



Emergency Preparedness Committee Virtual Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 16, 2020 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

EP Committee Member Name	P	A	EP Committee Member Name	P	A
Chuck Maginnis, BABCNC EP Committee Chair & At-Large Representative; Bel Air Rd. EP Captain; CERT	X		Robin Greenberg, BABCNC President Bel Air Hills Association Representative	X	
Maureen Smith, BABCNC Franklin-Coldwater Representative	X		Ron Cornell, Bel Air Ridge EP Committee, HCEC Ham Radio Group, LAFD ACS & CERT	X	
Irene Sandler, BABCNC Bel Air Crest Master Assn. Rep. & Traffic Committee Chair	X		Dan Palmer, BABCNC Residents of Beverly Glen Representative, RoBG EP Chair	X	
Jacqueline Le Kennedy BABCNC Business Rep & Treasurer		X	Luisa Bottari, Co-Chair EP North of Sunset District; Doheny-Sunset Plaza Neighborhood Assn. (DSPNA)	X	
Robert Schlesinger, BABCNC Benedict Cyn. Rep; Planning & Land Use Committee Chairman	X		Rob Farber, Bel Air Resident; BABCNC Alternate for Commercial or Office Enterprise Districts Board Seat	X	
Maureen Levinson, Bel Air Association, HCEC Communications; C-PAB	X		Bill Kabaker, Bel Air Ridge (BAR) EPAC, CERT Battalion 10, HAM Radio operator, HCEC	X	

- Call to order** – Chuck Maginnis, Chair, called the meeting called to order at 5:05 pm. He announced that Hildreth is off the committee for now as library is not available now. Maureen L. & Luisa will leave early.
- Roll Call of Committee:** Chuck called roll with 8 members present initially; Irene & Maureen joined in at 5:10 pm, Dan @ 5:17pm, for a total of **11** to include new committee member, Bill Kabaker.
Motion: Bill Kabaker will be joining the EP Committee this evening, and formally appointed at upcoming board meeting on 09/23/2020. **Moved** by Ron; **seconded** by Robin, **unanimously passed**.
 - Chuck related that Bill has been involved in the Bel Air Ridge (BAR) EP Committee seven to eight years; has been instrumental in assisting in the fire risk reduction efforts, is part of the BAR Drought Committee; is an expert in drought/landscape/water conservation; is in a ham radio group, HCEC; heads BAR Fire Mitigation Subcommittee and is working on starting a Fire Safe Council.
- Introduction of Attendees:**
 - Nickie Miner, Benedict Canyon Assn. (BCA) President; Former VP & Current Asst. Treasurer, BABCNC
 - Philip Enderwood, BABCNC Board member, Youth Rep & Public Safety Liaison
 - Ann Garry, Resident, North Beverly Drive/Franklin Canyon
 - Stephen Feig, Resident, Franklin Canyon/North Beverly Drive
 - Joan Herman, Resident, Board Member and Chair of Bel Air Ridge (BAR) EP Committee
 - Carolyn Duenas, Resident, Laurel Hills area
 - Luigi Major, Resident, Roscomare
 - Pat Zingheim & Jay Schuster, Residents, Bel Air Road since 1996, Upper Bel Air
 - Desiree Lapin, Resident, Nicada in BAR
 - Guity Javid, Resident, Deep Canyon, BCA & Member of Save Our Canyon / Stop the Hotel
 - Merrie Boran, Upper Bel Air
 - LAFD's Deputy Chief Armando Hogan & Captain Bryan Nassour
 - LADWP's Deborah Hong, Walter Rodriguez, Jr. & Juan Esparza

4. **Motion:** To approve January 15, 2020 Minutes: Maureen **moved**; Ron **seconded**; **10/0/1**: Irene; **approved**.

5. **Public Comment:**

Luisa Bottari Co-Chairs DSPNA's EP Cmte with Seema Hassan. She thanked Ellen for everything she does.

Guity Javid with Save Our Canyon has been working for the last few years to prevent hotel from being built and is looking for support for this effort.

Ann Garry related that she has joined us on behalf of Carol Hamilton. They are thinking that someone from her community should be on the committee, which is why she and Steve have joined us this evening.

Ron Cornell related that Bel Air Ridge (BAR) has hired a fire mitigation specialist to make recommendations to the association on how to mitigate fire. They will do a Fire Safe Council, which Bill Kabaker will discuss. Ron related that Bel Air Ridge had an incident two weeks ago, when a person was assaulted. Ron feels that this type of situation may recur and that, as an organization, we need to be able to call LAPD and have a more rapid response. He proposed establishing a subcommittee to establish protocols for sets of circumstances, to include our Councilmembers and interested HOAs. He will prepare something and ask Chuck to establish a subcommittee to address what may be a growing problem. Chuck noted that Philip Enderwood is now Liaison of Public Safety with WLA Community Police Station.

