

**MINUTES  
JULY 8, 2019  
WILDFIRE PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE  
REGULAR MEETING**

Vice Chair Paul Hansen called the Wildfire Public Safety Task Force Meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. in the Linda Callon Conference Room at Saratoga City Hall at 13777 Fruitvale Avenue.

**ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Vice Chair Paul Hansen, Members Bill Cooper, Arun Venkatachar, Michael Zhang  
ABSENT: Chair Chuck Page (excused), Member May Lu  
ALSO PRESENT: Crystal Bothelio, Deputy City Manager  
Chief Jason Falarski, Santa Clara County Fire

**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 May 6, 2019 and June 3, 2019 meetings.

COOPER/VENKATACHAR MOVED TO **APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 6, 2019 AND JUNE 3, 2019 MEETINGS.** MOTION PASSED. AYES: COOPER, HANSEN, VENKATACHAR, ZHANG. NOES: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: LU, PAGE.

2. Long Range Acoustic Devices

**Recommended Action:**

Receive and discuss information on Long Range Acoustic Devices (LRAD).

Deputy City Manager Crystal Bothelio shared information about LRAD technology and the resident request to supplement City communications during an emergency.

Chief Jason Falarski shared information about the County Fire Department's plans to install LRAD on new fire stations planned for Quito and Redwood Estates. The Department is considering available options, testing protocols, and best practices for use of the devices.

The Task Force considered potential uses of LRAD in the City of Saratoga and there was consensus to study it further as part of the work plan.

3. Wildland Urban Interface Information

**Recommended Action:**

Receive and discuss information on the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) requested at the May 6, 2019 meeting.

Deputy City Manager Crystal Bothelio shared information about the WUI requested at the Task Force's May meeting.

Chief Jason Falarski shared information about how the WUI and fire risk areas are established by the State, State responsibility areas, and response in areas with dual jurisdiction between County Fire and Cal Fire.

Task Force Member Zhang suggested that with the majority of households in Saratoga outside the WUI, the City may need to bring greater awareness to the risk of wildfire to people who live outside the WUI.

Vice Chair Hansen agreed that that it will be important to communicate strategically so that residents outside the WUI understand the impact of wildfire on them. He also commented on the need to communicate effectively with people from different cultures and languages.

4. Firewise Communities Wildfire Risk Assessment

**Recommended Action:**

Receive and discuss Firewise Communities risk assessment form.

Vice Chair Hansen shared that the Arrowhead community has started the process of becoming a Firewise Community.

The Task Force discussed the wildfire risk assessment process.

Task Force Member Cooper commented on the potential impacts of a neighborhood-based program, like Firewise Communities. If individual property owners or neighborhoods take responsibility for their fire risks, then eventually fire risks in the City will be greatly reduced. He raised questions about the 17 perils covered by insurance.

Vice Chair Hansen added that the process could take as little as 6 to 8 months to launch, compared to the 18 months suggested by the FireSafe Council.

## 5. Process for Creating Wildfire Foundation

### **Recommended Action:**

Receive presentation on the process to form a wildfire foundation.

Deputy City Manager Crystal Bothelio shared information about the process to form a wildfire foundation and the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council.

The Task Force agreed that forming a foundation may not be necessary and discussed opportunities to increase funding through grants and donations for wildfire non-profits like the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council.

Task Force Member Cooper suggested that additional funding may not be important if programs like Firewise Communities become popular in the WUI, since these types of grassroots programs focus on individual or neighborhood responsibility and action.

Task Force Members Zhang and Venkatachar noted that not all residents may be able or inclined to participate in programs like Firewise Communities and alternative options may be needed to reduce dry vegetation that becomes fuel during a wildfire. They also noted that there may be issues beyond the ability of individuals or neighborhoods to address.

Task Force Member Cooper acknowledged that some issues cannot be resolved by individuals or neighbors, but emphasized the impact reducing dry grass and fuel ladders will have on individual properties.

Task Force Member Venkatachar agreed and suggested that the Task Force look at a multipronged approach that accounts for people who are unable or unwilling to reduce dry fuels and other fire risks.

## 6. Development of a Proposed Work Plan

### **Recommended Action:**

Continue developing a proposed work plan for the Public Safety Task Force based on Council priorities and timeline of the Public Safety Task Force.

Vice Chair Hansen facilitated a discussion on the work plan based on a strategic planning framework.

The Task Force reviewed the initial list of potential action items for the proposed work plan and 7 broad categories that these actions could be grouped under that the Task Force developed at the June meeting. The Task Force then discussed how these actions and categories could be converted into a set of goals, strategies to achieve those goals,

tactics to implement strategies, and measurements to determine if goals have been achieved.

The Task Force agreed on the initial matrix below.

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Tactics</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Public Awareness & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey to understand community needs</li> <li>Create educational materials</li> <li>Conduct outreach sessions</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct outreach at schools to educate parents about wildfire risk and prevention during school events and activities</li> <li>Conduct outreach to students about wildfire risk and prevention and to teach students important skills, like how to use a fire extinguisher</li> <li>Conduct outreach on shake roofs</li> <li>Conduct outreach on the importance of defensible space</li> <li>Conduct outreach on home improvements to improve fire resiliency (such as replacing wood shake roofs)</li> <li>Conduct outreach and education to older adults, individuals with disabilities, or people with limited resources on resources that are available to them to reduce wildfire risk</li> <li>Conduct outreach and education to older adults, individuals with disabilities, or people with limited resources on resources that are available to them to reduce wildfire risk</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of outreach sessions completed</li> </ul>
Homeowner Defensible Space for Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote Firewise Communities</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete 3 certifications by Nov. 2020</li> </ul>
Fire/Fuel Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sponsored activities – Fire Department, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homeowner actions</li> <li>• Additional resources</li> </ul>		
Funding Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alliances &amp; collaborations</li> <li>• Grants &amp; other funding sources</li> </ul>		
Evacuation Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency plan</li> <li>• Test &amp; drill</li> <li>• Evaluate</li> <li>• Alert processes</li> </ul>	1) Annual emergency test demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure readiness</li> <li>• Evaluate results</li> </ul>

The Task Force agreed to continue discussing and refining the work plan at the next meeting.

7. Future Agenda Items

**Recommended Action:**

Consider agenda items for upcoming meetings. The next regular Task Force meeting is scheduled for August 5, 2019.

The Task Force agreed to continue discussion of the work plan at the next meeting. Other agenda items will include a presentation on WUI building code requirements and a presentation from County Fire on fire prevention.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Task Force meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

Crystal Bothelio, Assistant City Manager  
City of Saratoga