



MINUTES OF APRIL 17, 2025, REGULAR FIRE PROTECTION COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CAMBRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

A regular meeting of the Fire Protection Committee of the Cambria Community Services District was held at the Cambria Veterans' Memorial Hall, located at 1000 Main Street, Cambria, CA 93428, on Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 10:30 AM

1. OPENING

1.A Call to Order

Chairperson Gray called the meeting to order at 10:30 am.

1.B Establishment of Quorum

A quorum was established.

Committee members present: Tom Gray, David Pierson, Arthur Chapman, Ronald De Luca, Tony Safford, and Gordon Heinrichs.

Staff present: General Manager Matthew McElhenie and Confidential Administrative Assistant Haley Dodson.

1.C Chair Report

Chairperson Gray drew attention to the reports submitted by the Ad Hoc committees, asked for comment from General Manager McElhenie

Committee Member Pierson reported that the Firesafe Focus Group has interacted with a Cal Poly student class who will be visiting Cambria to write community wildfire protection plans. He also reported that the County of San Luis Obispo is planning a new ordinance similar to the one recently approved by CCSD's Board of Directors for weed abatement standards for developed properties which will be applicable to unincorporated communities not including those with community services districts.

Mr. Pierson also mentioned that California Governor Newsom held a news conference announcing grants for fire risk mitigation. The County's Fire Safe Council was a consultant to the State in the granting process.

Committee Member Safford reported that the Red Cross had 70 requests for defensible space inspections and that they will need to train an additional person to assist in making home visits.

1.D Committee Member and Staff Communications

General Manager McElhenie reported that the District Board passed the weed abatement ordinance which will take effect on May 10, 2025. He also reported that the District is planning preparedness meetings with neighborhood liaisons to prepare for carrying the preparedness message to all community members.

1.E Ad Hoc Subcommittee Reports

Ad Hoc Committee members Pierson and Chapman submitted a report on possible positions and funding to aid the Fire Chief in enforcing the expanded duties for fire hazard abatement in both vacant and improved properties. Committee members and staff discussed the issues raised by the report.

Ad Hoc Committee Members Safford and Chapman submitted a report with suggestions to reach out to community members to improve compliance with the new abatement ordinance and ensure the community is well informed. With a discussion and clarification from the District Manager, Mr. Safford and Mr. Chapman agreed to draft a messaging document for committee and staff review at the next committee meeting.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Gray solicited public comment from those present and those attending the meeting remotely. After hearing public comment, Chairperson Gray closed public comment.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.A Consideration to Approve the March 20, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

Committee Member Safford moved to accept the minutes as written.

Committee Member De Luca seconded the motion.

The motion was approved: 5-Ayes; 0-Nays; 0-Abstain; 0-Absent

4. REGULAR BUSINESS

4.A Discussion and Consideration of Task and Timetable for Evacuation Planning Ad Hoc Committee

After a discussion of evacuation issues, Chairperson Gray suggested that the ad hoc committee focus initially on working with other agencies to determine the current “best practices” in evacuation planning.

Committee Member Heinrichs reported he is planning to attend an evacuation drill to be conducted by the City of Mill Valley to understand evacuation needs and bring those findings back for their applicability to our community.

4.B Discussion of Possible Follow-Up Actions to Cambria Community Emergency Preparedness Area Meetings

The item was tabled to the next meeting.

4.C Discussion and Consideration of New June/July 2025 Committee Meeting Date

The committee discussed possible alternate meeting dates.

Committee Member Chapman moved to cancel the June 19 meeting and combine the June and July meetings into one meeting to be held on Tuesday, July 8, at 10:30 a.m.

Committee Member Safford seconded the motion.

The motion was approved: 5-Ayes; 0-Nays; 0-Abstain; 0-Absent

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S)

Chairperson Gray asked for any future agenda items and will review them for consideration in the agenda for the meeting scheduled for July 8.

6. ADJOURN

Chairperson Gray adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.