Bill Kabaker related that he and members of BAR's EP group had met with LAFD's Matt Stevens, Brush Inspector in this local area, with Council Member Koretz's reps, SMMC reps, Parks and Rec Reps, and DWP reps, to apprise them that existing brush clearance regulations do not mitigate fire risks, and as an adjunct of that, he has begun to configure a Santa Monica Mountains Fire Safe Council, a nonprofit organization, to qualify for grants from Cal Fire. He would like to go beyond the current brush clearance regulations, to assess areas that could be high fire risk, e.g., Stone Canyon Overlook area, areas coming down Beverly Glen, and along Mulholland Drive, where they need to remove dead trees, limbs, undergrowth and shrubs, as well as clogged drain swales. If interested in getting involved in this, please contact Bill.

6. **LAFD Guest Speaker, Deputy Chief Armando Hogan and Captain Bryan Nassour:** EP Chair Chuck Maginnis introduced Deputy Chief Armando Hogan.

Deputy Chief Hogan introduced Captain Bryan Nassour, as their Number One person in charge of the **Brush Clearance Unit** for the City of LA, to address our brush clearance concerns. Captain Nassour gave an overview and took questions. He is in charge of the Brush Clearance Unit along with Inspector Matthew Stevens, who breaks fire stations into subdivisions, e.g., Mulholland 108 Coldwater to Laurel Canyon, 99, border of Beverly Glen, and with another inspector, Charles Elzie, who handles some other districts of Bel Air Crest, 99's, 71's and 37's, from North of Sunset to Mulholland.

Captain Nassour noted that currently, we are in the middle of brush clearance. Due to the pandemic, they have postponed inspections for a month, allowing an additional 45 days for concerned citizens living in the very high severity zone, to complete it. They have completed all of the 141,000 parcels that are privately owned and have put eyes and boots on the ground on every single parcel. He noted that they currently have under 20% of those 140,000 in the process of their second inspections. They had initial inspections and are going back to walk through to make sure they comply with LAFD's fire code, and that they & their community are safe. If you have any questions don't hesitate to ask.

bryan.nassour@lacity.org Office: (818) 778-4939.

There followed a Q&A: Asked about the ending date of the 45-day extension, Captain Nassour noted that it has already ended; they usually start May 1st but due to pandemic, there was agreement among the Fire Marshal, City Fire Chief, and Council members that due to COVID, we needed to postpone to give all homeowners time to clear brush. They started June 1st, and July 15th started initial inspections. If after July 15th any resident has received a failed notice or failure to comply, they would have an additional 20 days.

He noted that they are now in middle of second inspections, which will be done by this Friday, and that if you haven't received an initial or a failed compliance, that means you have automatically passed.

He noted that, if at any given time, you want to look at your own property, each of you has access to look up your own private parcel (no one else's) at <https://vms3.lafd.org/> under your APN; you have a pin number. If you haven't provided or built your own user name, they will walk you through. Call the 800 number and they will give you a pin number and assist you, with property or user name.

Number to call regarding properties in need of attention: **Brush Clearance Inspection 1-800-994-4444**; however, Captain Nassour recommended going to www.lafd.org or LAFDBrush@lacity.org rather than making a phone call, due to reduced personnel during COVID. Captain Nassour's email, as noted above, is bryan.nassour@lacity.org.

Captain Nassour noted that he triages complaints regularly. As to properties in the MRCA areas, his unit will cite but will let MRCA know and tell them to address their brush clearance.

Maureen Levinson asked if the LAFD clears out privately-gated properties, to which Captain Nassour related that they do. She mentioned several homes. Captain Nassour noted that, per fire code, they are allowed to walk on any property if with a hazard within the VHFS Zone. They will leave if asked to leave but can be escorted there by an LAPD City Attorney. They make sure that it is safe. If a property is vacant, whether privately or publicly owned, if within city limits in a very high fire severity zone (VHFSZ), they will clear it. They give 30 days' notice for the public agency to comply. They now have an outstanding contract with DWP that falls under their jurisdiction and clear for them. If it falls under MRCA or any other state organizations, it gets a little tricky. If it falls under a privately-owned parcel, they will give the first and then second notice.

Depending on the situation and severity, if extremely high brush, and very dangerous parcel, or neighboring site, they have public contractors. They will post and put out contracts and put a lien on their property. They will clear it for them and make sure it is taken care of. They're going out this weekend to all private parcels who have failed their second inspections. If not done within 30 days, they'll start sending their contractors out and will clear it for them.

