



MEETING MINUTES

7:00 PM, Thursday, January 17, 2019
Newcastle Elementary School
645 Kentucky Greens Way
Newcastle, CA

- 1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance – Time: 7:00 pm**
- 2. MAC Members**
 - a. **Present:** Vice-Chair Dennis Jacinto, Karen Green, Elliott Rose, Edgar Sander, Sam Moore
 - b. **Absent:** Chair Steve Palmer
- 3. Statement of Meeting Procedures – Read by Vice-Chair Dennis Jacinto**
- 4. Approval of January 17, 2019 Agenda**
 - *Approved: Karen Green / Edgar Sander / Unanimous*
- 5. Approval of December 20, 2018 Meeting Minutes**
 - *Approved with spelling correction to Elliott Rose's name: Edgar Sander / Sam Moore / Unanimous*
- 6. Public Comment:**

Mike Lutzker from Auburn addressed MAC Members regarding the Hidden Falls Expansion Project. Mr. Lutzker is on the steering committee for Protect Rural Placer which is opposed to the expansion project. He raised concerns about the increase of traffic, fire, homeless, and crime. The project will cost approximately \$20,000,000 and will not produce any revenue. The money could be spent better elsewhere within the County. He advised MAC members that the Parks Department will be presenting this plan to the North Auburn MAC and Lincoln MAC but the committee for Protect Rural Placer still wants the Newcastle Ophir MAC's input.

Judyth Isaman from Protect Rural Placer group expressed their opposition of the Hidden Falls Expansion Project. Ms. Isaman shared a story about being a volunteer for the Junior Achievement Program and discussing the difference between "wants" and "needs" with a group of first graders. She explained how her story was relevant to the expansion project because the Parks Department is indicating the residents of Placer County "want" to expand Hidden Falls but it is not a "need".





The expansion will cost tax payers almost \$20,000,000. Ms. Isaman encouraged everyone to go to www.protectruralplacer.com and take short survey. Everyone can follow Protect Rural Placer on Facebook to keep abreast of what's going on.

Elliott Rose asked Ms. Isaman how many people visit the Hidden Falls recreation area a year. Ms. Isaman did not have that data but advised Mr. Rose that based on the parking data received from the Parks Department, the average is approximately 1,200 cars on the weekend only. The data was tracked from the period starting October 2017 to June 2018. Only a third of those cars were registered to Placer County residents. There is no revenue received to offset the tax dollars used to maintain the roads and the park which is why Protect Rural Placer considers this a poor fiscal investment.

Elliott Rose asked if the park was expanded, would the ratio between visitors who are Placer residents versus non-residents change. Ms. Isaman explained that they don't expect the ratio to change and said that many Placer County residents no longer use the park because they feel they shouldn't have to pay \$8 to reserve a park that is in the County they reside.

Residents on Mears Place, where the parking lot is currently, have been severely affected and have had to put up No Parking signs in front of their property and others have put up barriers to prevent visitors from littering and/or asking to use their restrooms. Ms. Isaman advised that they want to get everyone together and discuss how they can improve the situation on Mears Place parking area instead of making the current problem even bigger.

Karen Green asked Ms. Isaman to explain the offsite parking that is being proposed on Bell Road and how will people get from the offsite parking to the park itself. Ms. Isaman explained that they are going to expand the access to some private property on Country Club Lane and Big Hill which are private areas. There are some accesses and rights-of-ways that were already provided to the County of Placer Land Trust. The proposal is for a 50-acre parking lot area, but Ms. Isaman is unsure if all 50 acres will be used for a parking lot because some of the area is considered wetlands. The proposal is to add 100 parking spots and 40 horse trailers stalls. In addition, it has been proposed to put horse boarding facilities as well as bike rental facility and a small concession area which turns the agricultural property into retail property. The park is currently 1,200 acres and the proposal will expand it to 3,700 acres making it approximately half the size of the City of Auburn.

7. Reports:

A. Local Government: Placer County District 3 Supervisor: Supervisor Jim Holmes report:

The County was informed that the Adult System of Care will receive a \$489,000



grant for a pilot program through the Health and Human Services over a two-year period. The grant will provide relief for elders who are in jeopardy of losing their homes. It is part of Placer County's Elder Abuse Prevention Program. A lot of elderly people have family members that take advantage of them. The victims eventually discover that they do not have enough money for their rent. This grant will help elderly victims of such abuse get back on their feet financially. This is another great opportunity that Placer County has taken with the homeless issue and elderly population.

On Tuesday, the entire Board went on a tour of all the Placer County fire stations that contract with CAL Fire. They started at Station 10 – Bowman Station which is the CAL Fire Unit Headquarters. Station 10 was moved to Bowman because of the Auburn Dam. It is called the Amador station and CAL Fire manages it during the fire season and County staff operate it during the off-season. The Ophir station is the same as well.

