

**MARIN COUNTY COUNCIL OF MAYORS AND COUNCILMEMBERS
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, April 27, 2022
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
6:00pm**

Members Present

Belvedere: Councilmember Lynch
Corte Madera: Mayor Casissa; Councilmember
Fairfax: Mayor Hellman; Councilmembers Ackerman, Coler, Goddard
Larkspur: Mayor Hillmer; Councilmember Way
Mill Valley: Mayor McCauley; Councilmember McEntee
Novato: Mayor Lucan; Councilmembers Eklund, Milberg
Ross: Mayor Robbins; Vice Mayor Kuhl; Councilmember McMillan
San Anselmo: Mayor Fineman; Councilmember Colbert
San Rafael: Mayor Colin; Councilmembers Hill, Kertz
Sausalito: Mayor Kellman; Councilmember Hoffman
Tiburon: Councilmembers Fredericks, Griffin

Ex Officio: Ross Town Manager Christa Johnson; San Rafael City Manager Jim Schutz; MCCMC Secretary Rebecca Vaughn

Guests were: Mark Brown, Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority; Mark Van Gorder, PG&E; Melissa Apuya – District Director for Assembly member Levine

Call to Order

President Sashi McEntee called the meeting to order at 6:02p.m., and welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Marin County Council of Mayors and Councilmembers via webinar, for April 27, 2022.

A roll call of the Marin towns/cities was taken. There was a quorum of the 11 Marin cities/towns present, with representatives from each of the 11 cities/towns in attendance.

President McEntee then called for Public Comment.

3. Public Comment:

1. Deborah Benson – Stated that she is a member of the Fairfax Tree Committee. She spoke about the recent tree cutting by PG&E and that it has gotten out of hand. Their tree ordinance isn't being respected, trees are being cut down on private property without notifying the owners. Our building inspector, Mark Lockabee is being told that the owners have been notified. At a recent planning commission meeting one of our town staff mentioned a tree being cut without notifying the owner, and then PG&E telling the owner that another tree was going to be cut and they had the right to come onto the property and do so. There are big trees being cut down. Our ordinance requires a permit and we need some help here. So if Mark Van Gorder can be helpful in trying to get these contractors to do the right thing and pay attention to our ordinance it would be much appreciated, because it feels at this point like Fairfax is being clear cut. Any help from MCCMC is much appreciated.

Hearing no additional public comment, President McEntee introduced the presentation.

4. Presentations:

4.a. PG&E Enhanced Vegetation Management Plan For Marin

Presentation provided by Mark van Gorder, PG&E Sr. Government and Public Affairs North Bay

President McEntree introduced Mark Van Gorder, stating that Mr. Van Gorder will provide an update on the Enhanced Vegetation Management Program for PG&E. She explained that the enhanced vegetation management program in Marin has only a couple of different focuses and one of them is Mill Valley and one is Fairfax/Woodacre. Mr. Van Gorder summarized the program, explaining that the enhanced vegetation management program is to assess dead, dying, diseased trees and trees that have what PG&E calls strike potential, where, if the tree is leaning in the direction of their electric facilities and fails, if it's 100 feet tall, it has a 100 foot strike potential out. So those are the trees that PG&E is currently assessing through inspections. The inspections in the Fairfax area are complete and Mill Valley inspections are ongoing, and then the work is phased in.

He discussed the vegetation work occurring throughout their territories, and displayed areas where work is being done in the unincorporated parts of Marin County, and also in the town of Fairfax. He showed that those lines sync up with their electric distribution lines in the high fire threat area and explained the CPUC tier system, that Tier 3 represents the highest fire threat areas where their utilities are. He explained that those locations are where they are assessing vegetation, such as dead, dying, and diseased trees for overstrike potential.

He then took questions from attendees and discussed the public outreach that was distributed to areas where the inspections were being carried out. He stated that a trifold mailer was sent out to homes in the neighborhoods where the enhanced vegetation management program was happening. Automated voice phone calls also went out to customers. He further explained that what should happen is both their inspectors and those who are performing work on customers' property would be contacting the customers to let them know about the work. He expressed concern about comments stating that customers weren't being notified and stated that he would like to speak to anyone who said that they did not receive notification so that he can connect the concerned residents to those in the field so that their concerns could be addressed. Examples of the outreach materials can be viewed [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

President McEntee asked Mr. Van Gorder to further explain the Enhanced Vegetation Management Program, where it comes from, what is the criteria for it, and how that leads into the process of dealing with the cities and towns.