Captain Nassour related that they have aerial fuel management that they've tried in the Hollywood Hills; will see if they can do it this year depending on their budget. Last year, they completed the Mulholland Corridor, beyond their normal 10 feet, going 20 feet down Mulholland, north and south. They are trying to find the funds this year again for Mulholland to the Cahuenga Pass to Fire Station 109. He noted that they are asking neighborhood councils and neighborhood associations, if they elect to help, to fund that. Right now, his budget is at 3.2 million for entire city, government as well as private parcels, and they spend 1.5 to 2 million on public parcels. They are facing budgetary needs during the pandemic. He'd love assistance & sponsorship, especially at the Mulholland Corridor, high traffic area. He'd love a joint partnership with us.

Carolyn Duenas related that she is new to California from the east coast, and lives in the Laurel Hills area. She asked what systems are in place for community to be evacuated. Deputy Chief Hogan related that we have notifyLA in place, and go to www.lafd.org and choose "Alerts." Drop down menu shows different bureaus. He suggested Operations West Bureau and Valley Bureaus for Carolyn. They work hand in hand with LAPD, who does the evacuations. **Irene Sandler** asked about notifications for local neighborhoods to which Chief Hogan related that if you are on their alerts, they'll notify you. Some are opt in situations. Large scale emergency goes out. Irene noted big concern when people know there is a small fire that could go through the hills, and recalled a situation where she had no one to call in Franklin Canyon to ask if they were aware of it. *Irene would like to talk about this in the committee with Ron.*

Maureen Levinson asked about the radius of an Alert to which Chief Hogan responded the specific area, based on impact, they'll build a geo-fence, 2-3 miles, on a case by case basis. If it's in West Bureau, you'll get everything in West Bureau. (Chief Hogan encourages signing up for all the bureaus and discontinuing those as needed, if overloading your device.) Ron Cornell and Maureen mentioned the Pulse app and Citizen app. It was noted that Citizen alert may send a false alarm. Chief Hogan noted LAFD will give you accurate information.

Steven Feig from Franklin Canyon / North Beverly Drive asked about evacuations, noting that on a good day it is difficult getting out with cars parked uphill, into canyons and dead ends. Chief Hogan noted that for the first 30 minutes, shelter in place, then 60 & 90 minutes they look to evacuate depending on rate of spread: Shelter in place first, with evacuation being the last ditch effort. They try to move early. As to narrowness of roadways on red flag days, he noted that there is no parking in the high fire severity zones on red flag days.

Regarding restoration of Red Flag Day signs, Chief Hogan recommended working with Council District offices and noted that LADOT will assist with enforcement.

Asked what more to do to keep us safe, Chief Hogan related that COVID has changed what we would normally have done by now but to make sure that you have your go bag, medications, pets, go sheet; put that information out as a reminder; have a transistor radio, flashlights & batteries, things that are controllable by you. Opt in to all the applications.

He asks that you remain calm but be ready to go. If they ask you to shelter in place, for structure protection, they'll make sure everything is safe for us. There will be a point of contact. They also will have drones creating mapping. He'll look at all the fire roads, noting that they have bulldozers: one up, another being repaired by DWP and may have a third to assist Captain Nassour. They may have to use those fire roads to escort folks out. The difficulty for them is to see the direction of the fire. Chief Hogan mentioned that they do have cameras, one at Mount Lee, San Vicente Peak, Mandeville, Highlands DWP power site, between Highlands and Marquez Knolls. Those cameras can zoom up to 70 miles. They will assist once installed. He mentioned upcoming cameras with assistance of UCLA. They also have cameras at Mountain Gate overlooking the corridor, east & west of the 405. They'll have four cameras there. The best locations for these cameras is where there is no adequate cell service. If you have a location, particularly with poor cell service, give that info to Chuck who will relate it to the Deputy Chief.

Bill Kabaker asked about how to mitigate homeless who are lighting and causing fires, to which Chief Hogan noted that they have the same problem in the flat lands, e.g., Venice. LAPD was not enforcing 56-11 getting encampments off the streets. Now they are "survivalists" and there is no law saying folks can't live off the land. They are trying to look at this. They have to look at the location and give information the HOPE team, mental health specialists; identifying where they are with aid of cameras and drones (not from surveillance standpoint). Bill asked if maybe the council could provide food to remove need of them setting fires.

Maureen Levinson brought up a property on Oro Road with an antenna, and asked if they could put a camera on top of something. He noted that cameras weigh 50 pounds or so. She could send the information to Chuck who will send to him; if private, they need to enter into a letter of agreement. He'd be interested to see this.
This concluded the special presentation and Q&A.