One of the benefits of contracting with CAL Fire is when issues arise such as the tanker spill that happened Monday, January 14th.

They toured Atwood Station 180 which is the busiest station in Placer County. It receives over 5,000 calls for service a year with at least 3,000 being medical calls. That seems to be the trend in fire service with most calls being medical. There are volunteers but they need at least two years of training. Volunteers need the same training as a paid firefighter and require the same equipment and gear. Training volunteers is very expensive.

This tour was a way for the Supervisors to see the variety of fire services that are available in Placer County.

B. Public Safety (5 minutes each):

- Newcastle Fire Protection District - Battalion Chief Pat Nelson:
 - 586 Total Calls for 2018:
 - 51% medical aids
 - 12% fires
 - 12% vehicle accidents
 - 25% other (e.g. fire alarms, cover assignments, etc.)
 - 30 calls for December (only). The more significant calls were for mutual aid in which they provided their fire engines to other companies. If they send their engine to Auburn for a fire, in reciprocity when there is a fire in Newcastle, Auburn will send their engine.

They have seen a lot of fires caused by ash not being discarded properly.



Battalion Chief Nelson wanted to remind everyone to be cautious of how ash is discarded making sure it is completely cool.

Karen Green asked if there were plans in the works to address fire season. What can be done to educate the community about preparing for the upcoming fire season. Battalion Chief Nelson advised that the Newcastle, Foresthill and Placer Hills fire districts, in coordination, applied for a FEMA Grant. The grant has funded a Fire Marshal position that is working with CAL Fire on fire wise communities and defensible space issues. They can direct those sorts of issue towards the new Fire Marshal which allows other staff to work on the operations side which makes them more efficient at no extra cost to the tax payers. They are working diligently with their Fire Safe councils to address these issues. There is a lot more funding that will be available.

Supervisor Holmes announced that the Fire Safe councils are doing educational outreach as well as the Board of Supervisors. Supervisors Holmes and Montgomery will be taking charge and working with the PIO to educate the community on fire prevention.

Karen Green asked what the status of the ability of the prisoners helping with firefighting efforts. Battalion Chief Nelson said one of the things that slowed that practice down was when low risk inmates were released due to jail overcrowding. The Placer Center has been opened with two fulltime crews. Governor Newsome just allowed their budget to expand that throughout the State of California. When the crews are not fighting fires, they are doing fuel mitigation projects, flood projects, etc. It is a very good program for tax payers.

- CAL Fire - Firefighter Jason Leonard:
 - 339 total calls for 2018
 - 49 commercial/residential fires
 - 13 false alarms
 - 23 vegetation fires
 - 6 vehicle fires
 - 36 motor vehicle accidents
 - 144 medical aids
 - 7 medical rescues
 - 12 public assistance
 - 7 hazardous conditions
 - 1 HAZMAT



- 40 cover assignments
- 1 agency assist

Fire season has now turned into a year-round season. Now is the time for the community to get out and manage their defensible space which is required by law according to Public Resource Code 4291 (100 feet). It is important that everyone's addresses are clearly marked and visible which will help fire crews if a fire breaks out.

Additional information can be found at the following websites:

- www.readyforwildfire.org
- www.fire.ca.gov.

- **CHP - Officer Rob Luthi:**

A lot of officers assisted with the Camp Fire and units are still assigned to assist with general law enforcement duties. CHP has been busy in the Auburn area.

A hit and run accident occurred in the Town of Newcastle approximately a month or two ago. It involved a box truck that took out a couple of water lines and fencing. There was no license plate or description other than a u-haul type box truck.

Through the Office of Traffic Safety, the Newcastle and Grass Valley CHP received the Corridor Safety Grant in the amount of \$200,000 for a one-year term. The grant money will be spent on extra patrols for the roads that have seen an increase in traffic collisions. Focus will be on unsafe turning movements, unsafe speed, and wrong way driving. The areas of focus will be the north end of State Route 65, State Route 49, Foresthill Road, Auburn-Folsom Road, Placer Hills Road, Sierra College Road, and State Route 193.

Citation numbers were down for November and December as a result of CHP units being deployed to the Camp Fire.

- **Placer County Sheriff's Office – Deputy Toby Williams:**

- 246 calls for service (December 2018):

- 67 Traffic/vehicle related calls
 - 47 proactive stops (vehicle code violations, suspicious vehicles, etc.)
- Burglar/Security Alarms (no # of calls provided) is the second most popular call for service. Most of the time people forget their codes or the systems short circuit due to weather.



To help mitigate false alarms, Deputy Williams advises people to do a periodic checkup on their alarm systems. If you do forget your code and the alarm company has already called, please call the Sheriff's Office back to advise them everything is okay, and it was a false alarm. If things seem suspicious, the Sheriff's Office will still come out and knock on the door to do a welfare check.

