



Building A Better Community



Draft Minutes
Bel Air-Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council “Virtual” Regular Monthly Board Meeting
Wednesday January 22, 2025, 7:00 P.M.

NAME	BOARD SEAT	Present	Absent
Barcohana, Elizabeth	Private Schools Grades K-6 <i>(Selected 09/27/2023)</i>	X	
Bayliss, Shawn	At-Large Traditional Stakeholder (2025)	X	
Brand, Jonathan	Bel-Air Association <i>(Appointed 04/26/2024 / Seated 05/22/2024)</i>	X	
Evans, Ellen	Community Interest At-Large (2025) / VP – Legislative Affairs	X	
Goodman, Mark M.D.	Bel-Air Association	X	
Greenberg, Robin	Faith-Based Institutions / VP – Operations <i>(Re-selected 07/2023)</i>	X	
Gros, Mirco	Doheny-Sunset Plaza Neighborhood Association	X	
Hall, Jamie	Laurel Canyon Association	X	
Holmes, Kristie Ph.D.	Public Educational Institutions (2025)	X	
Kadin, David Scott	Benedict Canyon Association	X	
Kamin, Aaron	North of Sunset District (2025)	X	
Kwan, Robert (Bobby)	Laurel Canyon Association	X	
Levotman, Vadim	North of Sunset District (2025)	X	
Longcore, Travis Ph.D.	Custodians of Open Space / President <i>(Re-selected 07/2023)</i>	X	
Loze, Donald	Benedict Canyon Association		X
Mann, Mindy Rothstein	At-Large Traditional Stakeholder (2025)	X	
Marble, Stacy	Private Schools Grades 7-12 <i>(Elected 06/26/2024)</i>	X	
Marburg, Tad	North of Sunset District (2025) <i>(Elected 06/26/2024)</i>	X	
Miner, Nickie	Benedict Canyon Association	X	
Michael Kemp	Bel Air Hills Association <i>(Appointed 01/19/2025 w/ Paden Alternate.)</i>	X	
Palmer, Dan	Residents of Beverly Glen		X
Ringler, Robert	Residents of Beverly Glen		X
Ryan, Sandy	Casiano Estates Association <i>(Appointed 01/24/2024)</i>	X	
Sandler, Irene	Bel Air Crest Master Association		X
Savage, Stephanie	Laurel Canyon Association	X	
Schlesinger, Robert	Benedict Canyon Association <i>(Arrived at 7:16 pm)</i>	X	
Silver, Jonathan	Bel-Air Association <i>(Appointed 04/26/2024 / Seated 06/26/2024)</i>	X	
Smith, Maureen	Commercial or Office Enterprise Districts (2025)	X	
Spradlin, Jason	Holmby Hills HOA		X
Steele, Timothy Ph.D.	Bel Air Glen District (2025) / Secretary	X	
Stojka, André	Bel Air Ridge HOA		X
Templeton, Patricia	Bel Air Hills Association	X	
Weinberg, Steven	Franklin-Coldwater District (2025)	X	
M. Levinson for L. Weisberg	Bel-Air Association	X	
Wickers, Alonzo	At-Large Youth Rep (2025)		X
Vacant Seat	Laurel Canyon Association		0
Total:		28	7

Dr. Longcore provided welcoming comments and information on procedures for holding the meeting virtually per SB411, and on Brown Act rules regarding public comment. At 7:07 PM, Dr. Longcore called the meeting to order, and led the Pledge to the Flag. Dr. Steele called the roll with quorum met. Member Schlesinger arrived at 7:16 PM, with a total of 28 present.

1. The agenda was unanimously **approved** with a change to move item #6 prior to item #2, as moved by Dr. Longcore and Member Evans. [*Attention was next turned to item #6.*]
2. **Motion** to approve December 18, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes (Attachment A) **passed** with 1 abstention from Levotman, as moved and amended by Templeton to clarify at the end, where it says she suggested we have reports from each of the stakeholder groups, it wasn't reports but an introduction about our communities as we have different concerns and topography and risks.
3. **General Public Comment** - There was no comment from the public on topics within the Board's jurisdiction but not on the adopted agenda.
4. **Monthly Expenditure Report**
Amending motion to take the roll call vote on **both Item #4 and Item #5 passed** as moved by Levotman and Kamin, with the results as follows:
Motion to approve the December 2024 Monthly Expenditure Report (Attachment B)
Motion passed by 22-0-0 with 10 absences and 3 ineligible, as moved by Levotman.
5. **Pop-Up Tent**
Motion to approve new invoice for a 10x10 Pop-Up Tent from Extreme Canopy for outreach events of \$1,831.00 plus taxes of \$173.96 for a total of \$2,004.96. New artwork now includes the original BABCNC logo. (Attachment C)
Motion passed by 22-0-0 with 10 absences and 3 ineligible, as moved by Levotman.
6. **Updates and Forum on 2025 Wildfires and Urban Conflagrations**
Comments and updates from government representatives and other experts on the fires and fire risk within the neighborhood council territory. Public comment is encouraged within a timed period to ensure other agenda items can be heard.