7. **DWP Guest Speaker, Brian Wilbur or Walter Rodriguez** on power outages in the BABCNC area.
 - Brian Wilbur is Director of Power Distribution and Transmission Division.
 - Walter Rodriguez, Jr. is Assistant Director of Power Distribution and Transmission Division
 - Juan Esparza, in charge of Electric Trouble

Deborah Hong with LADWP Community Affairs Division introduced herself, and introduced Walter Rodriguez, Jr. and Juan Esparza, in charge of Electric Trouble to speak on the recent outages.

Detailed information was provided on the cause of the outages over the recent heat wave, in which stress on the system took out several transformers. There are 25-30 customers on a transformer. It was described as a small outage. If transformer is on a line, they have to take rigging; if underground, those structures are so small it takes some maneuvering. During heat, they heat during the day, if the structures don't have circulation, they won't hold during the day. The equipment didn't have an opportunity to cool down. Other issues are that with COVID, people are working from home, children are at home, and consumption is greater than ever. Also, there are restrictions on DWP employees who are wearing masks, getting overheated. Leading up into Labor Day because of the August event, they prepared and concentrated strictly on transformers.

They replaced 300 transformers in their six districts in their service territory, had crews on hand over the weekend including contractors. They had different levels of response: The last time they used this, they went to level 3, Sunday, and had over 100 crews working and still couldn't get to the transformers. That Sunday it was 121 degrees; when it started to taper down, they caught up Monday and Tuesday.

On the 3rd, one of their main feeders on Beverly Glen and Sunset failed. It was underground. They used ground searching methods to isolate the problem. Once they did, it was just 900 feet span of cable that went bad. During heat events, the cable expands and contracts; it took over 24 hours. Another power failure occurred where a tree fell, off of Laurel Canyon. The others were all transformer related.

Irene asked about the equipment being old. He noted that of the conduit system, normally there is not any spare conduit to replace cable without outages. Whenever equipment fails, they'll install new equipment. Irene asked about protecting area around transformers. He recommends clearing a 6' radius around any overhead structures / power poles, at minimum, because if anything sparks, they will fall directly down. That is what the Vegetation Management Group does around any of their equipment and structures.

Chuck asked if once that feeder was repaired, what other things could go wrong with the feeder on Beverly Glen. Walter noted that when a circuit takes vault, it will extenuate the problem. Their engineering group will take a look of the whole circuit, see if they need to create job to replace that. He noted also that things are not made the way they used to, e.g., synthetic cable.

Deborah noted that when we have these elevated events such as over Labor Day, the Community Affairs staff is monitoring social media, put on schedule all day during the 3-day weekend, and the phone lines are staffed by a different division; they all tie in to the same information. They move as quickly as possible to communicate updates. People are looking for a precise tie for a restoration and the crews are working as quickly as they can. They are on Nextdoor, Twitter, and distribute press releases.

Dan Palmer asked about the Beverly Glen/Sunset part of the Alert from 405 to Bel Air Road completed in December. He noted that there was no notification, it was worked on by a subcontractor and he did not see DWP supervising. Walter answered that it wasn't the same feeder they were working on. Contractors are supervised by one employee. You won't see them because they don't stand out but are there supervising. They found some compromised conduit, went to BOE, asked them, and went through CD5, with Deborah's and Greg's help, they had to fix the conduit, otherwise during the rainy season they could have had further problems on circuitry. (You'd have to dig up the road if rainy.) Dan continued that he had not been informed of the replacement, transformer additions, etc. and that there was no signage. He opined that it was ill-managed. Walter noted that they were doing a good job on Sunset, watched it but will bring it up to them. Juan Esparza thanked Walt.

Phone Number for Distribution of Operations for Electric Trouble: 213-367-5843.

Maureen asked regarding the September 6th update, what the incidents are in the "Community Incident Calls and Customers" to which he noted that these reports can be confusing. When the same person keeps calling all the time, it elevates it to a neighborhood. Irene asked about people using generators, to which Juan responded that you have to be very careful; you have to disconnect the main, going into your building, there is potential to backfeed to power lines, and if someone is working on it, they could wind up getting hurt. Walter recommends having a professional install a disconnect switch. Disconnect the main and connect the generator, they can determine how much load they can carry. There are propane and gas powered generators. Walter noted we have to conserve energy during these events and that we have just set records in temperatures.

This concluded the special presentation and Q&A.

8. **Possible Guest Speaker, Ken Nelson, Chief of Fire Division of the MRCA:** Not present.

9. Good of the Order:

10. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:56pm

Next Meeting: TBD