



Amador Fire Safe Council
PO Box 1055
Pine Grove, California 95665
209-295-6200



“The Mission of the Amador County Fire Safe Council is to protect the people of Amador County and their property from the effects of catastrophic wildfire through education, cooperation, innovation and action. “

Amador Fire Safe Council

Executive Board of Directors Meeting

MINUTES

August 17, 2011

Amador County Agriculture Department Conference Room

12200 ó B Airport Road, Martell

Attendance; Ingrid Barnes, AFSC; John Hofmann, Amador County Consultant; Thomas Tinsley, Calfire; Amy Rocha, NRCS; Jim McCart, AFSC; Mike Kirkley; Tony Migliaccio, AFSC; John Romena, BVBP; Maureen Murray; Debbie Dunn, Pine Grove Upcountry Resident; Cathy Koos Breazeal, AFSC; Kristina Agustin. Proxy from Lola to Amy and Steve to Tony

1. Call to Order ó 3:09 pm by Jim McCart
2. Approval of Agenda ó Motion Ingrid, second Tony. Motion Passed
3. Introductions
4. Minutes ó Moved John, second Tony. Passed voice vote.
5. Treasurer's report ó See Attached. Motion John. Second Ingrid. Motion Passed Total \$173,279.27
6. Executive Director Report ó See attached
 - a. While at the county fair worked on WUI, CAG and Title III
 - b. Tiger Creek Co-op grant ó No go since SPI and PGE pulled out.
 - c. Thank you from Red Cross and Sierra Highlands
 - d. CalStar Newsletter.
 - e. ACCG ó FS and Cali Cat Tour
 - i. SNC grant request ó CEQA/NEPA work
 - ii. Steve Wilensky meeting congressional people to promote projects ó source for woody biomass
 - iii. Burney Hat group similar to ACCG ó now collaborating
 - iv. Currently there are appeals on the View 88 project
 - v. SNC grants Sept-October 26

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- vi. Monty McCoy making mining claims selling on E-Bay
 7. FSC Invoice Approval ó See attached list ó 1627, 1628, 1632, 1633, 1634 - Motion Ingrid, 2nd Tony. Motion passed.
 8. Announcements ó
 - a. EQIP deadline ó November 18th
 9. Committee/Grant Reviews
 - a. Covered in ED report
 10. Old Business
 - a. Title III ó
 - i. The BOS declined AFSC's request for \$8000 for 2 Firewise demo gardens and using the gardens for public education/Firewise Community Days.
 - b. Title II ó
 - i. We have been told we have the Tiger Creek Road brushing project, but no paperwork or contract yet.
 - c. Amador Water Agency GSL
 - i. Rich Farrington (out of town unable to attend) previously requested a letter of support for the Fire Chief's letter. Jim McCart drafted and presented letter of support.
 - ii. Upcountry resident Debbie Dunn read letter into record ó see attached letter
 - iii. Mike Kirkley (retired CDF Division Chief) suggested this is a political issue, endorsement by AFSC will not make a difference and warned AFSC against getting involved in political issues
 - iv. No motion to accept or decline letter of support for Fire Chief's letter tabled indefinitely
 11. New Business ó
 - a. SRA fire fee
 - i. CAFSC supports fire fee ó According to CalFire Rep. Tinsley it is fluid, constantly changing it was originally 4 for fire prevention now for fire protection. August 22nd Public meeting
 - ii. Fee Max of \$150, reductions due to multiple parcels, cwpp, low income, etc.
 - iii. Bill signed into law; billing would be done by board of Equalization
 - iv. SRA fee came up 2002 and 2003
 - v. AFSC has no position on this issue
 - b. Treasurer position ó Tony has too many things ó need to step down, Christina will discuss with Maureen; add to agenda for next meeting.
 12. Public Comments ó
 - a. John Hoffman - 2011 Title II ó 3rd party administrator need to wait to sign contract, waiting for FS supervisors office and 3rd party to sign. Title III Should consider submitting project during comment period. Do not have to limit to only half of funds and if project not submitted during comment period can't fund
 13. Next Meeting ó September 21, 2011
 14. Adjournment ó 4:15 pm

[This letter read during GSL discussion 10.c by Debbie Dunn]

August 17, 2011

Dear Fire Safe Council ;

Below is your publicly declared Mission and a listing of Goals that this Council is operating to. My assumption is that none of what is published below has changed.