Dr. Longcore provided introductory remarks as to this forum, noting the purpose is to hear from folks who have perspective from government, fire control, fire safety and a forum for people to share their ideas, to listen to people about what they care about and are concerned about and as to next steps, so that we can listen and hear what's going on, with hopes for solutions. [*Robert Schlesinger arrived at 7:16 PM.*]

Haley Martinez, Office of CD5 Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky -

haley.martinez@lacity.org Haley provided updates with regard to motions approved by City Council to address immediate needs ASAP resulting from the fires. She noted that the Councilwoman attended a roundtable to discuss funding from the State to the City, and reimbursements from FEMA as well as in regards to State building codes, a transition away from natural gas and underground utilities, among others. Haley noted that the new Disaster Recovery Center <https://www.fema.gov/node/690995> is located at UCLA Research Park West 10850 West Pico Blvd. LA, CA 90064; open 9am to 8pm daily to provide resources for individuals & families impacted by the fires. For more information see <https://emergency.lacity.gov/recovery>.

James Latham, Chief of Operations, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) james.latham@mrca.ca.gov Mr. Latham spoke on the impact of recent fires on the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA), with some comments including that their fire division was among the first on evacuations; preventative measures on red flag days were brush clearance, and their staff operates small four-wheel fire engines to funnel to fire hydrants. He noted that the rangers are law enforcement, with full powers of arrest, search and seizure. They have Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF) units with firefighting capabilities. Currently they are enforcing the borders of the burn areas, assisted by California National Guard, LAPD and CHP. Because it is red flag, their status has switched to 24-hour coverage for high visibility patrol, as a preventative and enforcement measure. All parks in the Santa Monica Mountains are currently closed.

Rorie Skei, Chief Deputy Director, SMMC skei@smmc.ca.gov Rorie introduced herself, noting that the SMMC has a lot of parkland in the mountains. She described losses from the various fires. She noted that the Conservancy has had fire resiliency funding that they have used in the last two years for grants on local entities, structural hardening at their parks, removing hazardous vegetation, and they do the annual 200 foot clearance in the Community Facility Districts (CFDs). They're fully involved in a lot of the fire preparedness measures. She mentioned the Southern California Ignition Reduction Prevention ("SCIRP") program, a consortium headed by the Forest Service, looking at ignition reduction from arson, accidental starts and power lines. She noted that Proposition 4 passed in November and in the Governor's budget, the Conservancy has been allocated an additional \$10million for fire prevention and reduction grants for capital projects. Over the years they have been involved in a lot of the science forums on SoCal chaparral fires and have found that one of the best ways to mitigate is "structure hardening." To find resources on how to make your homes fire safe, go to <https://defensiblepace.org/> a great group sponsored by Cal Fire.

Amanda Laflen Field Deputy, LA County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, 3rd District ALaflen@bos.lacounty.gov

Mandy provided fire-related updates, with some comments as to Watch Duty, <https://app.watchduty.org/> and note that the burn acres are now 70% contained. She referenced the Disaster Resource Center mentioned by Haley at the old Westside Pavilion 10800 Pico Boulevard. She listed legislative motions passed since the fire kicked off.

Dylan Sittig now is the **Regional Planning Deputy at Supervisor Horvath's Office**, leading the debris removal process, He noted that this is a two-phase process, with the EPA leading the first phase, and the State partnering with the Federal government with non-hazardous debris removal. Learn more about the fire response at their website, in their disaster recovery section or subscribe to their newsletter.

