

MARK WEST CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes, March 10, 2021, 6:00 pm
Zoom Meeting
Video available. Send request to MarkWestCAC@gmail.com

A) Call to Order: Chairperson Fies called to order, the regular meeting of Mark West Citizens Advisory Council (MWCAC) 6:00 pm.

Roll Call: Council Members present: Roni Berg, Brad Sherwood, Karen Fies, Willie Lamberson, Pete Lescure.

1. Presentation on the Fire Sales Tax Measure: Supervisor Rabbitt

In March 2020, Measure G was put on the ballot. It was a ½ cent sales tax. Funding of fire protection was an issue long before the 2017 fires. Over the course of time, the County has increased the budgets for fire prevention. Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) have risen from 9 to 12%.

County fire chiefs came up with Standards of Coverage for County, the Silver Plan. It states what is reasonable to expect within the County (fire prevention and protection, signs, vegetation management, equipment and staffing).

It's about improving the system for all situations, rather than staffing for one massive event. Mutual Aid is the only way to cover all the need in the county.

The measure lost with 64.84% of the vote. We are hoping to bring back another tax measure in 2022, or beyond, with more outreach.

The County is really pushing for more consolidation and coordination. They want city managers to participate. Fire fighters want back up and support from cities. Demographics have changed and the County has to adapt accordingly, in several areas, i.e., staffing, training, overnight facilities, 24/7, 365 days.

Discussion:

Council Member Lescure represented the Mark West Chamber in interviewing battalion chiefs. If tax payers knew how professional and how much it takes, they'd be more inclined to vote for the taxes.

The MWCAC will be happy to help getting the word out throughout the campaign.

Supervisor Rabbitt: System needs to be generational and we will take you up on this when the time comes.

2. Approval of Minutes: On a motion by Council Member Berg, second by Council Member Lamberson, the minutes of the regular MWCAC meeting February 10, 2021, were approved. The motion carried on a voice vote. (5-0)

B) Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items: None

Adjustment to Agenda:

F.1. Neighborhood Improvement Funding Program (NIFP) Subcommittee
a. Application from the Mark West Unified School District (MWUSD) (\$14,000)
Superintendent of MWUSD, Ron Calloway, Council Member Berg and Council Member Lescure

The MWUSD put in an application for \$14,000, for a surveyor's report to put sidewalks on both sides of Mark West Springs Road (MWS Rd.) between Old Redwood Hwy and Riebli Elementary.

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Superintendent Ron Calloway: On the north side of the road, the sidewalk stops and becomes a ditch. Students have to walk into the ditch or too close to cars. Either way they get sprayed by passing cars, when raining. This will equalize access to the school, for all students.

This has been an ongoing issue, over many years, with a few attempts at getting a solution. None successfully. There is currently enough money in the Transportation and Public Works (TPW) budget to put full sidewalks on both sides of the road. An additional \$14,000 is needed for a survey.

The school district is asking the Council for the money in the current fiscal year, to align with TPW's funding.

Johannes Hoevertsz, TPW director, estimated \$1.5 million to put full sidewalks on both sides of MWS Rd. from Riebli School and Ursuline Road, to Old Redwood Highway. Funding will come from his current budget as well as the County's PG&E lawsuit funding.

Council Member Lescure shared a picture of Lavell Rd. taken in 2004, where it floods. Children have to walk through the water to get to school. This happens every year. He will support a loan to the County, on the condition that the County and School District commit, in writing, to fix the flooding area on Lavell Rd as well.

He also stated that the funds should be a loan, as the sidewalks should be paid for with tax dollars. The NIFP is not intended for this purpose. They are a County issue for which TPW is responsible.

Council Chair Fies said that she understands and talked to Hoevertsz, TPW, about it. TPW only has funding for this fiscal year. It will take many more months, than we have, for the County to get an agreement for a loan. If the Council is recommending taking action on the \$14,000 grant, we should do so now. If prolonged, the larger pots of money may be lost. After this action, we can advocate for the other streets.

Council Member Berg said that Larkfield Resiliency Fund is still waiting for their \$31,026. They've agreed to take \$14,000 less, now, so the survey can get done quickly, in the timing required. That portion would be paid back to them after July 1'st.

Council Vice Chair Sherwood supports the grant. PGE money needs to be spent now, before it moves out of the community. There was a lot of support from community, at the school board meeting, for this project. The situation is a dangerous one for anyone walking in that ditch.

Council Member Lamberson appreciates Lescure's passion and supports the MWS Rd. project.