Mr. Van Gorder responded that when vegetation comes in contact with their equipment, there is the chance and potential for ignition. He stated that, in the case of the Dixie fire, it's his understanding that a tree that they deemed to be safe, that was somewhat leaning towards their lines, failed and fell into those power lines starting an ignition that resulted in approximately 1 million acres of forest damage. PG&E wants to remove strike potentials from their lines, which includes vegetation that may overhang the lines. So going ground to sky or at least from the lines to sky up, that could be anywhere from 18 to 20 feet out, depending on the type of tree and tree growth. PG&E has a tree assessment tool to determine the tree's health, and if it has strike potential, if it's leaning towards the lines and there's concern about

root failure or general failure where it would fall into the lines, PG&E is removing those trees that they feel that could fall into lines and create an ignition, the whole tree or branches.

President McEntee added that the Enhanced Vegetation Management program is a 10 year plan in which PG&E looks at the vegetation that has strike potential, that has the potential to ignite. And then there is a risk rating on all of the circuits, and then they determine the most risky areas. And then anything that is going to potentially result in ignition, within the allowable bounds per CPUC or per law, will be removed. It was also her understanding from PG&E's enhanced vegetation management team, that if that limbing up would adversely affect the tree's mortality, then they will just remove the whole tree. Then, it needs to be determined if the tree is on public property, private property, or is it in the public right of way. If it's in the public right of way, then there is a process of interacting with the jurisdiction, whether it's a city, town, county, open space, parks to communicate on and get an encroachment permit to be able to do the work.

For trees on private property, Mr. Van Gorder explained the communication process, where they will be sending out mailers that explain the work, why they need to do the work. They provide the 800 number, and email as a means to communicate. They canvas the area and field teams should be speaking with the property owners before coming onto their property. It may be that the customer isn't home, didn't get the mailer, didn't listen to the voice message that was sent, or it's possible that somehow a property did not get those communications. If a customer is saying that they didn't receive any communication, he would like to talk with them about their experience so that he can follow up with staff.

Regarding permits from affected jurisdictions, Mr. Van Gorder explained that PG&E would not request a permit. There may be instances where they need some permits, but they don't fall under the jurisdiction of tree ordinances or protected trees. They do want to work with the towns, and if there are areas of concern, they are happy to meet and discuss. He stated that they will set up a follow up meeting, both in Fairfax and Mill Valley with those vegetation managers to talk about how they can do better, but specific to permits for private property, typically they do not request permits.

President McEntee summarized that she will communicate with PG&E to figure out how they can coordinate the vegetation management work a little bit better. She stated that she will pass on to them the questions that came out of this presentation: Does PG&E's vegetation management work follow local ordinances and get local permits before doing the work; What is the environmental review process for this work; What is the process for working in the public right of way versus private property; What is the policy for debris removal (noting that it may cause the owner to have an expense and could create a hazard); Does PG&E replace trees or would they consider replacing trees that are removed in a different location; And there should be more of a coordination process with jurisdictions in sitting down with them in advance for planning. especially when roads are going to be closed for the work.

Following Q&A, President McEntee introduced the second presentation.

4.b. Update from Mark Brown, Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority Executive Director, Regarding Outlook For Upcoming Fire Season

Mark Brown, Executive Director for the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority provided a presentation on the 2022 Fire Season Forecast. The presentation slides can be viewed [here](#).

His presentation covered Northern California as a whole, and discussed the winter weather, the current drought index, what the fuels are tracking for specifically in Marin, and the overall significant fire potential. Currently, the weather outlook for April through July is near to above normal temperatures and near to below normal precipitation.

Regarding the winter weather, if you look at year to date rain totals, they are almost normal. But the way that we received it, did not do much to help us when it comes to wildfire because it was sporadic and it came in huge doses at once.