<https://lindseyhorvath.lacounty.gov/>

Danielle Picciano, Director of Programs for Santa Monica Mountains FireSafe Council noted that this is a recently formed FireSafe Council whose mission is to promote wildfire safety and community resilience in the communities of the Santa Monica Mountains. She noted that FireSafe Councils are community-led organizations to help mobilize communities to harden homes, create defensible space and respond effectively when disaster strikes.

To prepare our communities, she offered a few services that they provide:

1) Home Ignition Zone assessment (HIZ) provided through a CalFire funded program to help assess the ignition risk of individual properties and educate residents to help them understand what they could do to promote safety of their property and surrounding neighborhood (examples given including removing combust).

2) Fire Wise USA Assessment, a voluntary recognition program through the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA); www.nfpa.org

Residents come together for communitywide action; gather three to five people as leaders within the process within the community, then assess risk through their organization; then create a three-year action plan with goals that should be tracked and recorded. When complete, submit that to the NFPA for certification, and when you hear back from NFPA, reach out to your insurance for discounts that they sometimes give. Every year you will record at least one hour of work per household. Not every household has to participate. This includes tasks such as cleaning gutters or hiring gardeners to clean up shrubs in your yard. Contact them if you want to get started on their actions. They have a service request form. Reach out to them anytime. Service request form is on their website.

Dante Cornejo MySafeLA Coordinator, an LA nonprofit, introduced himself noting that he works closely with LAFD. Email: dante.cornejo@mysafela.org

Dante noted that they offer similar services as creating Fire Safe Councils and Fire Wise sites, home assessments, and are the community resilience partner with LAFD working with them on efforts such as wildfire reduction, smoke inhalation installations, and CPRs. Contact him or Danielle as to community resilience as they are on similar paths.

Dr. Longcore opened the floor to public comment from stakeholders.

Bill Grundfest commented that Public Safety needs to be the #1 budget priority; to include techniques to spot fires when tiny, to cut power before it sparks, use preventative retardants, and find ways to clean the fuel we are not using. He noted that water usage is insane, and thinks there are things that can only be done as a community which we are not doing, noting that hydrants went dry, and a reservoir was empty.

Marlene Hakakah wanted to address that last week, a food truck caught on fire on Mulholland by her community, became 100% engulfed by fire and LAFD put it out. She asked if there something we can do. She contacted CD5 but doesn't know if she's heard anything back. Something has to be done about the food trucks. As to SMMC, a lot of property borderlines that conservancy and for those people it is very terrifying because it is kindling waiting for something to happen. She asked if we can make a clearance space between her community and the wild brush; maybe use some money coming this way to clear that, and not put all the responsibility on the homeowner. She lives off Casiano Road, at the end, just above Bel Air Crest and a lot of homes on Colina Strada including half her street has a lot of brush of the SMMC, as do a lot of cul-de-sacs off of Casiano.

Marina noted that a couple months back, she brought up the issue of the Beverly Park traffic that happens every single day during the week, and acknowledged that Travis and multiple entities have been involved in trying to resolve the issue for her community. She understands that the Narrows Overlook has been closed off with barriers, which she noted is great, because it is a designated staging area for the LAFD if a fire breaks out in this neighborhood. She noted that it is important for that area to stay clear because workers

have been parking there every day and do *not* have the right to do so. While the overlook issue has been addressed, she noted that traffic gets backed up to BP every weekday from 6 AM to 8 AM with standstill traffic going both ways on a major road, which she described as a major fire hazard to her community where it is impossible for emergency vehicles to get through, particularly during red flag periods. She noted that they were witnessing the challenges during the recent fires and that it is very concerning that Mulholland is blocked for up to two hours every single morning. She feels that we need to take some action at least during red flag period to stop this, and that it shouldn't be happening every day. It didn't exist a year ago and she asked why it is happening now.

Svetlana (Lana) Kasman noted that she is one of the homeowners, who live in the Casiano Estates area, with many homeowners who are butting up against a wild brush that has not been cleared for decades. A neighbor who has been there for 30 years related to her that no one has stepped inside those hills, a catastrophe waiting to happen. She feels it is imperative that something gets done that people get there and clear the dead brush. She noted that there are a lot of electric wires & lines that if they go on fire, will be the second Pacific Palisades. She reported that the homeowners have done their due diligence and cleared their hillside within 200 feet but even if they wanted to, they are prohibited from going into those areas, in case they should remove protected trees. She related that this must be addressed immediately.

