

FIRESAFE MONTANA
Board of Directors Meeting
Missoula, Montana
July 10, 2009

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:50 a.m. by Jake Kreilick, president. Also attending were: Carol Daly, Don Lorenzen, Pat McKelvey, Bob Mutch, Jim Nethercott, Dick Rath, and Jon Trapp, directors; Bob Fry, *ex officio* director, and Crystal Hagerman, executive director.

After the welcome and introductions, the minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. Dick Rath moved and Jim Nethercott seconded a motion that they be approved as corrected. The motion passed unanimously.

Crystal reviewed the mission, goals, and objectives of FireSafe Montana (FSM).

Crystal reported that she is working with the Governor's Office of Community Services on a series of Fire Ready Montana events to be held in late August. Jan Lombardi and Danielle Shyne are the project leaders for the Governor. Crystal will send the FSM board those individuals' contact information. She is hopeful that we may be able to get the Governor as a speaker for our 2010 conference.

There was some discussion of potential dates for Wildfire Awareness Week in Montana. It was decided that, rather than try to coordinate it with the National Wildfire Awareness Week in early May or Fire Prevention Week in June, we should stay with the same approximate timing we used this year. Bob Fry suggested that perhaps we should call it Wildfire Preparedness Week instead of Wildfire Awareness Week. Jim made and Bob Mutch seconded a motion that FSM declare June 20-26, 2010, as Wildfire Preparedness Week. The motion passed unanimously.

Crystal will send a crisp electronic copy of the FSM logo to everyone who needs one. Pat suggested that when we reprint the little FSM spiral note pads that we print some prevention tips on it. Everyone thought that was a good idea, and it was referred to the Education and Materials Committee.

There was a brief discussion of future financing and FSM's relationship with funders. There is a clear need to diversify our funding sources. Having a good long-term plan and implementation strategy in place is a necessity, both to attract funders and to guide our work. Jake said we should get more information on other FireSafe Councils and how they finance their operations. We also should develop a list of individual donors who give large amounts, family foundations, etc. to use in fundraising.

Planning needs to get going for our third annual Communities and Wildfire Conference. The first was focused on getting people working together on wildfire preparedness and mitigation. The second was a more “hands on” event – the nuts and bolts of how to start a local FireSafe Council and other technical information. After considering a number of ideas and locations, as well as the needs of the various FSM constituencies (landowners, contractors, fire service agencies, etc.), the board turned the matter over to Crystal and the conference committee (Pat, Jon, Dick, Jake, Bob F., and Bob M) to develop specific plans for the board to consider.

The next project discussed was a contractors’ symposium. Some of the issues that could be addressed are insurance, treatment prescriptions, bonding, taxation of cost-share payments, contractor selection, contractor payment, and contractor/landowner relationships. Jim said he thought Helena would be a good central location, and suggested that field tours featuring various pieces of equipment and treatment approaches be considered. Bob F. suggested that there be meetings and presentations in the morning, followed by a field tour in the afternoon. Pat, Carol, and Jim volunteered to help Crystal with the planning, and there was a suggestion that Craig Rawlings be asked to participate as well. The date selected is November 7, and the location will be Helena.

The board viewed the revised DVD and suggested changes and corrections. Crystal will work with Right Angle Productions on accomplishing those. The board felt a “sleeve” similar to the one used by DNRC for its *Fire on the Prairie* DVD should be used to package the FSM DVD, regular than a regular jewel case, as long as the cost is relatively comparable.

Carol made a motion, which Jon seconded, that the administrative services contract that FSM has re-negotiated with Gallatin County Extension should be approved. The motion passed unanimously. During the next few months the hiring committee (the executive committee members, plus Don) will develop the process to be used in recruiting a permanent executive director for FSM.

Upcoming staff and Outreach Committee activities include:

- Work with the Seeley Lake mitigation task force on forming a local FireSafe Council for that area
- A presentation in Emerald Hills/Lockwood, where the community is also interested in a local Council
- A July 15th meeting of the group Bob M. is working with in the Painted Rocks area. Ravalli County is doing an update on its CWPP also.
- A July 16th meeting at Big Sky
- Having a table at the Western Montana Fair in Missoula
- An August 8 presence at the West Yellowstone Community Day
- An August 11 evening program at West Yellowstone
- A table at the Bozeman Farmer’s market on August 22
- An August 29 meeting at the Double Arrow subdivision in Seeley Lake

Crystal will continue working with the Forest Service on possible activities during the fire season. The East Glacier group will be meeting in the Fall again, and hopefully will be voting to form a Council there. If all goes well, we could end up with eight local Councils being set up this year. Continued follow-up with them will be essential.

Pat said he was very impressed with the hands-on training that Painted Rocks did for landowners, and would like to see something like that made a standard for FSM. Several people discussed their experiences doing home assessments – using volunteers, using Red Zone software, etc.

Pat reported on activities connected with Tri-County's 25th anniversary. A one-half hour segment will be featured on ACTV, with some of the long-time participants reflecting on where the organization has been and where it's going. The Upper 10 Mile collaboration has completed its work and given its recommendation to the county.

Crystal is beginning work on the next newsletter, and also wants to get the FSM website updated. If no progress has been made with our current host by the first of August, Crystal will begin looking at other alternatives.

After a short discussion on the issues related to cost-share payments being reported as miscellaneous income to recipients, Carol said she would get some information for the board about how the Secretary of Agriculture could make it possible for fuels reduction cost share payments to be treated as non-taxable.

Crystal reported on the FireSafe USA discussions she has been involved in. FSM has been asked if it would consider being the fiscal agent for FSUSA until that group achieves its own 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. Concern was expressed about the amount of Crystal's time that might be involved, and whether the proposed fee would be adequate to cover it. The board asked Crystal to get further information about specific services that FSM would be expected to perform for FSUSA and the estimated time involved.

Jake said he would like the board to have a late fall or early winter retreat to work out its short- and long-term work programs and financing strategy. Several possible locations and dates were suggested. Crystal will check out prices and facility availability. Meanwhile, Don will review the minutes from the board's last planning meeting and pull out the salient points for directors to review prior to the retreat.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.