The drought index, as of April 12th, still shows Marin in what is considered a severe drought and the fuels moisture index is showing a drying trend, despite the heavy rains last year. The forecast is showing an above normal chance of significant fire by June. By July, right now the prediction is that the Bay Area could drop back down into normal chance for significant fire. But chances for significant fire in July, August, September, October is already high. If we get the ignitions and we get the same weather that we received last year, 2022 can be a very similar fire season to 2021.

He also shared that the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority's 2022/23 draft work plan is included on the presentation slides, including lists of key projects proposed for each of the member agencies. See pages 10-16 of the [presentation](#).

Following the presentation and Q&A, President McEntee announced that written committee reports were included in the agenda packet, and then continued with the remainder of the meeting.

5. **Committee Reports:** All Committee reports were submitted in writing and are available in the [agenda packet on the MCCMC website](#). President McEntee thanked those who submitted written reports and encouraged the membership to review the reports.
 - 5.a. Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)
 - 5a. Written report from Supervisor Damon Connolly
 - 5.b. Association of Bay Area Governments
 - 5b. Written report from Pat Eklund, Novato
 - 5.c. BCDC Report from North Bay representative on the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)
 - 5c. Written report from Pat Eklund, Novato

- 5.d. ~~Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District~~ (No report)
- 5.e. MCCMC Legislative Committee
5.e. Written reports from Chair Alice Fredericks, Tiburon, and Vice Chair Barbara Coler, Fairfax
- 5.f. Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit District (SMART)
5f. Written report provided by Dan Hillmer, Larkspur
- 5.g. Transportation Authority of Marin
5.g. Written report provided by Alice Fredericks, Tiburon
- 5.h. ~~MCCMC Climate Action Committee~~ (No report)
- 5.i. ~~MCCMC Water Policy Ad Hoc Committee Report~~ No report

6. BUSINESS MEETING

6.a. Report out from City Selection Committee Meeting Regarding the Following Items:

1. Primary MCCMC Representative to the ABAG Executive Board, (Incumbent, Pat Eklund / Novato)
2. Alternate MCCMC Representative to the ABAG Executive Board (Incumbent, Eli Hill, San Rafael)
3. MCCMC Representative to the Marin County Local Agency Formation Commission (Incumbent, Barbara Coler, Fairfax)

President McEntee reported that the City Selection Committee met regarding the appointments of the primary and alternate representatives for MCCMC to the Association of Bay Area Government's (ABAG) Executive Board, and an appointment to the Marin Local Agency Formation Commission. For ABAG, Pat Eklund is the incumbent, as the regular member and Eli Hill is the Alternate. They both submitted letters of interest and they were reappointed by the City Selection Committee. Barbara Coler, the current incumbent as one of the MCCMC representatives to the Marin County Local Agency Formation Commission, submitted a letter of interest and was reappointed by the City Selection Committee.

6.b. Report out of Annual Mayors Select Committee Meeting

President McEntee reported that, regarding meeting in person, it was decided that we will go ahead and be virtual in May. And then we may move to meeting in person in June, and we would try to have that in one of the cities that has an easily accessible outdoor venue, which right now is probably going to be either Novato or Mill Valley.

The group also talked about any requests that come through this body that result in requests

for financial contributions from cities and towns. There are two interests: 1) To make sure that there is still the ability for people to make requests and to share opportunities with the group. And 2) that the budget processes and timing of the cities and towns are respected so that we can make efficient use of everyone's time and not feel obligated to respond to what all are wonderful requests.

The group also reviewed the list of appointments, which seats get appointed or recommended by the City Selection Committee, which get appointed by the MCCMC body as a whole.

6.c. Review of Draft Agenda for the May 25, 2022 MCCMC Meeting
Attachment 6b: Draft agenda for May 25, 2022 meeting

There were no comments on the draft agenda.

6.d. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve the Draft Minutes of the March 23, 2022 MCCMC Meeting Held Via Zoom Webinar
Attachment 6c: Draft minutes, March 23, 2022 meeting

There was a motion and second (Eklund / Casissa) to approve the minutes of the May 25, 2022. The motion was approved by roll call vote of the cities/towns present, 10-0-1 (Tiburon abstained).

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17pm to the next regular meeting scheduled for May 25, 2022 at 6:00pm to be held via Zoom videoconference.