From the written Q&A, Svetlana reported that the brush hillside areas are butting the following addresses in Los Angeles 90077: 15531 Aqua Verde Drive; 15520 Adagio Court; 15519 Adagio Court; 2720 Casiano Road; 15518 Via Cantare Street; 15517 Via Cantare Street; 15525 Adagio Court. Ms. Kasman noted that their community of 148 houses is facing unprecedented danger which can end up in catastrophic life & property losses. They also have Stephen S. Wise Temple and school, as well as former Jewish American University as part of our neighboring community.

Michael Edson concurred with both of the last two speakers, especially Marina, and noted that this has not been resolved, the lines of traffic have gotten worse, and people are closing their eyes, traveling half a mile hoping nothing is going to come the other way. He feels that something is going to come the other way, something will go off Mulholland and potentially start a fire. He noted that the north side of Mulholland has not been cleared for decades; he has three properties on that Mulholland strip and nothing is being done with the parking area for Beverly Park, where people from Beverly Park removed the tape, parked their vehicles where the staging area is needed for the LAFD. He related that they had lunch with the Fire Station #99 on Saturday and expressed concern about the long lines of traffic every single weekday morning; it takes him 45 minutes to an hour to travel on what would take him less than half an hour, east or west. He noted that if there is a fire, a fire truck will have to travel so long there, it will be a nightmare. He wonders why Beverly Park is getting a free pass, allowed to park all of their vehicles in the Narrows Overlook as they have plenty of room to park their vehicles.

Sam Sanandaji related that he lives on Aqua Verde, east of the 405 behind the former AJU, and since 2009 they have been pleading with SMMC to help them, because they clear more than 200 feet from their property line, and at that point it becomes SMMC, who has told him in the past that they are not allowed to address the brush and that the growth of dead trees is the home of the animals, to not disturb their habitat... They report

that they don't have money to address this whereas they used to have a crew that would come in the summer and clear, it hasn't happened in the last several years. They would just clear the grassland but leave all the dead trees; it now has become a brush hazard zone closer to Skirball Road, right next to the freeway. He noted that there is so much debris there and any fire with the winds would destroy our entire neighborhood. He noted that no matter how much hardening they do at their homes, there is so much fuel for the fires that it will not be able to be brought under control. He concluded that to prevent further damage, loss of life, and destruction to their homes, country and city's tax base, it behooves us all to address this before it becomes another disaster.

Ashlee Powers lives between Benedict Canyon and Beverly Park, and voiced concerns over Beverly Park as well as across from LAFD #99. She noted that there has been a tree across from the Lava Flaming Grill, on the ground, which she sees when she runs daily and assesses the brush. The tree is on the ground, half up, and finds it concerning because it's next to all the brush. She wants to know who is responsible for that; it's been there for 2-3 years and asked what can be done. As to Beverly Park, she has had emergencies like having to take her dog to the ER and was blocked; also, she has almost been hit by cars when running because cars have to share the road with bikers & runners. She noted that there have been close calls at Beverly Park and nothing has been done.

iPhone Gira Golbhar related that she lives off of Casiano, Adagio Court, in the cul-de-sac. She noted that their hill goes down to the 405 but that they have hardly seen anyone from MRCA. She noted that they clear their hills but asked why MRCA does not clear. She described difficulty communicating with SMMC and MRCA. She noted that many of their friends and relatives have lost their houses and opined that if it comes here, it will wipe out all the neighborhoods, (naming multiple surrounding communities). They are begging the MRCA to send someone to look and see what's happening here. There are many pine trees that are very dangerous, very dry, and they are not even allowed to do anything. She begged the people who are here this evening from SMMC and MRCA for their help. She referenced the food truck that burned, and opined that we just need one of these for the whole neighborhood to go up.

Mona iPhone noted that she is a board member in the Bel Air Park Community; Marlene is her neighbor. She noted that it costs a lot more to fight a fire, than to prevent. She'd like to invite the two people here tonight on the call from SMMC and MRCA to come to her community. She noted that she and others have reached out to them and asks them to come and see the true brush area that has been neglected for so many years and would appreciate their assistance in this matter.

