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager  
City of Saratoga