Council Chair Fies: Surveying has to happen first. TPW has the money set aside for the work. Then construction money will come from the PG&E settlement.

Jen Mendoza, Field Representative, representing Supervisor James Gore, said that this is the first time she heard about the Lavell Rd. issue. She will follow up with TPW to bring it to their attention.

MWS Rd. is the current issue before the council and it is a timing issue. This is just to get the surveying done.

On a motion by Council Member Berg, seconded by Council Member Lamberson, a motion to approve the School Board Application, \$14,000, for a surveyor was approved. The motion passed on a roll call vote. (4-1)

Council Member Berg: Yes

Council Member Lescure: No (On Principle)

Council Member Lamberson: Yes

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Council Vice Chair: Yes

Council Chair Fies: Yes

Superintendent of Mark West Union School District, Ron Calloway will join Mendoza in pursuing the Lavell Rd. flooding situation with TPW. Jen Mendoza will take Council Member Lescure's pictures to Supervisor Gore.

Adjustment to Agenda:

D. 2. Update on intern: Council Member Berg

Jake Gordon, a student at Healdsburg High is available to the Council for six days. Council Vice Chair Sherwood has a huge list of projects to choose from, to work on with him.

Jake Gordon is enjoying learning community politics. He is working on a slide show presentation about the Council, with a goal of getting interest, support and participation in the Council. They will present it to community leaders, such as HOA presidents, Chamber of Commerce, etc. He will show it next meeting.

C) Pending Items: Updates when available

1. Wikiup Commons: **None**
2. General Plan: **None**
- 3, Utilities & Water: **None**
2. Speed Limits on Mark West Springs Road and Old Redwood Highway: **None**
4. HAWK Light in Front of the Larkfield Shopping Center: **None**
5. Sonoma County General Plan for Mark West Area: Council Member Lescure **None**
6. List of unmet needs projects for Larkfield/Mark West/Wikiup: **None**

D) Presentations: Information Only

To proceed as follows: 1. Presentation 2. Questions by council members 3. Questions and comments from the public

1. Website: Council Member Berg

The website is up and running, <https://markwestcac.org/>. The goal is for a more dynamic presence. Meetings, surveys and things going on in our neighborhoods, will all be there.

2. Update on Potential Intern: **See above.**

3. Report on Two Closed Sessions: Subject - Community Outreach Coordinator

Council Member Berg presented a written report outlining the purpose and responsibilities, etc. The Council proposes Beth Henry, VP of Membership, Publicity & Public Relations for the Mark West Chamber of Commerce, to provide support to the MWCAC as well. Her background, qualifications and costs are on the report. It will be attached to the minutes.

Discussion:

Beth Henry: She knows there will be discussion going forward, following on the heels of Supervisor Rabbitt's mention that the need for publicity and marketing is a strong element of any campaign. She is very happy to work with the Council.

All the Council Members voiced their complete support for Beth Henry.

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One concern is the proposed spending of \$600 monthly = \$7,200 a year, 18% of the annual income of about \$40,000. Is it appropriate? Maybe that person could raise some funds (grant writing, etc.) Maybe a sunset clause in the contract.

This is the best investment to make after five years of Council work. The community needs to be informed.

According to National Council on Non-Profits, the salary and program for publicity should be no less than 65%. Of that, no more than 35% should be spent purely on salary. We are good with starting at 18%. We also have the secretary salary and the web site developer.

Council Chair Fies will develop a budget for the Council.

Beth Henry: Her approach will be the same as with Chamber ~ Get community engaged and excited. Invest upfront and create the momentum; and eventually there will be volunteers to participate.

On a motion by Council Member Berg, second by Council Member Lescure, an agreement to have a contract with Beth Henry was approved. The motion carried on a voice vote. (5-0)

4. Discussion and Choice of the logo created by MWUSD students

Brian Fies, Writer, Journalist, Illustrator & Cartoonist, made recommendations on the MWUSD Logo Design. His main considerations were: How well they captured the character of Mark West? Would they look good both large and small? How well they were composed? Are they attractive? And would they be effective?

The earth drawing is adorable, terrific artwork. (Third grade) May not be instantly recognizable. 5th grade was the cleanest and most professional. It was very precise and he liked the color pallet. It did not however, best capture the character of Mark West.

Brian Fies recommends the one with the tree and water. Water represents Mark West Creek. It defines the character of wildland and urban interface. It also suggests the hills and trees. It can be shrunk down in size when necessary. It is a strong clean graphic. His recommendation is to go with this design. It may be possible to have latitude to change it up a little bit. It does what you want it to do.