Cynthia McDermott related that she has been visiting fire houses, asking what they need and has found confusion such that the fire fighters have said they have enough. She noted that this effort has not been organized. When she goes to FS #88 above Burbank, the poor fire fighters want us to stop. It has been an issue of a lack of organization, with people saying send stuff to the FD. She discouraged people from doing so right now; noting maybe in two weeks. It has been overwhelming; particularly the FS on Mulholland. She thinks it may be better to donate to the LA Fire Foundation so they have equipment they need as they've not been funded appropriately, which she thinks is the City's responsibility and that putting pressure on the City to make sure the firefighters are properly provided for would be a better way of using our money.

Enrico Bressan, introduced himself as an architect and engineer, who has been living near Benedict and Hutton Drive since 1999, and has been very active in construction for many years. He spoke to Mindy at the Fire Department and expressed his concern about how we go forward in the future, protecting our houses, building in a better way for fire resistance, earthquake resistance and sustainably architecture and home design, including building a house from scratch or improving an existing house to minimize fire and other vulnerabilities. He asked for the possibility to have a more extensive discussion in the future to illustrate some of the ideas that he'd like to share with the community here and perhaps others, e.g., the Palisades, to minimize fire vulnerabilities. He feels we need to share with the community so that there are resources to build better for the future rather than being reliant on building with wood, etc. Another concern of his is the overhead electrical wiring that have started fires in Alta Dena and Paradise. He has been vocal that these need to be put underground, which though expensive is cheaper than waiting for 15,000 houses to burn.

Jordan Allan lives off of Java, and thinks we are doing a terrific job organizing these meetings, and would like to take it another step further to have an email that everyone can share, with photos and pinpointing locations with a fire hazard; take it to the city so they can do a couple days of clearing out this brush, including but the lookouts on Mulholland. He noted that we all spend thousands of dollars a year doing our annual brush clearance but thinks the City isn't doing theirs. He asked why we don't organize our own efforts to organize our representatives, organize a meeting at one of these locations where all this brush is built up.

Dante Cornejo, a MySafeLA Coordinator, noted that he tries to educate homeowners and community members on actions they can take; steps to reduce the overall amount of fuel within your specific community and around your home to better prepare. He noted that a lot of concern is about the fuel that is without the communities' hands. In terms of education as to Fire Safe and Fire Wise, every community he has spoken to, as the last speaker said, should be capturing pictures and videos and bringing up issues so their voices can be heard and hopefully addressed.

Mr. James Latham noted that as Chief of Operations, he is responsible for law enforcement maintenance but doesn't represent their brushing program. He explained that they do what the Fire Department asks them to do. He noted that, as Dante mentioned, there are many things you can do to harden the structures; have a much greater chance of survival from these catastrophes. What hit SoCal was an extreme situation but getting things away from a structure saves structures. Try to find resources such as ember safe mesh to go over your vents. As to brush, he noted that this concern is not falling upon deaf ears. As to traffic, he doesn't represent the City of LA, they are partners to talk to about that. As to the overlook, he noted that all of those vehicles are by people who are working in Beverly Park, and we need to make a connection with Beverly Park, and bring them on to help solve this problem. There are things we can do on our side. He opined that obviously brushing is a big concern but brushing alone won't save the structures other than turning the whole place into a desert. He noted that here in SoCal, we live with fire but also live with mudslides and that all that vegetation has a root system that holds the soil in place.

Rorie Skei wrote down the addresses cited, and promised to look at their situations. She noted that they cannot clear every acre of habitat that they own; they follow the FD's standards. She said that if there are trees at issue, they'll take a look at those but can't promise to clear the hillsides beyond the 200 foot area.

Dr. Longcore read an email from CD4 regarding the parking/road obstruction issue at Beverly Park, which he has been discussing with MRCA, noting that LAPD is aware of the traffic issue, are doing their best, including ticketing, and a permanent solution depends on the Beverly Park HOA policies in CD5, and that maybe MRCA could offer one- or two-hour parking, not all-day or overflow parking.

Dr. Longcore opened the floor to Board Q&A. **Member Levinson** expressed concern regarding 1) the expediting building permits, and asked if there will there be changes in the building codes, if you don't want wood attached to a structure; 2) are we going to be expediting permits before making changes on how we build? 3) She was disturbed that Chief Crowley was unaware that the Santa Inez Reservoir was empty. She asked why didn't LADWP advise the LAFD that the reservoir was empty; why didn't Chief Crowley know? She thinks the City needs to get together and exchange information that needs to be addressed. She noted that someone asked her to please ask for more cell phone reception towers in the hillsides. She does cleanups on the streets, seeing a lot of cigarette butts around construction sites and there is no enforcement. Something has to be done to help monitor the smoking in the hillsides.