- 3 residential burglaries
- Petty theft (mail theft) is down most likely due to the weather. Deputy Williams advises residents to check their mail every day or put a mail hold at the post office if they are out of town.
- 1 Vandalism
- 6 Theft calls

Deputy Williams provided a brief update on the incident that occurred January 15 where a suspect went on a rampage which resulted in the suspect being shot and killed off Highway 65/80. One of the Sheriff's K9s was shot in the melee but is expected to recover fully and be back to work in a few weeks. Not a lot of details were known other than one innocent bystander was shot and killed at her residence and another was shot but expected to survive. The investigation is being conducted in coordination with CHP, Rocklin PD, Roseville PD, and several parties involved.

C. MAC Member Reports and Correspondence - None

8. Action Item(s): None

9. Information Items:

A. Placer County Public Works / Road Condition & Maintenance Status

Kevin Taber, Engineering Manager, made a presentation regarding the status of the Placer County road network regarding physical condition and maintenance funding outlook.

Two years ago, a consultant was hired to survey the roads and come up with a Pavement Condition Index (PCI). The overall PCI for Placer County is 58 out of 100. The roads are still in fair condition.

In April 2017, SB1 (Gas Tax) was approved which increased the tax by \$0.12 from \$0.18 to \$0.30. Revenue generated from the gas tax will provide an additional \$7.3 million to the road maintenance budget which will be used for resurfacing and reconstruction projects. The budget will increase to over \$9 million by 2025.



Only a partial year of funding was received in FY 2017-18 because SB1 went into effect in November 2017. Funding from SB1, in addition to County Service Area funds, were used to overlay roads in Tahoe, Granite Bay, and Penryn.

SB1 funds are now received monthly and go directly to the road maintenance budget. The law prevents those funds from being diverted.

The number of resurfacing projects will increase with the use of SB1 funding:

- 80 – 120 miles of resurfacing every year
- Average 10-year resurfacing schedule for County roads.

The following chip seal projects will take place in Newcastle Ophir areas:

- Crater Hill
- Chile Hill
- Lazanos Road
- Geraldson Road
- Ridge Road
- Kellogg Road
- Rock Springs Road
- Gilardi Road *(if funds available)*

Eventually the sealing projects will be caught up and they will not have to chip seal as much and then they can start to focus on major spots for overlay. The hope is that the chip seal projects will decrease every year and more money can be spent on overlay projects.

Edgar Sander asked why a section of Taylor Road just north of Loomis, about 100-200 yards long, has not been repaired. Kevin Taber said he would look at it and give the Town of Loomis a call.

Unrelated topic: For citizens that pickup litter/trash on the side of the road, call the Road Maintenance Division at 889-7565 to come pickup collection bags.

B. Rural Area Broadband Update – Ophir/Newcastle:

Dieter Wittenburg, Placer County Information Technology made a presentation on broadband status in the Ophir/Newcastle area. *(Chelsea Walterscheid, Sierra Business Council – Gold Country Broadband Consortium was unable to attend due to weather conditions)*

The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is funding areas that have little or no broadband service at all. They've been taking census data from citizens and carriers for some time and compiling the information to understand who needs it and the density of homes in those certain areas so



they can potentially fund something that will be delivered to a more densely populated area.

AT&T is the service provider in the Newcastle and Ophir areas. AT&T is using towers to provide internet services to the community. The Ophir community denied or did not show interest in a tower being installed. There is a direct correlation between towers going up and internet service in the community. That is one of the major reasons why internet service is more prevalent in Newcastle rather than Ophir.

The cost to build out fiber services for a small rural area, such as Ophir, is approximately \$460,000 (for approximately 110 homes). The rate of return for the carriers is not worth the time, effort, or cost. The only way to bridge those gaps is through grants.

The grant process starts with the citizens. The citizens need to advise the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) that they do not have internet service. The coverage maps need to be corrected to influence areas that need funding. Lastly, a carrier needs to be found that is interested in providing service in the area.

Residents are urged to take the speed test @ tinyurl.com/SierraSpeedTest. The data goes is gathered by the Sierra Business Council and allows them to share it with the PUC. Gathering the data shows that there is interest and will help influence what can be done to bridge the service area gaps.

There is a provider, XWire, that is interested in providing service in the Ophir area but needs at least 30-40 homes interested in order to make it cost effective to build the infrastructure.

The biggest challenge is knowing who really wants it. Residents must be advocates and get involved. Talk to neighbors and have them take the speed test. If residents do not have internet, a hard copy form is available to complete and send via USPS.

10. Adjourned at 9:06 p.m. until the next regular meeting on March 21, 2019.