Council Chair Karen Fies will coordinate with the MWUSD on the COOKIE... Take a Bite! prize, to the top three logo entries, along with Superintendent Calloway, Brian Fies and Council Member Berg (supplying the prizes).

On a motion by Council Member Berg, second by Council Member Lescure, the sixth grader's tree/water logo was accepted as the MWCAC logo. The motion carried on a voice vote. (5-0)

Council Member Berg will put it on the website.

E) Presentations of Referrals from Permit Sonoma: ACTION ITEM None

F) Subcommittee Reports & Discussions: ACTION ITEM

1. Neighborhood Improvement Funding Program (NIFP): Council Members Berg and Lescure. **See above.**

2. Rebuild and Fire Mitigation Subcommittee: Council Vice Chair Sherwood and Chair Fies. They met with Mark Brown, Director of the Marin County Wild Fire Prevention Joint Powers Authority (JPA).

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Last year, Marin County voters approved upwards to \$20 million per year for fire prevention in Marin County. Mark Brown is a Sonoma County resident, and is committed to help Sonoma County better organize our fire safe community. The Committee will share any resources they get, and what they learn from him.

Council Chair Fies attended virtual webinar for Sonoma County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan update for 2021. This was from Permit Sonoma and included Lisa Hulette and others who presented at our last meeting. They have a plan that they are required to do every five years in order to draw down federal funding after a disaster. They are looking for input. They talked about the grant that they are applying for, the Building Resilient Infrastructure in Communities (BRIC), through FEMA. There is a cool map on County of Sonoma website. It has hazard mitigation zones and you can search by hazards or address. Also, a survey that they are collecting.

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Long-Range-Plans/Hazard-Mitigation-Update/>

<https://youtu.be/EDEKA8-nRA0>

Suggestion: Committee can look up the Topanga Coalition for Emergency preparedness. <http://www.t-cep.org/> for a model of how a community organized and maybe help each other.

3. Community Services District (CSD) Subcommittee: Council Members Sherwood and Lamberson **None**

4. Wikiup Open Space: Council Members Berg and Lamberson introduced community members supporting the committee: Mike and Jodeena Landon, Lori Barber, Lisa Frazee and Heidi Would. The property is to be fenced due to dirt bike riders.

Discussion by the Committee & Supporters: The Banke-Jackson family wants to fence the road, not the creek. Many concerns: Will force wildlife through the east side, not good for them. It might attract graffiti and unwanted signage and attention. Will wall off the community.

Neighborhood watch was one suggestion.

Views have been presented to developer Tony Korman. Requested they be presented to the Banke-Jackson family to consider.

They still plan to fence with a steel fence. Liability is the family's concern.

The committee will create a survey to gather views of the neighborhood. It can go up on the website.

Mike Landon: They could use the existing steel posts and rerun cables. Korman was not for that.

Jodeena Landon is creating a google workspace for the committee to communicate with one another.

G) Correspondence: Information Only **None**

H) Council Member Announcements and Disclosures: Information Only

1. Council Vice Chair Sherwood gave a Mark West Union School District update.
 - ~ Hybrid re-opening begins on March 29. Welcome back signs will be posted at each campus. Anyone can donate homemade signs.
 - ~ Summer School Program will be offered.
 - ~ 20 percent of students staying at home and not returning to school this year.

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2. Chamber will give a presentation on the Chamber Outreach at a future MWCAC meeting.

3. Beth Henry announce that Wednesday, September 22 is the Annual Mark West Community Fair and Business Showcase. Hoping to be live at the LBC. There will be a dunk tank with four Dunk Tank Heroes.

I) Future Agenda Items: Potential projects for future meetings and suggestions for the next MWCAC meeting

1. Susan Sloan, Cope program in Wikiup (TBD)
2. Chamber presentation (TBD)
3. Intern Jake Gordon will present a MWCAC presentation to the Council (TBD)
4. Presentation of Council Budget, Chair Karen Fies (TBD)

J) Adjourn to Closed Session: ACTION ITEM

There being no other business to discuss, on a motion by Council Member Lescure, seconded by Council Member Berg, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 pm.

Approved Date:

Chair

MWCAC MEETINGS: 6:00 PM—SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH
Zoom Meetings Until Further Notice
Be sure to check the MWCAC website for meeting agenda, location & time
sonomacounty.ca.gov/Mark-West-Citizens-Advisory-Council
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