Member Barcohana noted her position on this neighborhood council is to represent private schools, including in the Mulholland corridor. She noted that the children haven't been outside during recess because of the air quality up there; school was closed for over a week at Milken because they lost power... which has caused another disruption to the students. She noted that her son hasn't had a single year of normal school, and now fires add to that. She is shocked that representatives of the City government, SMMC and MRCA reactions or responses to the fire as sufficient, that not one of them have mentioned cuts to the LAFD budget, air quality or undergrounding power lines to prevent cutting of power that disrupts education and normal activities of the residents. She is shocked to hear that the people of the conservancy have done clearance, as they have not. She noted that speaker after speaker has begged them to do the clearance, as there are children up here and we owe it to them and their families and the residents to keep them safe, and the answers that these representatives have provided are completely insufficient.

Member Smith related that she would love to see the GM of DWP at this meeting to explain to us, noting that we were out of power for several days. One customer service person told her there were lines down on Roscomare... She wonders why is there no communication between the engineers that look around to see what's going on in the neighborhood and the customer service people as none seems to know what's going on or to relay information on what's going on in our communities. No one has been able to answer her questions. She'd like the DWP GM to answer questions.

Member Schlesinger related that he has a 13-page list of the most fire resistant plants that would be helpful to disseminate this to all the people in our community. He'll disseminate it. He'll send it to the outreach committee.

Member Savage had several comments including but not limited to: 1) Responding to a comment made above on having a separate group to talk about complaints, noted that the Fire Department has had a complaint line for many years: go to <https://lafd.org/fire-prevention/brush/report-hazard> where you can file complaints against your neighbors whom you've hopefully reached out to and if they don't respond, after two weeks without doing anything, eventually the City will send a crew out there and there will be a lien against their property. She noted that many in her neighborhood do *not* comply with brush clearance... that everyone should be doing so as this is serious now, and she feels if people don't wake up from this situation, she doesn't know what will wake them up. 2) Everyone should be aware that the costs of new construction is significant and they should be expecting a cost of \$700/square foot excluding land for new construction; that is realistic and not fancy, drywall and a floor. She can provide records if needed. 3) Something she has been studying closely for the last nine years on this board is that most projects she has reviewed through this NC and the Mulholland Design Review Board (MDRB) is that most people just go for the minimum side yard setbacks, probably not a good idea, and she'd hope we would have a big overhaul and rethink what is in your side yard. She has been studying friends' houses that burned in Pacific Palisades and looking at their side yard setbacks. The minimum would be 5' with an eave, you are four feet on each, so 8' away space with a wood eave and probably a wood fence and probably dense growth in that area -- it would make sense that it would all ignite. She noted that it's a hazard even without these strong winds and setbacks are a big deal, recommending having greater ratings for side yard walls and rethinking everything here.

Member Templeton noted that she had sent out a link today to the Board, and that this picture may have helped people understand Elizabeth's passion. She noted that we sent out a survey about their neighborhood about the things they were most concerned about. She asked that we please use science and data when trying to figure out next steps; not wishful thinking; use science as our lives depends on it. It seems the various departments don't know what's going on in the other departments, and have no holistic approach. She'd like this problem to have a holistic approach: 80 percent of their respondents were concerned about being able to evacuate, including people who are older, and turn their phones off. We have an air raid siren, and maybe should turn it on; 60 percent said knowing the best evacuation route was important; 100 percent say traffic making evacuation difficult was a big concern, e.g., Roscomare Road. If a fire were to strike during rush hour... 70% said they need accurate info to make homes fire safe, and 60% about fire wise landscaping; 80% said how and where to get accurate info in general was a concern... and 80% wondered if there would be enough water in Bel Air Hills if there were a fire. She noted that LAFD is no longer making in person inspections,... doing brush clearance when using drones you cannot see enough what's under tree cover without coming in person. What's the procedure if a fire starts in a neighborhood during school hours? How are the kids going to get out? When the parents come to pick them up... They support closing certain roads, like Roscomare that are narrow, during very high wind times so there isn't a backup, and concern about vehicles blocking... She will share the results of the survey.

