

Emergency Preparedness Committee
Bel Air Ridge Center - 2760 Claray
Wednesday March 16, 2016 7:00 PM

Call to order:

7:10pm

Roll call

Present

Chuck Maginnis
Susan Reuben
Dan Palmer
Hildreth Simmons
Gary Stephens
Irene Sandler
Ron Cornell
Donna Larsen
Tim Pershing

Affiliation/Title

BABCNC Safety Chair, Bel Air Resident
Holmby Westwood
Residents of Beverly Glenn
Residents of Beverly Glenn
Studio City HOA & Blue Can Water Rep.
NC EP
Bel Air Ridge EPAC, HCEC
Bel Air Casiano, HCEC
Assym Member -Richard Bloom's Office

Introduction of Attendees:

Everyone introduced themselves and their association or residential area. New to the group is Gary Stephens from Studio City which flanks our east boundary of Laurel Canyon, while we flank their west. He works with Patti Kirby in Studio City who initially expressed interest in our group.

Approval of minutes:

Minutes of the last meeting were moved by Irene Sandler and seconded by Ron Cornell, and approved.

Liability Issue

Tim Pershing, a field representative for Assemblyman Bloom, gave a review of the "Good Samaritan Law. (GSL)" He brings issues like this to Assym Bloom's attention. He stated that the California Supreme Court ruled that since the "Good Samaritan Law" is located in the Health and Safety Code that it only applies to medical professionals or health care workers who weren't at work. Although the individual is covered by the federal GSL, the HOA in this discussion are not protected from liability. This is something that has never been tested in California. CERT as a group is organized and sanctioned through FEMA and is under the federal Volunteer Protection Act (VPA) which covers individuals and not entities. Under California law the individual is NOT protected, only medical professionals. In one of the only cases in California, an individual who removed someone from an auto that they thought was going burn, was found guilty as the moved individual became paralyzed. This is the case that changed California law to just the medical profession. Susan asked about people were organized on their own, and as long as there is an overlaying group, the overlaying group would be responsible.

Below bottom left, Tim Pershing discusses liability while Hildreth Simmons, Susan Reuben, Donna Larsen and Ron Cornell attentively listen.



Release forms can be used and may provide protection. We would only know for sure about the “Good Samaritan Law” ruling in California if there is a court challenge.

Several states are trying to correct or rewrite the “Good Samaritan Law.” North Carolina is running a pilot program and Georgia is recognizing that individuals volunteering to help others, may be covered by the GSA. Laws are being passed where when someone calls 911 to request help for overdoses as example, that even if the individual who called is high or drugs are found, they will not be prosecuted after calling. The best approach to change California GSA is through a grass roots effort but there is resistance from both legal and insurance organizations which will fight the laws for their clients, and who also charge for liability insurance. State law often supersedes Federal law as it’s often more stringent. Susan asked since Emergency Management, LAFD and other city entities are asking for HOA’s assistance in an emergency by organizing CERT and the City’s 5-Point Plan, why won’t they be responsible. This was apparently brought to the City Council’s attention and they would not make a statement coving liability. Irene asked what is needed to have a law passed in California, and Tim responded that if sponsors or entities would make a run at this, such as the American Heart Association or American Red Cross, this would be helpful in producing a change in the law, as they deal with medical issues which is the root of liability.

Topanga Canyon has a coalition of volunteer groups referred to as TCEP which has liability coverage. The Topanga Emergency Management Task Force is a LA County coalition for planning and coordinating which does not respond to emergencies. Chuck and Irene mentioned

an EP Alliance meeting they attended with Len Shaffer chairing at the Emergency Management facility and how this was formed to encourage the 93 NC's to institute EP. He might be a good source to help with this and Irene mentioned that he was not aware of any liability coverage they have.

Chuck asked if liability was presented by Richard Bloom and Tim said it did not rise to the levels of other issues which were presented. Chuck offered to introduce Tim to Len Shaffer to see if they could speak on this issue and perhaps have Tim provide a presentation to Len's group, and he agreed. Everyone applauded Tim for his time and expertise in discussing liability.

Other topics

Chuck brought up the subject of copying opposed to blind copying our list of over 100 individuals as virus or spam could result from one infected computer, versus the purpose of open copying being for emergency notification which is important for hillside groups prone to wild fires. Open copying allows anyone to contact the group if there is an emergency. There was little discussion and no one seemed to object to being copied for the purpose it served.

Susan Ruben then started by mentioning that her CERT training classes have conflicted with our Wednesday EP meeting for the past few months, and thus her absences. After 2 years in EP preparations for their 1100 home HWPOA, Susan sent announcements that USGS Debbie Weiser would discuss the 5 to 6.3+ earthquakes within 3 years which got responses.

Below from left, Irene Sandler, Dan Palmer, Gary Stephens and Tim Pershing listen as Susan Reuben describes her successes with EP and CERT participation.



Fifty people signed up to help with EP and with continued mailings, they had a great attendance. Eighty three signed up and 65 actually showed up for LAFD Mitch McKnight training. Of the 65 who initially attended this 17 ½ hour course, 35 graduated which was a huge Holmby /Westwood CERT Class success. In addition, 25 individuals paid for the extra CPR training. Susan feels her success was due to the continued scaring of residents to be prepared along with the earthquake forecasts. She also took the LA City 5-point plan and reduced it to 7 pages which Ron asked her to provide to Chuck for distribution. Susan asked if anyone had ideas on how to raise funds to buy the supplies needed for EP.

Gary Stephens suggested that grants are available for Homeowner Associations through California Community Foundations and Chuck mentioned that Topanga Canyon had a presentation on that subject which is in our minutes.

Ron mentioned that they are going to have another HAM radio course in May to further the cause to provide radio communications throughout our area and surrounding areas for emergencies, and particularly fires. He and Michael Schlenker started as 2 individuals and now have 10 involved in their HAM radio subcommittee. Susan volunteered that Ron Heckler from their area participates. Gary stated when asked that he does Satellite.

Ron Cornell mentioned that LAFD Station 99 is having an “Open House” on Fire Day, May 14, and BA Ridge donated \$250 for this cause. HCEC, EPAC and the Neighborhood Council EP program will participate in staffing a booth to promote our EP programs.

Chuck then discussed anticipation to the 5 -6.3 or greater earthquake forecast. Gary suggested following up on any announcements to the community. Chuck mentioned Northridge as a reminder and distributed the orange laminated door knob EP reminders to everyone

Ron and Chuck prompted Gary Stephens to speak about the Blue Can Premium Emergency Water that his companies sells. He brought samples for everyone in attendance. Gary discussed how regular cans can spring leaks due to preservatives and the preparation involved in producing Blue Can water. It is \$29.95 per case and is unique in the fact that it has a shelf life of 50 years.

Adjournment at 9:00 PM

Chuck Maginnis
Submitted:
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