



## Westport Municipal Advisory Council

P. O. Box 307, Westport, CA 95488  
www.westportmac.org

### Draft MINUTES

April 11, 2023 at 7:00PM  
Westport Community Center

- 1) **Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order by Director Knapp at 7:10 pm. In attendance were Directors Knapp and Van Bueren. Directors Scott, Quinton, and Oakes notified that they were unable to attend, while Director Grigg is expected. Public attendees included Emily Tecchio, Carla Thomas, Dan Maxey, Melinda McLaughlin, and Liberty and Marilyn Tiriboyi. Absent a quorum guest speaker Tecchio was asked to begin her invited presentation on Item 2a.

- 2) **Old Business:**

- a) **Fire Safe Councils**—Emily Tecchio of the nonprofit Mendocino County FSC provided an overview of a 2021-2022 grant awarded to it by Mendocino County to prepare environmental clearance for a project that will reduce fuel loads along Branscomb Road from State Route 1 to Wilderness Road. The County has contracted with Mendocino County FSC to manage the project. If funds remain after processing the clearance fuel load reduction will begin by limbing trees and removal of lower story brush 25 ft on either side of the centerline. A follow up grant will be sought to complete this project. Director Grigg arrived at 7:20 pm to make a quorum for the WMAC.

Tecchio continued with information on a GIS mapping project for the county that will be shared on the MCFSC web site by the end of April. It gathers data on fire issues and potential partners that can be used to apply for grant funding for fire safety projects. Westport Beach Subdivision is listed as “of concern” by the Board of Forestry under AB 2911. This identification could help qualify it as a high priority for road fuel reduction grants. Roadside clearance projects typically qualify for a Notice of Exemption under CEQA. Sources of funding could include state and federal agencies. Both will benefit from an update of the Mendocino County 2015 “Community Wildfire Protection Plan.” MCFSC hopes to be awarded the CWPP update by the County and begin work by August. Westport projects will have a greater chance of being funded. For example, the federal Community Wildfire Defense Grant requires projects be described in a Community Wildfire Protection Plan to qualify for funding. Van Bueren will share 2012 WVFD GIS files with Tecchio. Defensible space assistance for income-qualifying seniors and people with physical disabilities is available through Mendocino County FSC:  
<https://firesafemendocino.org/dsafie/>.

WVFD Fire Chief Dan Maxey said the Westport FSC is seeking owner permissions for assessments of fuel reduction on private roads in the Westport Beach Subdivision including Howard Creek Road, Ponderosa Drive, and Little Howard Creek Road. Other local private roads may be added if owners express interest. The assessments will likely occur in June so permissions are needed before that time. Director Knapp agreed the owner permission forms and project info could be distributed via community email lists. Carla Thomas said the WFSC will send a project summary statement and the permission

form to Knapp and Van Bueren to facilitate wider distribution to the local community. This topic will be revisited at the next WMAC meeting to consider sending support letters for grants.

- 3) **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:** The draft minutes of March 14, 2023 were unanimously approved as corrected in comments supplied to Secretary Gary Quinton by email following distribution of that draft to the WMAC Directors.
- 4) **Public Expression:** There was none.
- 5) **Old Business (Continued)**
  - a) **Website Progress:** Director Van Bueren supplied local photographs to Director Quinton to replace non-local images in the website mock up. Directors Knapp and Van Bueren will work with Director Quinton to ensure the complete inventory of WMAC documents is uploaded to the new website.
  - b) **Mendocino County Hospital Tax:** Director Knapp reported local nonprofits who were inappropriately charged for this property tax are taking their own actions to resolve the issue. A WMAC letter was sent to the County Board of Supervisors March 17 and Supervisor Gjerde referred it to the County Council March 18 for resolution. The WMAC will follow up by requesting updates Gjerde and County Counsel.
  - c) **Community Center Rental Fees:** Supervisor Gjerde is looking into a one-time FY 2022/2023 augmentation of WMAC budget to cover normal operating expenses that cannot be paid this FY because a one-time website upgrade invoice depleted most of the normal \$2500/year allocation. The Directors unanimously agreed that annual invoicing of the \$1200 meeting hall rental should be sent to Danielle Fitts at the County for payment pending approval of that budget augmentation request.
- 6) **New Business and Announcements/Correspondence:** The need to set a new regular date and time future WMAC meetings was raised because the second Tuesday of each month precludes some Directors from participating. Director Knapp will seek agreement from all Directors before the end of April on the timing of future meetings so that it can be widely announced/noticed to the community.
- 7) **Set Agenda for Next Meeting:** The date and the time of the next meeting will be set after the process in Item 6 is resolved before the end of April. Items 2a, 5a, and 5c will be revisited to obtain updates and a topic raised by Tom Kusliuk in an email will be added.
- 8) **Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.  
These minutes were taken by Director Van Bueren standing in for Secretary Quinton.