Member Miner applauded Member Barcohana. The shocking thing she found out yesterday is that the Franklin Canyon reservoir is empty. How are fire hydrants functioning if they are and why they are or are not repaired immediately? She would like to know about the cars parking on both sides of the street, because of construction at the

top. Residents have been calling for months now. Nothing happens. Budget cuts, things that are antithetical to public safety - has to stop immediately and people have to take notice that is positive.

Member Ryan recognizes that we live in a desert. We chose to build a life here and need to mitigate those risks. For years the FD sent them to the Conservancy... The last time they got brush clearance on the 405 was December 2017. When they have homeowners who say their property taxes and insurance have gone up, they continue to spend their money and time to ensure safety around their houses. Tell us who to speak to get a real actionable plan. If we know who to speak to get an actual plan that gives us hope. The passion here is frustration, with 470 students going to a one-way in and one-way out school... no buses to take them away. His concern is clearing the brush and if we can't do it we will find a way. Everyone wants to see this averted again. Tell us who, James and Rorie, for those homeowners that Elizabeth and he represent, who for more than a decade do not know who to speak to...

Dr. Longcore asked Member Ryan to clarify the clearance he wants done, which Member Ryan responded to. Dr. Longcore noted that in his field, he is familiar with and has done and for a long time studied all the academic papers that tell what the factors of what only matters within a hundred feet from the structure: chaparral to grasses, which ignite faster. He noted that more than 100 feet of clearance doesn't help your structure ... He noted that he calibrates everyone's expectations... who understands the law, you are not going to get these canyons to the bottom, because it doesn't help structures survive fires. Those hillsides are going to burn unless we want to pave our hills. He noted that if you want to protect it, start from our structure out, and that you won't find any agency that will clear 400 feet from the structure.

David Kadin asked and was told that they clear per FD standards. Rorie noted the standard is 200 feet in the county and the city; the rest of the state 100' from a structure.

Michael Kemp noted that as to Stone Canyon, he believes that land is controlled by DWP, and that we used to see some mitigation along fire roads, which he hasn't seen for the last years; expressed concern about empty reservoir, and noted that maybe we're talking about sometimes not clearing the hillsides of dead trees.

Dr. Steele noted that it should be kept in mind that there are bigger issues at play: 1) Climate change and how it affects us locally, in the state and the world; 2) described various sources of our water. He noted that there is a much larger context here, not to diminish anything about local suffering and local dangers, and noted, as Bill Grundfest said, things are connected and we should try to maintain a sense of the connections.

Member Hall thinks that the State has passed all these laws, streamlining development and increasing density in VHFHSZs. Because they are politicians, e.g., SB9, ADUs, could quadruple the density on one lot. It doesn't apply in VHFHSZs unless there are adopted fire hazard mitigation measures, and the public agency could decide what that means; we learned that those measures don't work. They're going to happen and there is no amount of existing mitigation measures that will save us from another huge event. There was no amount of brush clearance that would stop those winds... he would hope the legislators stop to think if it is a smart policy decision to add density in FHFHSzs. We

need to create housing but not on these zones. If anyone knows a legislator who wants to correct the errors in SB9 and SB35, to please let him know.

Member Mann related that her biggest fear is that the city legislators will not have learned and we'll repeat mistakes. She echoes what Members Hall and Levinson have said, noting that she keeps hearing that the city wants to expedite the process to rebuild. She hopes we have learned from some of the errors in the past. She noted that Member Evans wrote an amazing letter on behalf of her HOA and sent it to the Mayor, and she hopes we can look at that letter and use it as a starting point and to encourage other NCs in the rest of the city to sponsor a similar letter, to encourage the city to look at things differently in how we rebuild the city.

Member Smith wanted to know from LA County what caused the evacuation notices to go out in error and that it will not happen again.

Member Kwan wanted to talk about funding for the FD and resources, noting that a lot of neighbors got cited, but the extension never came; probably it was not funded. Funding for inspectors is an issue. Everyone is talking about that we shouldn't have cut funding for the FD. He noted that Fire Chief Kristin Crowley said she'd like to hear more from the city and county on how to increase funding for the FD.

Member Weinberg noted that he has a video, from a nest camera from someone's balcony in the Pacific Palisades, and that you can see this fire develop and turn into a monster, blown by hurricane force winds, so that no amount of funding, hoses, reservoirs was going to stop this monster from taking those houses...

