

Emergency Preparedness Committee
Les River Community Center
Wednesday January 21, 2015 7:30pm

Call to order:

7:35pm

Roll call

Present

Chuck Maginnis
Hildreth Simmons
Dan Palmer
Maureen Smith
Donna Larson
Marlene Hakakha
Alina Vartany
Ron Cornell
Susan Reuben
Alen Pijuan
John Darnell
Larry Bogartz
Sheryl Bogartz

Affiliation/Title

BABCNC Safety Chair, Bel Air Resident
Residents of Beverly Glen
Residents of Beverly Glen
Bel Air Resident
Casiano Park
Casiano Park
Casiano Park
Bel Air Ridge
Holmby-Westwood
LA County Emergency Management
District Director for Councilman Koretz
CERT Battalion 18 Coordinator
Westside Village

Introduction of Attendees:

Everyone introduced themselves and their association, or residential area. John Darnell is the EP specialist in Koretz's office and is CERT qualified. He is helping research liability issues for groups and HOAs. Alen Pijuan is the LA County Emergency Management Office presenter. Larry & Sheryl Bogartz are with an HOA near the Miracle Mile (Wilshire area) and heavily involved with EP & CERT. They read the BA Crest article in the LA times which peaked their interest along with John Darnell inviting them.

Approval of minutes:

Hildreth Simmons motioned to approve the January 21 minutes, Maureen Smith seconded, minutes approved.

Inter HOA Communications

Ron Cornell was allowed to update everyone first on this schedule change as his time was limited. He, Don Farkas and Michael Schlenker met several times with the goal of tying all the hillside areas together. Bel Air Ridge has been operating with radio communications since 1991 and involved with ACS in the past. Ron has wanted to do this for years and after meeting Chuck, he has presented at the NC meetings a few times and has allowed Chuck to use the clubhouse for EP Committee meetings. Ron suggested getting his idea in motion by forming a sub-committee for those interested in communications. They have a strong core group. There is intra-community communications like what Dan has at Residents of Beverly Glen, which is

always needed. Then there is an inter-community communications need and the best way of doing this is through ham radios, and preferably coordinating with the fire stations. They have used CB Radios successfully in the past with Bel Air Park and recently with Michel Schlenker at Bel Air Crest using ham radios. Susan confirmed that Ron Hecker in Holmby-Westwood is interested and has experience in auxiliary communications. They are looking to have a ham radio training session in April or May. Marlene expressed an interest in learning this. Susan asked if they planned to have block captains, and that is a goal. CB Radios are around \$45 while ham radios start at around \$120. A test is needed for a ham radio license. Ron has 9-10 hand held radios in Bel Air Ridge for intra-community use by block captains. CB Radios and FRS radios can use repeaters. Chuck mentioned that Patty Kirby in Studio City expressed an interest in attending one of our meetings, which could flank our east side. Ron said they plan to meet once a month with the goal being a ham radio training session to get more people involved. Susan mentioned the meeting at LAFD Station 37 where various entities were present but nothing reoccurred since Capt. Johnny Green was repositioned. Ron asked if Dan could join them and it would depend on what time they meet. For the communication committee meetings, Chuck suggested he could get this out to their list of over 100 individuals and Ron will let him know the date of their next meeting. Everyone thanked Ron for the sub-committee update.

