

TOPANGA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE

*June 11, 2020
10:00am – 12:00pm
Remote Skype Call*

MINUTES

Approved Approved with changes

Co-Chairs: OEM, Jeanne O'Donnell and TCEP, James Grasso

I. Welcome from Co-chairs

Jeanne O'Donnell, Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office-Office of Emergency Management and James Grasso, TCEP

II. Introductions

See sign in sheet for full list.

III. Mission Statement

The mission of the Topanga Emergency Management Task Force, a partnership of designated public agencies, non-governmental organizations, and community organizations is to ensure the sustainability of emergency management efforts and strategies for the Los Angeles County unincorporated area of Topanga. The Task Force oversees the coordination and communication among governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the community to improve preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery. It will develop, review, and monitor community-based emergency plans, facilitate emergency planning exercises, ensure community involvement and educational outreach, and evaluate and update emergency plans after a disaster.

IV. Public Comments (3 minutes each person)

- Susan Nissman: Why is Topanga not listed individually for COVID-19 cases and instead included with the rest of the SMM?
 - Tessa addressed. Topanga is included in the SMM unincorporated area. DPH has decided that this is how it will report for this area. Jeanne will make a note to include Public Health officials in this for the future, if possible.
- Stacy Sledge: What is included in the SMM for this?
 - Tessa explained that it should be the unincorporated areas of the mountains. Reiterated that DPH wants the focus to be on the greater area.

V. Review/Approval of Minutes of Feb. 5, 2020 Meeting

The minutes were approved with no changes.

VI. LA County Updates

1. Fire Preparedness Documents for Residents:

- Megan Currier: Unable to do evacuation drill, so wanted to send materials on fire awareness. Fire just revamped Ready, Set, Go document. Chief Smith wrote letter to residents encouraging everyone to be aware and look at their evacuation plans, especially for changes that might be in place because of COVID-19. Brochure and letter were shared with local media, will be printed and distributed. Budgetary reasons restrict full mailing.
 - Jane Terjung suggested posting on NextDoor. Jeanne noted that we don't want to be all-digital, as it would limit who we can reach.
- Drew Smith: Believes that this group will be very helpful in spreading this information to residents. June 1st is the beginning of enforcement of brush clearance. It will be continued until the fire code is met or people need citations.
 - Susan Nissman: How do we know if an inspection has occurred?

- Answer: Fire keeps a weekly poll of what inspections have been completed. They

will continue to go through the manual process of the inspections and upload the information into a spreadsheet. You will only be repeatedly notified if you do not pass the inspection and need to do something. If you pass the inspection, you will not hear anything. Inspections should be done around August 15th.

- Stacy Sledge: Raised concerns about the Corral coming into compliance with fires.

- Answer: Fire and Sheriff is aware and trying to respond. This is more of an enforcement issue, and an individual issue that can be addressed after this meeting.

2. Evacuation Discussion:

- Drew Smith: Fire is going to continue with a system based on evacuation need. There is no straightforward evacuation route or location. As the emergency proceeds, they will set the pace and coordinate resources. Evacuation facilities will do everything they can to ensure social distancing and health protocols will be followed.
- Jeanne O'Donnell: Evacuations may need to expand beyond our normal sites because of the need to social distance. A group including, Fire, OEM, Sheriff, DPH, etc. have been meeting to discuss what the best strategy is. This is the time to look at your personal evacuation plan as well to see if it is still appropriate and possible. It is going to take a lot more real estate and volunteers to pull off.
 - Susan Nissman: Could you include in preparedness to make sure that your evacuation kit includes necessary items for COVID-19?
 - Answer: Will definitely include this. We will see a novel virus again, so this is a great thing to include moving forward.
- Fred: DACC is also in planning stages. Need to triage evacuees so they know where to go. Will continue to work on message.
 - Susan Clark: Would the parking lots at the beaches be available for evacuation?
 - Answer: They are currently surveying options. All options are on the table.
 - Deputy Cerveney: They have gone to every temporary refuge area, and there is a significant lack of signage for where refuge areas are (particularly the one off of Entrada).
 - Answer: There are 9 PSRs where you should go if you cannot evacuate. The residents typically know where PSRs are. PTRAs (smaller and closer, where you go if you can't get to PSR) are trickier.
 - Jeanne will set up an Ad Hoc committee to discuss if we can increase signage.
- James Grasso: We have had several people in other unincorporated areas that want to join a Topanga zone.

VII. California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)

- Chris Moore: Gave updates on fire season preparedness and microgrid legislation. There may be some eligibility in Topanga for batteries, and he can share more information. There are several ways to qualify, and they are working on educational material for residents. Companies will be working on PSPS, trying to set up communication with SCE about this. Want to make sure that communication is occurring for PSPS.
 - Dave Ford (SCE): Have teams out looking at power lines right now, doing everything they can to manage vegetation and reduce risk of fires. They are also working on insulation.
 - Susan Clark: Saw a biologist out in the field that said they have been employed by SCE to check on birds in the trees.
 - Answer: When working in environmentally sensitive areas, require that a biologist ensures that meet standards of area. SCE wants to make sure it is safe, especially during nesting season.
 - James Grasso: Higher tiered equity program: many Topangans may qualify.

VIII. Elected Updates

- Tessa: Our office has been very focused on COVID-19. The biggest priority is safety. Many changes have been in the works, and we are moving forward with fully reopening beach parking lots.

- Spoke on money that the County has received through the CARES Act (CDBG money), and how 3SD is using it for food and toiletries for Topanga, as well as putting in a port-a-potty and hand washing station. This is located off of Old Topanga Road. The food program should begin around June 22. The Topanga Community Center is the lead for this project. It will run for about 12 weeks out of the library. Spoke on a number of economic stimulus opportunities that we have been sharing with various chambers.

IX. Member Updates

- Town Council (Stacy Sledge): At the end of the month, will be sending out a mailer to reach vulnerable population. It will include helpful information on access cards, mask program, contacts for mental and physical health, and more. Wanted to take a moment to remember Mary Atkins, a past member of the group from DACC who has sadly passed.
 - Tessa promoted the 3D grant program and encouraged applications.

X. New Business/Announcements

- Susan Nissman: Topanga Canyon Gallery and Theatricum Botanicum are both close to being able to open. Both have lost their visitors and incomes. The Gallery has an online auction through the 20th. The Theatricum has some online options as well. Asked that we try to support both if we can.
- Topanga Canyon Fire Safe Council (Ryan): Dropped “North” from their name. Want to time presentation with release of fire preparedness documents from Fire
- Working on coordinating evacuation from the bottom of Malibu and Topanga so that there is not a bottleneck.
- Mark Winn: This is a good time to go around house and take pictures of everything in your house, so that if your gets destroyed, you will have documentation for your insurance company.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:47am. The next meeting will be July 15.