

Topanga Canyon Boulevard Roadside Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 29, 2014
10:00am-12:00pm
Topanga Library

I. Welcome:

a. Introductions

Standing Members in Attendance:

Kara Seward- Pavley, SD27
Susan Nissman-Yaroslavsky, Third Supervisorial District
Zuhey Espinoza – Yaroslavsky, Third Supervisorial District
Fiona Nagle – Caltrans (CT)
Lauren Wonder- Caltrans (CT)
Ed Siribahdi- Caltrans (CT)
Patrick Chandler- Caltrans (CT)
Patrick Portevs- Caltrans (CT)
Roger Pugliese – Topanga Association for a Scenic Community (TASC)
Kevin Johnson – Los Angeles County Fire Department
Beth Burnam – North Topanga Canyon Fire Safe Council (NTCFSC)
Clark Stevens – Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains (RCDSMM)
James Grasso – Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (T-CEP)
Joseph Rosendo – Topanga Chamber of Commerce
Carrie Carrier- Topanga Creek Watershed Committee (TCWC)

b. Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved with minor corrections

II. Issues/updates:

a. Implementation Plan Review (Fiona Nagle)

- Debbie Wong has signed the Implementation Plan
- Everyone has signed the Final Implementation Plan
- Hard copies have been given to Pavley, Yaroslavsky and Fire Dept.
- The Implementation Plan will be available on the Caltrans Website as a downloadable PDF
- A hard copy will be available at the Topanga Library (no check out)

b. Current Projection of weather and fire season impacts (Kevin Johnson)

- Not a lot of rain is projected
- National Weather Service is only able to accurately project 30 days in advance
- Johnson indicated that at this point in time there is no rationing happening
- Caltrans noted the Governor has mandated a 10% reduction in their water usage

c. Communication Subcommittee (Fiona Nagle & Kara Seward)

- Fiona Nagle emphasized incorporating drought tolerant landscaping in response to climate change and to encourage people to plant regardless of the season.
- It is important to remind community members that fire season has now become a year-round issue.
- The concept of “adaptive management” planning in response to the drought was discussed. Adaptive Management is a systemic management paradigm that assumes natural resource management policies and actions are not static, but are adjusted based on the combination of new scientific and socio-economic information. Management is improved by learning from actions taken and their effect on the ecosystem.
- The brochure should be used as an instructional guide allowing for adaptive management.
- Town Council will pay the printing cost of the brochure and the County will reimburse the Town Council.

d. Best Management Practices Subcommittee (Carrie Carrier)

- Carrier expressed concern about the mulch. She indicated the mulch used for the pilot project is made of almond trees and treated with pesticides. Carrier read a letter from Ben Allenoff expressing his concerns.
- Caltrans indicated the mulch from Mulch Masters met the Specs (low flammability, hard wood)
- The issue was resolved when Nagle read the certified Specs for mulch used by Mulch Masters; it is not treated with pesticides and meets all other specification as agreed to by the committee.
- It was agreed that transparency and accountability should be respected at all times; if there are individual concerns about BMP’s, they should be brought to the attention of the entire committee.
- It was pointed out that a preferred vendor may not always be available and Caltrans will choose qualified vendors that meet the agreed upon BMP Specs.

D. Mapping Subcommittee

- No Updates

III. Next Steps

a. Action Items

- Final brochure will be presented and discussed at the next meeting

b. Meeting Schedule

- The next meeting is scheduled for April 30th
- Debbie Wong will be present at the April 30th meeting