



Promoting Wildfire Safety Through Education and Action

**Santa Barbara County Fire Safe Council
Executive Committee Meeting
November 22, 2023**

Executive Committee Directors Present: Paul Van Leer, Kevin Varga, Nic Elmquist, Victoria Cooper, Rob Hazard

Executive Committee Directors Absent:

Others Present: A. Parkinson, T. Adams, S. Coffman

1. Office Space

- Mike Williams has offered SBCFSC office space at their space (old Direct Relief building) in Goleta. We will have a meeting space and storage space for our stuff. We will chip in \$500/month for rent.
- Staff will start packing up and moving out in mid-December.

2. AOP Interview Update

- AMP and Paul completed a second round of interviews, totaling 10 applicants. We identified two great candidates that really stood out.
- EC recommends hiring Charles Harris at starting rate of \$30/hour

3. Community Alerts Radio show

- EC reviewed the previous motion (attached) set forth on September 12, 2023 regarding the EC recommendation to transition the radioshow to a podcast and approval of funds not to exceed \$1,500 to purchase supplies.
- This plan was originally dependent on Kian taking a more active role in the program, but with him moving on we are unsure if the new candidate has the interest to be heavily involved in this program. So once the new candidate gets more up to speed with the organization we will discuss his interest with this type of work. If he is interested that he will work with Ted and Mike on developing a more robust plan for the podcast including but not limited to: identifying and purchasing supplies, frequency of shows, role of personnel, timelines, show structure, show discussion topics, metric identification and accumulation, advertising, etc. A timeline for an initial first show would no longer be in January, but later in the year, potentially June.
- Mike and Ted have an interest in doing visual shows, but EC recommends starting off with something less cost-intensive and less time-consuming as we transition mediums



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and followers. When running the podcast we can build up a following, learn from the process, and develop a plan to transition to the more work-heavy visual shows.

- AMP also voiced concerns about perception paying Ted (a board member) and Mike for something they have been doing for free for several years, especially if our paid staff member is leading the efforts.

4. CalFire grant preliminary brainstorming

- CalFire Wildfire Prevention grant application closes January 10, 2023. Their grant options are split into 3 options: hazardous fuel reduction, planning, and education. Rob has received word that CalFire is really pushing for acres treated this year to meet state political pressures, especially in southern California. Not that they won't fund any planning or education grants, but that we would likely be more successful with implementation focused hazardous fuel reduction grants.
- Grants are for 3 years with a max award of \$3 million.
- While the focus is on hazardous fuels reduction, which is mainly contractual funds, we still need funds to pay Kate and Gustavo, which aligns more with the education grant component of this grant opportunity, as the funds paying them expires later this year. However, to reduce the number of Cal Fire grants we have, we will tie in their work with the hazardous fuels grant.
- Current idea for hazardous fuels reduction grant is to ask for funds for:
 - i. Roadside clearing: Joan and SB County Roads Department are very in favor of this. We have already had a meeting. It would be very easy acres treated, which will greatly improve the chance of the grant getting funded. Rob and Nic will help with writing this portion of the grant and provide a budget estimate.
 - ii. Chipping in north county: communities TBD, but at least include Cebada Canyon.
 - iii. TREX/prescribed burning: funds to fully/partially fund an annual TREX program. This would also help with acres treated. Kevin will connect AMP.
 - iv. Firewise and Home Evaluations: staff time funds for Kate and Gustavo. We will tie this into improving the success of the chipping program included in this grant ask.
- AMP and Graham are unsure if we will get the OPR grant we applied for in August, which essentially provides funds to expand the RWMP scoping phase to north county. EC was pretty unsure about applying for a CalFire planning grant to supplement this need since they are focused on fuels reduction at the moment. But AMP is very in favor of planning funds to help us be more strategic with planning and prioritizing future projects, which we (AMP) frequently feel behind on.



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- i. AMP suggested framing RWMP as a CWPP or multiple CWPPs since the scoping is very similar and CalFire understands CWPPs and not RWMPs. Rob expressed concern about completing multiple CWPPs in that timeframe and CalFire tends to have a lower budget number in mind when funding CWPPs than what we would likely need for this expanded scoping.
- ii. Applying with State Coastal Conservancy is another option, but would potentially be very difficult since they may question why we are asking for wildfire planning funds after they funded the RPP, even though our proposal would be focused on quantitatively prioritizing projects and would be more community informed by us also doing boots on the ground work like focus groups and Firewise to inform project needs. Plus, SCC only does reimbursement grants, which we most likely would not be able to front the cost and would need SIG-NAL to be the main applicant/grant manager and we would be a contractor.
- iii. AMP will flush out the scoping needs and process so EC can revisit the topic at a later date.

Motions:

- Recommend to the full-board we hire Charles Harris as the new AOP/Communications Coordinator. Starting salary would be \$30/hour (non-exempt status) with the option to get a raise to \$32/hour upon successful completion of his 6 month probationary period. V. Cooper, K. Varga seconds, all in favor.

General Notes:

- Nic will connect AMP with Pat McElroy to discuss running a nonprofit and fundraising.

Minutes submitted respectfully: Anne-Marie Parkinson