

MEETING OF THE

East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governments (EBWC)

EastbayWildfire.org

Thursday, November 14, 2024

1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

El Cerrito City Hall, Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito, CA 94530

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER | ROLL CALL

Chair Susan Wengraf called the meeting to order at 1:10 PM as a quorum of members were present.

Members Present

Contra Costa County: Supervisor John Gioia
City of Berkeley: Vice Mayor Susan Wengraf (Chair)
City of El Cerrito: Councilmember Paul Fadelli
City of Pinole: Mayor Maureen Toms
City of Richmond: Councilmember Soheila Bana (Alternate)
Rodeo-Hercules FPD: Board Vice Chair Marie Bowman

Members Absent

Alameda County: Supervisor Elisa Márquez
City of Hercules: Councilmember Alex Walker-Griffin
City of Oakland: Councilmember Janani Ramachandran (Vice Chair)

Fire Chiefs Present

Alameda County (Chief William McDonald)
Contra Costa County (Assistant Chief Chris Bachman)
City of Berkeley (Assistant Chief Colin Arnold)
City of Oakland (Chief Damon Covington)

Technical Advisory Members

Alliance of Fire Safe Councils (Jon Kaufman)
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (Mike Torkelson)
UC Berkeley (Ruben Lizardo)

2. APPROVE MINUTES OF OCT 21, 2024

Rodeo-Hercules FPD Board Vice Chair Marie Bowman moved to approve the minutes; Supervisor John Gioia seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA MATTERS

Two public comments including Councilmember Janani Ramachandran's aide stating her regrets that she could not attend at the last minute due to illness.

4. PROPOSAL & DISCUSSION OF VEGETATION MANAGEMENT/CEQA STUDY

Jon Kauffman opened by asking EBWC for an Approval of Proposal Concept before introducing the proposal presenters: Lara Rachowicz of Ascent, Sean Baumgarten of San Francisco Estuary Institute and Mark Tukman of Tukman Geospatial. [The proposal Document and Presentation can be downloaded from the [EBWC website](#) under Meetings. The presentation starts at 0.01:50 of the meeting video.]

PUBLIC COMMENT: Six Public Comments including one from Contra Costa County Fire Assistant Chief Chris Bachman who suggested meeting with the Proposal Team before the next meeting to discuss: best practices CCC Fire is already doing, ongoing reporting, procurement issues, and the possibility of starting with a smaller scale project.

ACTION: Councilmember Soheila Bana moved to approve the Proposal Concept, with direction to the Proposal Team to work with Contra Costa County Fire to discuss the issues they identified before finalizing the proposal, and then report back to the EBWC. Supervisor John Gioia seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

5. PRESENTATION BY AMY BACH OF UNITED POLICYHOLDERS ON FIRE INSURANCE STATUS

United Policyholders Executive Director Amy Bach gave a 30-minute Home Insurance Update. Topics included Wildfire Risk Scores, strategies from the CA Dept of Insurance and the Safer from Wildfires Framework. [The Presentation can be downloaded from the [EBWC website](#) under Meetings. The presentation starts at 1:11:00 of the meeting video.]

6. FEE STRUCTURE

Chair Susan Wengraf noted that given Oakland's current financial situation, Vice Chair Janani Ramachandran did not feel she could recommend the second-year fee structure but could recommend the first-year. [The Fee Structure document can be downloaded from the [EBWC website](#) under Meetings.]

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Supervisor John Gioia moved to recommend the Year One Budget with the fee structure noted in the report, subject to each agencies' governing body approving it for that agency. FPD Board Vice Chair Marie Bowman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

7. BOARD CHAIR ELECTION & FUTURE BOARD COMPOSITION DISCUSSION

Chair Susan Wengraf noted that she will be retiring from the Berkeley City Council on Dec 5th and therefore is no longer eligible to serve as an EBWC Elected Representative. She added that Vice Chair Janani Ramachandran will be on maternity leave for a couple of months.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION: Chair Susan Wengraf made a motion to elect Supervisor John Gioia as EBWC Chair and leave the Vice Chair seat open until 2025. FPD Board Vice Chair Marie Bowman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Supervisor Gioia agreed that his office will conduct outreach to relevant member agencies about their respective representatives in 2025.

8. REVIEW & VOTE ON PERMANENT MEETING DATE & TIME

The item was continued until newly appointed EBWC Members join in early 2025.

9. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS

The Dec 5th meeting was canceled. Newly elected Chair Gioia will schedule the next meeting for early 2025. Meetings could be held every other month with executive committee meetings in between.

10. MEMBER COMMENTS

El Cerrito Councilmember Paul Fadelli and Berkeley Vice Mayor Susan Wengraf announced this would be their last meeting. Members appreciated Chair Susan Wengraf for her leadership, vision and work to bring EBWC into fruition and serve as the Coalition's first Chair.

Lisa Jacobs passed out the final Strategic Framework One-Pager, approved with changes, now incorporated, at the October 21st meeting. [The Strategic Framework document can be downloaded from the [EBWC website](#) under Meetings.]

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:22 PM