



**CITY OF MILL VALLEY
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

April 20, 2023
5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Commissioners Present: Chair Christie Coleman, Commissioner Leah Curtis, Commissioner Commissioner Josh Galland, Commissioner Tara Huffman and Commissioner John Poulson.

Staff Attending: Southern Marin Fire District Deputy Fire Chief Tom Welch, Mill Valley Police Chief Rick Navarro, and Mill Valley Community Engagement Coordinator Michelle Terrell

The April EPC meeting was called to order at approximately 5:37 pm by Chair Christie Coleman

Public Comment: none

Approval of the March 2023 minutes: approved by Commissioner Poulson and seconded by Commissioner Curtis.

Old Business:

Upcoming community outreach events

The Commission participated in its first large tabling event of the year – Eggstravangza on March 25 at the Community Center. Close to 3,000 people were in attendance. Commissioners Poulson and Coleman attended, along with Community Engagement Coordinator Terrell.

The next scheduled tabling event on Sunday, April 23 at the Mill Valley Community Center (1:00-5:00) is Earth Day Marin. Commissioner Poulson has signed up to be at the event the whole time, with Commissioner Galland joining at 3-5. Community Engagement Coordinator Terrell will set up and be present at the event. She has invited a representative from Fire Safe Marin to join the Commission for the tabling event, sharing wildfire preparedness information with residents.

Subcommittee structure in 2023-24

For two years, the EPC had a subcommittee structure which typically had two to three commissioners dedicated to exploring a topic of interest (such as community outreach, cyber preparedness, flooding and sea level rise, and equity and inclusion). The idea was for the subcommittee to meet regularly and bring information and findings to the whole commission at the monthly meetings.

Moving forward, the EPC has decided to change its approach. Instead of relying on subcommittees, the commission will now use the goals outlined in its 2023-26 strategic plan to guide individual commissioners' activities. Each month, commissioners will report back to the group on their individual efforts to achieve three key objectives: building awareness of risks, preparing people for emergencies, and promoting community resilience. Individual commissioners may continue to explore specific emergency preparedness concepts, including flooding and sea level rise, community and business outreach, and equity and inclusion strategies.

New Business:

Brainstorming

Commissioner Galland brought up the topic of the Marin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. That plan addresses the threats Marin County faces and is currently being updated. Marin County officials are seeking community input and Community Engagement Coordinator Terrell shared that there is a Town Hall commissioners can attend and she will share that information with commissioners. She will also share the Marin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan that guided work from 2018-2023.

Neighborhood groups and preparedness

Commissioner Huffman shared her enthusiasm for neighbors helping neighbors for safety and connection. Commissioner Curtis (who also serves as the Neighborhood Response Group Coordinator for the Southern Marin Fire District) explained the NRG concept and highlighted that the Tam Valley neighborhood has an NRG orientation this month. Huffman suggested the EPC also reach out to the smaller neighborhood groups/associations, find out which ones are still active, and to focus on their neighborhood-building strengths as well.

Active threat preparedness

Commissioner Poulson brought up the issue of the increase of active threats in the workplace, schools, public areas, etc. Commissioners Huffman and Galland echoed those concerns. Poulson asked Chief Navarro if the City, with the support of the commission, can offer active threat training to the Mill Valley community.

Chief Navarro shared that he and Community Engagement Coordinator Terrell have been working on developing an active threat preparedness outreach/training program for the community.

Election of new EPC leadership

Commissioners Poulson and Curtis both sought the Chair seat of the Emergency Preparedness Commission. In a closed ballot vote, the commissioners selected Poulson as Chair and Curtis as Vice Chair.

Staff Reports:

Tom Welch, SMFD Deputy Fire Chief

Several City of Mill Valley, Southern Marin Fire District, and City of Sausalito staff members recently met for two Joint Emergency Operations Center (EOC) training sessions at the Southern Marin Fire District's headquarters in Sausalito. During a major disaster, representatives from Mill Valley and Sausalito will work together out of the SMFD headquarters. The Mill Valley Police Department will maintain a smaller Department Operations Center (DOC) and can open it quickly as needed. There will be ongoing joint EOC training this spring and summer for specific roles and tasks.

Chief Welch reported that the fire season is predicted to be average with peak fire conditions coming later in the summer. The snow melt in the Sierras will continue through July.

Rick Navarro, Mill Valley Police Chief

Community Engagement Coordinator Terrell submitted a budget seeking a doubling of the EPC's budget. With outreach events increasing three-fold, more supplies (literature, go-bags, and other swag) are needed. With funds for fire being shifted to Southern Marin Fire District, leadership needs to determine how the EPC will be funded and whether an increased budget request can be supported.. He will report back on the 2023-24 budget later this summer.

Michelle Terrell, Mill Valley Community Engagement Coordinator

Community Engagement Coordinator Terrell gave a shout out to Commissioner Coleman for delivering the annual report to the Mill Valley City Council on March 20.

Terrell shared that she had created an emergency preparedness survey for the city to use to track how well residents are prepared. The Chiefs have approved of the survey and Terrell will share it with Commissioners prior to the May meeting. She also met with local faith leaders and created a preparedness guide for faith-based organizations. This will be available online and she is creating some print copies to share as well.

Terrell continues to provide social media posts on behalf of the EPC. In the past month she created 17 Facebook posts and tweeted over 80 times. Social media messages focused on storm preparation and storm updates (particularly in March); messages were also shared about Tsunami Preparedness Week, earthquake preparedness and safety, e-bike safety reminders, spring gardening tips for wildfire safety. She also retweeted local and county partner information.

Leah Curtis, Southern Marin Neighborhood Response Group Coordinator

Commissioner Curtis reported on several upcoming events related to SMFD, NRG, and CERT. She encouraged commissioners to update their life saving skills with one of the 90 minute Marin

Lifesaving Skills workshops (the next workshops in San Rafael will be held May 23, July 18, September 19, and November 14 and a few others in Novato, Central Marin, West Marin, and Ross). She also encouraged commissioners to attend an NRG orientation program at the Tam Valley Community Center from 5 to 6 p.m. on April 27.

Curtis shared that the Mill Valley Neighborfest initiative is gaining traction, with larger events planned for May, as residents express interest in building connections and sharing emergency/safety messaging. In April, SMFD collaborated with The Outdoor Art Club to deliver a defensible space talk, discuss volunteer programs, and provide hands-only CPR training, with Rich Shortall from Fire Safe Marin presenting about the benefits of Firewise communities and the synergy with NRGs; 100 attended and 85 were trained. The OAC plans to host an annual event.

Upcoming CERT events include a volunteer appreciation event on June 14th at Homestead Valley Community Center, where EPC can join to appreciate Southern Marin CERTs and NRG Block Captains. The SM CERT steering committee is recruiting, and CERTs are encouraged to register for the new ReadyMarin volunteer portal.

Commissioners Reports: none

7:15 PM Adjournment