Liability Discussion with Updates

The discussion on liability changed slots as this was alright with Alen Pijuan. Chuck mentioned that he met with Paul Koretz and asked for help on the liability issue. This is how John Darnell got involved. Chuck summarized the issues for BA Ridge, BA Glen, Bel Air Park and other communities who were concerned that there is no liability coverage for CERT recommended triage centers or command posts, if personnel were unable to man these positions. Tim Pershing from Assemblyman Richard Bloom's office was also requested to help as Zev Yaroslavsky recommended their office as a great direction for an answer, or some action. Susan mentioned that their Holmby-Westwood attorney's ideas which were distributed at an earlier EP meeting, were going to be part of their overall EP plan. Donna asked if their EP committee was authorized by the HOA and Susan said yes. They have liability insurance for the board but not necessarily for all the volunteers that are part of the plan. Chuck mentioned some communities don't care as they want to prepare their community regardless of any objections, for their tenant's safety. Ron mentioned that their attorney said it's better not to have a plan than to have one, because if something goes wrong, you can get sued. So what they need is something in writing that will place the board more at ease so they can proceed with a plan. Susan said if people have to shelter elsewhere, that could present a liability issue as LA Country Club was one idea but how would it be orchestrated and liability is again an issue, perhaps for the Club and for the HOA. Churches and Temples are also concerned about liability. So they are considering having people shelter at home or in groups. Ron said they need some type of written mandate from the city, state or an agency addressing this....It's not only HOAs but for doctors as well. John Darnell mentioned that this is a widespread concern throughout the country. He is on his CERT team in Encino and understands the two areas of saying you are going to do something and not performing, or performing with something going wrong. Discussion took place regarding EP supply containers being broken into and who would be responsible. Marlene clarified that the city government has limits of liability which somewhat protects them. Ron went to say he checked with the state and county for answers, but without results. John mentioned that many agencies just know about their liability, but not an HOA or other

organizations situation. Chuck asked if John could get the Mayor behind us on this. John responded that we need to first find out if there is already something in place. Chuck mentioned that it's silly that the LAFD and other agencies are pushing CERT with nothing backing the liability issue. Susan, Donna, Marlene, Alina & Ron all felt something should come from legislature. Chuck repeated what Tim Pershing, who was unable to attend, wrote that their Legislative director said it will not be part of this session. It is a problematic legal grey zone and has been for years. Susan mentioned this could take years to get this approved from the state, that John might run it through his office up to the mayor and get the city involved quicker. Ron agreed and asked John to keep us up to date with his progress. And John said he would get back with Chuck with any answers. Donna asked if anyone knew of anyone being sued for this and Larry Bogartz responded that this is a known issue around the city and the statement stating grey area is the most factual way of putting it. But he said you can take some steps with medical treatment. A release of liability from each homeowner was then discussed. Then a signed release in an emergency like UCLA does might be helpful. No one will read a non-disclaimer until a disaster happens, when it's too late. Susan asked if there are grants for helping communities prepare and Donna responded yes in City's 5 Step program.

Below, everyone participates in the discussions as Alen Pijuan and Ron Cornell lead us on different topics, left to right: Marlene Hakakha, Donna Larson, Alina Vartany Alen Pijuan, Larry Bogartz, Sheryl Bogartz, Ron Cornell and Maureen Smith.



And from left to right: Susan Reuben, John Darnell, Hildreth Simmons, Dan Palmer and Marlene Hakakha.



LA County Emergency Management -Alen Pijuan

LA Emergency management in Los Angeles has a group of around 30 individuals including interns, while NY has 200 employees. After speaking with Steve Dargan and Capt. John Ignatczyk, he understands our group is more informed than then his typical presentation would cover. Susan replied that our only group prepared is Bel Air Crest. And Ron then commented that there have been personnel issues for recent drills, which is typical in most communities. Ron's group has done drills as well. Alen's most recent drill was with Mandeville Canyon and they evacuated to Paul Revere School. They only have one main road to and from the mot of their residents in the hills. They were happy to do the drill but what failed was Alert LA County as far as calling cell phones. Coverage is limited with Sprint having about the only tower or antenna up there. Chris Ipsen spoke at the BABCNC meeting and it appeared that Alert LA County was a great notification system. But now Alen tells us it goes through the county. So the City has to request this from the Sheriff's Dept. which has a delay. So LA County Emergency Management Agency bought their own system which is based on Nixel. Chuck explained how