Our Mission Statement

To Protect the people of Amador County and their property from the effects of catastrophic wildfire through education, cooperation, innovation and action.

Our Goals

- Promote a healthy forest.
- Improve air and water quality.
- Reduce the potential for fire loss damage.
- Improve fire safety by reducing dangerous fuel loads.
- Educate the public about fire threat and fire prevention measures.
- Reduce vegetation waste stream to landfills.
- Coordinate a Countywide Fire Plan, with the cooperation of local fire agencies.
- Improve circulation for evacuation.
- Serve community and neighborhood fire safety needs.
- Operate through in-kind donations, grants and financial contributions.

Today as agendized, you are addressing a request to endorse or support the Amador Water Agency (AWA) \$14 million capital improvement project, the Gravity Supply Line(GSL). My assumption is that this water delivery system improvement project named the Gravity Supply Line, is being presented to you as some type of fire suppression improvement.

What I do not see mentioned or suggested in your Mission or Goals, would be for this Council to get dragged into a political arena of two governances manipulated by special interest. A manipulation that in fact is not in the best interest of the general public, property owners and tax payers of Amador County.

The purpose of this writing is informational in order to allow the Amador Fire Safe Council to make an informed decision that in fact remains align with its stated Mission and Goals versus the focused political position being presented by the requestor, Mr. Farrington. Validation, verification and/or proof of all statements are available on request.

THESE ARE THE FACTS:

- USDA GSL Grant proposal, final version submitted by AWA in 2009, only mentions fire twice in the 130 page document:
 - 1) Allows AWA to supply water for fire protection (Fire hydrants are a current use of this water)
 - 2) Being constructed underground the pipe is insulated from natural disaster such as fire
- GSL CEQA Negative Declaration and NEPA documents, are a require detailed analysis of this project that is legally defensible, and has been adopted by the AWA Board of Directors. They address fire to this extent;
 - o Pipe underground is insulated from fire and vandalism
 - o Increased personnel and activity in project construction could increase risk of fires. Mitigation provided.
 - o Overall impact to fire protection services? Less than significant. No mitigation required.
 - o “The proposed project is an underground pipeline and intake structure operated and maintained by the Agency and would not require public services beyond existing service levels or directly affect fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or most other public facilities.” (CEQA pg 573)
- The GSL will not improve fire flow to any of the existing hydrants or stand pipes therefore does not provide a significant improvement of fire protection or suppression to housing communities upcountry.
- The GSL only transports raw water to the Buckhorn treatment plant, not to residential developments.
- A campaign fire upcountry could interrupt power which will interrupt water being pumped from the treatment plant to many residential areas. The GSL will not improve or prevent this condition.
- Chief Blankenheim stated clearly in a public meeting upcountry this year, that if a campaign fire is approaching a residential development, he would not send fire fighters in until two days after the fire, “for mop up”. Mr. Farrington was at this meeting, please ask him for verification.
- Improved raw water quality to the treatment plant, may result from the GSL but it must not be very significant as the AWA has not even bothered to do the simple testing to determine the degree of improvement that may or may not occur. Therefore, claims on any water quality change must be considered assumptive and ambiguous.
- To think of the GSL in the context of fire suppression, is to define the cost of two fire hydrants at \$14 million. That would make them seven million dollars a piece. Not a very cost effective venture in my mind.

Why do I consider the approach to you and others as political? The last cash flow projection published by Amador Water Agency indicates that without the USDA award of this GSL project, the agency will be close to a cash minus position before the end of the year. Enter stage right; Politics and bail outs from special interests which is happening right now.

The old saying still stands; You can't make a purse out of a sow's ear, nor does lipstick on a pig make it any more attractive. The GSL is not now, was not in 2009 when the grant proposal was submitted to USDA for funding, nor has it ever been a fire suppression project. It is a raw water delivery system that may, under perfect circumstances for unique residential fires, provide access to raw water for fire protection vehicles. A catastrophic fire will be fought from the air and the reservoirs will be the water source, not a street pipe.

For the Fire Safe Council to enter into this political arena with an endorsement will reduce your effectiveness and put a questionable status on your public image and clean reputation. I have always thought highly of this Council and supported it when ever possible. As an upcountry resident and tax payer I ask you to stay true to your Mission and Goals and stay focused on what you do best; Fire! not water projects being forced on the public by special interest and political posturing.

Thank you for your time,

Debbie Dunn

Pine Grove Resident