



KENSINGTON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
MEETING OF THE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday, September 23, 2021 3:00pm-5:00pm
Via Zoom Teleconference

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Directors: Larry Nagel and Kevin Padian

Community Members: Lisa Caronna, Peter Guerrero, Danielle Madugo, Paul Moss, David Spath

Staff: General Manager Bill Hansell, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Johnny Valenzuela

Agency Representatives: Chief Mike Gancasz (EPC), Chief Michael Pigoni (EC/K FD), Meredith Gerhardt (OES), Heather Tiernan (OES), Brian Garcia (NWS), Lorena Herrera (OES)

Members of the Public: Rob Firmin, Gail Feldman, Candy Capogrossi, Chris Hilliard, Charley Patton

Meeting called to order at 3:05 PM by Director Padian.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Rob Firmin commented about pre-positioning apparatus on Red Flag days. Rob noted that pre-positioning is a very valuable tool, although he realizes that it would require additional resources. Larry Nagel stated that pre-positioning an engine at the WUI would necessitate the KFPD paying for an extra duty crew of three or four firefighter/paramedics on Red Flag days because we would still need an engine at Station 65 to handle the usual medical calls. Chief Pigoni agreed that pre-positioning is a valuable tool but noted that we don't know where the fire will be coming from. There was a question about the difference between Red Flag days and Extreme Fire Weather days. Danielle Madugo noted that the Wildcat Canyon watch group and they take on the watch when winds exceed 15 mph.

3. (3:04pm) ADOPTION OF CONSENT ITEMS

a. Approval of Minutes of the regular meeting of August 26, 2021 (Approve)

MOTION: Spath/Caronna To adopt consent items.

Motion adopted by consensus.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Emergency Warning System

Status of the public address systems question -

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Kevin noted that at the last meeting Lorena Herrera (OES) noted that the public address system would require some vetting by the county. Heather Tiernan (OES) noted that the siren systems are designed to work in conjunction with the Evacuation systems. Heather noted there would be no problem integrating the system with the County system.

b. CWS Alerts

Review of CWS alerts vis-à-vis weather radios and NOAA broadcasting with Contra Costa County OES personnel. Heather Tiernan noted that schools also issue emergency warning alerts.

Lisa Caronna asked how the evacuation process works. Heather Tiernan explained that the county gets its information from the Incident Commander.

Peter Guerrero noted that we not talk about sirens because we are talking about public address systems.

David Spath asked how the process would work in determining who contacts the CWS. Chief Pigoni noted that in any major event there is a unified command so both Police and Fire will participate. Also, activating all of the speakers at once would cause a conflict with the sequence of zone evacuations by Zonehaven. This can be avoided, Director Padian noted, by not using the speakers for mandatory evacuation orders, but only using them for alerts and warning stages.

David Spath asked if CWS uses the Zonehaven zones. Heather Tiernan explained that CWS will use whichever system the Incident Commander requests and noted that the plan is to use Zonehaven zones for actual evacuation orders.

David Spath noted that using the speakers to tell people which zones to evacuate will not be very useful.

Heather Tiernan noted that power outages will not be as bad as they were in the past. The power outages will be shorter and cell towers will have battery backup, so the CWS can be expected to work during prolonged emergencies.

Kevin Padian asked whether we should recommend weather radios to citizens. He asked if the NWS would allow local agencies to issue orders, warnings, and instructions. Brian Garcia explained how the NWS alert system works. NOAA radio is a good redundant tool.

Danielle Madugo asked if NOAA is the agency that issues Red Flag Warnings and Brian Garcia responded that yes, those warnings emanate literally 25 feet from his office.

c. Evacuation Routes and Parking Restrictions

KFPD General Manager Bill Hansell reported on a meeting last Wednesday with Police and Fire Chiefs, Sup. John Gioia's office, and DPW head Monish Sen about feasibility of evacuation route signs and parking restrictions in Kensington. Kate Rauch was asked to pass on the message that Kensington and the County are starting a Red Flag pilot

program.

d. Nixle

Follow-up query with Chiefs. Heather Tiernan noted that Nixle is activated by local agencies. They are not activated by the County CWS system. They can provide local information not available to the County.

Paul Moss asked how we activate Nixle in an emergency. Do we have somebody who has the responsibility for notify Nixle in an emergency. Chief Pigoni noted that the Admin Assistant and the Battalion Chiefs have the authority to issue Nixle alerts. He also stressed that we still will not use Nixle to issue evacuation alerts because we will be using the Zonehaven zones.

Danielle repeated what Chief Pigoni said that Nixle should not be used for evacuation.

Bill noted that he was recently evacuated and he confirmed that an evacuation is constantly unfolding.

Johnny Valenzuela noted that the during an emergency, the public has to have a place to go for information.

e. Evacuation Drill

Kevin noted that Mill Valley is having a drill this year.

Chief Pigoni noted that it may be too late for an evacuation drill this year. Better to shoot for next Spring after the rains come.

Larry Nagel noted that anything we can do would be helpful in raising awareness.

David Spath agreed with Lisa that an actual drill is the best choice but there probably is not time this year to do this. David agreed that some kind of virtual drill would be very useful.

Gail Feldman talked about how they have talked for years about how important an evacuation drill is. Gail stated that we need to have a drill as soon as possible.

5. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Refrigerator magnets are on the way.

Shred & Meds event will be scheduled for some time in November.

David Spath recommended that information be issued on Red Flag days similar to what Berkeley does.

6. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kevin is writing an article for the Outlook on pre-evacuation.

Kevin is working with EBMUD to open up a route at the end of Kingston to Colusa Avenue. EBMUD suggested we put a gate in the fence with a lock box.

Danielle Madugo reported that she had a meeting on an emergency evacuation drill with Hilltop Elementary School and the new principal enthusiastically supports the effort. They are moving forward with an off-campus evacuation drill.

Paul Moss noted that he has an article coming out in the Outlook. He avoided mentioning Nixle because he wasn't clear on the role of Nixle. He now will write another article on the role of Nixle.

7. CALL FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

8. ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting of the Emergency Preparedness Committee of the Kensington Fire Protection District will be held on October 28, 2021 at 3:00pm via Zoom Teleconference.

Adjourned at 5:11 PM by Director Kevin Padian

MINUTES PREPARED BY: Larry Nagel

These minutes were approved at the Emergency Preparedness Committee Meeting of the Kensington Fire Protection District on October 28, 2021.

Attest:

Emergency Preparedness Committee Member