

TIMBER COVE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

Public Hearing

July 9, 2016

Fort Ross School

1pm

1. Introductions:

Bob Ferguson (BF) asked for good thoughts for Fred Leif who is ill and unable to attend the meeting today. (BF) continued to explain about how dangerous a fire would be in our area. He essentially stated that if you are lucky you will be able to call your insurance company, if you unlucky someone will be making that call for you. He continued his discussion on fuel levels, age of trees and age of electrical lines. Discussed PUE to be used to improve existing lines and add circulation loops and fire hydrants for fire protection

2. Fire Abatement:

a.

i. Dennis Meredith, Chief TCFPD, discussed high fire danger due to fuel loads and effects of drought on vegetation. He discussed the need for road improvements – widening – so that people may evacuate safely and fire personnel may enter to fight the fire. He stated that TCFPD follows under the jurisdiction of Cal Fire and follows their enforcement rules. The department supports the fire protection ordinance in spirit. He indicated that the ordinance is cutting edge as it goes beyond what Sonoma County and the State of California requirements. Camp Meeker and Fitch Mountain have a pilot program that will run for the next two years but it deals with land with homes. Discussed use of fire hydrants in wild fire situation. In wild fire situation you need to stay mobile. Discussed that if a structure fire is not controlled with application of 2,000 gallons you become defensive and work to protect against spread to other building or land. Density of fire hydrants is more important for structure fires and the initial attack. Discussed some local wild land fires, fire behavior and rate of spread. Discussed underground PGE program. Tom Giacinto comment on length of time needed to complete underground with PGE and level of cooperation needed for process.

ii. Cal Fire, Kurt, Battalion Chief. Partners with Marshall. They started out as fireman together and they work opposite of each other. He asked about existing plan and what the needs may be. Discussed that having a plan in place opens up grant funding from SRA fees. Cal Fire wants people to clean up their property so that it may survive a fire without a fire truck present. Cal Fire meets with people to discuss clean up and how to make their property more fire safe. They try to use education and communication to help people clean up. Cal Fire may only enforce clean up within an area that is 100 feet from a structure. If the property line is 10 feet from the structure then the enforcement stops at the property line. They are not able to enforce cleanup of non-structured lots. They are able to offer education to anyone who will listen. Kurt discussed the fire history of this area. He discussed fuel types for the area and influence of weather on fire activity.

He explained that the Valley fire was an extreme situation. You need to plan for normal fire occurrence and complete cleanup for those situations. Discussed ways to get parks to clear fire breaks. Discussed inmate crew use. Discussed you 'catch more flies with honey than vinegar.' Discussed that a clean forest is a health forest and cuts down on fire danger. Costs may be prohibitive and that is a long term and then there has to be a maintenance program. Discussed fire as a natural cleaning process for the environment. Discussed ways of disposing of debris – chipping, burning during appropriate time, maintenance of debris under power lines by PGE, maintenance of HWY 1 corridor. Ed Tunheim discussed importance of clearing as far out as you may on your property and need to clear along road. You need to be responsible for your property and do your part. You need to be aware of riparian right away when clearing as it is a protected area.

b. John Rea discussed the use of the water company as the agent to enforce fire protection. The need for protection of the water shed so that the company is able to continue providing water to the district households. Need to clear debris along road ways, from canyons and from interior roads to allow safe evacuation routes and entrance of fire equipment to offer protection.

c. Lorrie Uribe read Ordinance 2016-02 – Fire Abatement to the group. Tom Giacinto suggested that the board make an amendment to the by-laws to protect this ordinance. Grace O'Malley discussed right of water company to enforce clearing of lots – district has right by virtue of protection of water shed. There is overlapping coverage by Cal Fire who inspects homes and district ordinance which is focused on lots although they may work with homeowners for compliance. Discussed negotiation, timing and planning of clean up. Need for care in burning debris and weeding

eating. Discussed the sides of the dam needing to be cleared. District aware of need to clear and are working on a plan to possible use the dam as a fire training for the local district. Need to address environmental and permit items. Claudia Giacinto wondered what the responsibility is of the property owners and how do we motivate them to participate in maintaining their property – how do we shift the burden back to them so they do the work. General discussion followed about possible ways to influence people to participate and that requirements need to be fairly applied. There is no pass-all. All landowners need to participate. Comments about consistency over years, what people are allowed to do and not being in a situation where they have an issue with the HOA. Need to educate people. General discussion about cost to bring in to compliance and the need for a plan that is fair to the property owner.

3. PUE Ordinance:

Bob Ferguson discussed PUE. Described the development of the water system and the easements. The district had limited resources in the beginning and they did the best they could with money they had at the time. Currently the district is designing a system to eliminate the hammering in the lines, buildup of chemicals at dead ends by creating circulation loops and replacement of lines that are the proper size. John Howland discussed the general cost of operating the current system and the high labor costs due to the age of the system. Currently working on a master plan. New filtration system will reduce flushing and labor costs to complete work as the system will be automated. Working to extend the period for pumping from the Weir. Added new well at Weir site and awaiting testing to bring online. Looking at replacing distribution system and adding fire hydrants. Looking at adding storage on the north side of the subdivision. Considering replacement of meters with AMI meters that will allow real time monitoring and people will be able to go online and see how much water they are using. It will monitor if there is a leak and turn off the water. Online billing should be done by end of September. Bob Ferguson discussed funding and base rate. Discussed bonds, grants and loans as possible funding. The district will hold community meetings to present Master Plan. John Howland describe the need for the PUE to complete work and Lorrie Uribe read the ordinance to the people present. Concerns about the District entering on to people's property and adding district improvements i.e. a tank, without full discussion. The ordinance is necessary to carry forward the Master Plan. Bob Ferguson statement that the mission of the district is to serve the community with water. The district will approach property owners to discuss improvements and reach agreement. It was suggested that this be included in the Standing Rules so that the intent to negotiate is carried forward as the board configuration changes. Discussed validity of PUE. PUE exist and district is perfecting them by this ordinance.