Alert County worked by placing coordinates on a computer and mapping out who got alerted with information regarding a fire or emergency. But the county was not mentioned. Steve Dargan will train them tomorrow and we need to sign up. Chuck will send the link to sign up, but he would also like to hear about any gottchas. Alen was then asked about water being supplied if water is shut off in a community. Alen explained it needs to be done if a community is without water for an extended period of time. Mayor Garcetti mentioned that it could be 18 months if Aqueducts need to be repaired. Alen said they are working on plastic piping and other things to prevent this from happening. The Aqueduct provides water to most of Southern California plus other locations. Susan asked about our aging gas lines. Are there any plans to use flexible pipes for this same reason? Alen offered that the problem is that gas leaks will cause fires and there is not enough water to put out the fires. Grey water used for golf courses is being discussed. So water is a major issue. On earthquakes, there could be a 33 foot displacement with a San Andres rupture. The last large Pacific Plate rupture was in 1857 which was a 7.8 to 8.0 with shaking for 3 minutes. We are overdue, so need to prepare. Chuck recalled that over 150,000 people will be displaced according the USGS presentation. Beverly Hills also has a video which is excellent on earthquakes. The NAPA earthquake was thought to be inactive, so we can't rest believing inactive quakes will not erupt. Lucy Jones is with USGS and discussed retrofits for earthquake fittings at \$5000 per unit, which the mayor will push for first story and underground parking garages. Aftershocks will be in the 5 to 6 point range after the big one hits, and there could be hundreds of these. Chuck asked if fire is as much a concern to Emergency Management. Alen said that the hills are in better shape than flat ground for earthquakes due to the ground conditions. The LAFD's biggest fear is fire during the San Ana conditions. If a fire is 5 minutes away and roads are jammed, you won't get out. Capt. Gonzales drilled us on getting out before it's too late. Sheltering in place is something we need to plan for, if necessary. Chuck thought it would be rare for the wind to go upward from Sunset to Mulholland and Ron concurred that the Bel Air fire came southward rom over Mulholland. Susan mentioned that pool pumps are of interest to them if electricity goes out. Larry suggested speaking to people in Topanga Canyon who have practiced a full scale evacuation. Zev would know the people over there. Susan asked what the top 5 emergencies are besides fires and earthquakes. Alen said wind and rain storms. Marlene asked about kids in school and Alen suggested talking to the schools about their emergency plan, which is mandated. Marlene asked where police or fire might direct autos or block roads and Chuck responded that with all the chaos not knowing which directions the winds are blowing, no one knows in advance. Susan added that roads might be unpassable with trees down. But the schools will have a plan even for keeping kids for a few days. Churches and schools all have plans. Donna spoke to Lonny Mayfield at Stephen Wise Temple and asked about their traffic plans in the event of an emergency as it will have a significant impact on her community if an evacuation is necessary. Susan asked if they could get an already drafted community plan and Alen suggested Mar Vista is doing one now. Montecito Heights likely has one. Mandeville used the City's 5 Sep Plan. Tarzana was used for an earlier 1 hour drill like Mandeville Canyon where situational events took place to see how residents would react. They go into the neighborhood and look for victims. They simulate LAFD arriving an hour later to see how first responders do until professional help arrives. They then transported

the victims to the Tarzana Hospital. The triage area was at a gym. Everyone applauded and thanked Alen for his time and ideas regarding EP.

General Discussion

Before closing Chuck mentioned that it would be good to have Larry at a future meeting to discuss mundane issues with emergencies which come from his experience being a CERT Director. Everyone agreed. Gary Plotkin also had a good idea that although we all have lists for emergency supplies, which are the most important or our top five. Producing a hit list would be interesting particularly for those who have no lists. Everyone agreed that water was the biggest priority with food and first aid being others. At the next meeting, we will take a poll of the first 6 items we would want and distribute the findings. Susan came up with a list and her fear is that many will not be prepared and will seek those neighbors they think are prepared, as chaos will break out. People must prepare for their own family and pets. Chuck reiterated that he has his personal list of 50 or so email addresses on Bel Air Rd for this very reason and for notification. Chuck asked Larry what is important and he said responses will vary. You need water, and how will you deal with your neighbors is also important. The second thing is organization. Every situation needs for someone to be in charge. And this is an individual thing. The Neighbor Team Program is a specialty for Larry. What to have and what to do, is necessary immediately after an emergency, and afterwards. Susan suggested having community meetings in their Holmby-Westwood community and USGS would be a good start, but she would also like to have Larry speak. He mentioned that 50,000 people will need medical attention following a large earthquake and the hospitals will be over loaded. There is a lot to do and we all need to be resilient.

Adjournment at 9:30 pm

Chuck Maginnis
Submitted: March 7, 2015
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