Mario Garcia, Battalion Chief, LA City FD, was asked to respond to issues of brush clearance from MRCA, to which he noted that they have the 200 foot clearance, and go to LAFD.org for further information; tab Wildfire Preparedness, Evacuation Routes, and Brush Clearance. As to air monitoring, he noted that all showed that there were no contaminants out of normal limits. As to the LAFD budget, he noted that we are his strongest ally. He is the local Fire Chief of out of Battalion 9, which incorporates Bel Air, Brentwood, and the Palisades area. As to Elizabeth's point, he noted that the LAFD is normally very successful at what they do. It is very rare to have an incident of this size. He noted that they lost key resources that are one of our biggest tools during the fire; lost at 40mph all of their air resources. He was working that day, and the fire had a 10-minute head start, according to the timeline videos, one from the LAX tower, with 100 mph winds, there was nothing they could do. They had assets before hitting the 40-mph mark; their biggest concern was life safety, evacuating everyone from the area that became a challenge. He looks at Roscomare, Stone Canyon and those areas daily, noting it will be a challenge. He noted that when you hear we are having Santa Ana winds, get your go-bag and notifyLA to get notified so you can evacuate on time. The same applies to schools. Looking back at 1968, last fire went through all the canyons... with all the fuel in Bel Air it will be a hard fight.

He would go over evacuation routes, there will have to have hard closures. He would probably have only outgoing traffic. If any blocking of resources, it will be repeat of the Oakland fire. It will take everybody to get out of the area for them to do their job. He noted that if there are winds, they will throw everything they can when they get a wildfire

and with this one, there was no stopping it. Their primary concern was lifesaving. All the wires came down in the area. There were a lot of things going on. They had people who either got trapped or decided not to go, throughout the incident, they had to get people out of their homes, and there were people trying to come back to their homes. He noted that they called for air assets all the way, had them from Texas, but when the winds reached those speeds... can't put personnel in front of it. Once it's uncontained they have no way of stopping it, with 100 mph. You'd see chunks of wood flying through the air.

Member Ryan thanked Battalion Chief Garcia for what he and they did. Sandy wondered what they do for LAUSD, noting that he had a meeting with the principal of Roscomare School on Friday. There were buses there for the number of schools. He asked what the Fire Department says or what is the plan (explaining the area) where there is an 80 year old school that sits on the edge of a canyon. Chief Garcia noted that where there are people in danger, they'll try to get them out, they'll find out where the assistance center will be and send parents there.

Member Levinson noted that in Bel Air, they have had two fire roads, which are now inaccessible, Vestone Road, which connects Bel Air Road to Stone Canyon Road, then Sandal Lane a foot path that goes to Beverly Glen. She would like to address these evacuation routes and alternative ways out as people have built over these roads. He will be happy to meet with BAA to discuss alternative ways.

[At this point, 2 hours and 5 minutes into the meeting the recording stopped for a few minutes and then was resumed at 9:10 pm.] From a recording provided by Member Levinson, there was a discussion between the Battalion Chief and Member Levinson concern, as to fire roads and trails. He noted that they'll never have anyone take a fire road, and if you take a fire road as a path out, that's a bad choice; a paved road that is probably inaccessible their fire trucks cannot go on those roads. Levinson noted that the Fire Department doesn't have a road. He noted that they'll get off of their apparatus, and depending on what it is, as a lot of what the Bel Air Community will be structure protection... Depending on the size of the fire and the speed of the wind, when they put fire engineers in place... they try to put three to four fire engines, they'll try to protect the homes. He spoke on hardening of structures, so that when you hear zero percent humidity, high winds and warnings, move upholstered furniture & firewood away from the home, remove leaves and pine needles from the rain gutters. They will use hand tools to keep the fire from going past that but they don't take apparatus onto those roads.

Member Templeton BAHA rep provided details about her location and her concern that there is nowhere to shelter if there is a fire during school hours. She noted that an evacuation plan is needed for that school. She asked if a fire cuts off their access to Roscomare, they don't have a way out. He provided responses, including but not limited to that in that area, a lot of time, people working on weed abatement using gasoline powered equipment that could spark a fire and shouldn't be used on red fire days.

Further discussion was held as to evacuation for the school that is also LAUSD, to which he noted that he cannot say how they do their evacuations and that Fire Station #99 is in that district. Feel free to call him if needed.

Member Levotman thanked the Chief for being with us this evening, and sharing his

experience on the fire that broke out. He asked for clarification as to the 100 mph winds, to which he noted factors include construction of the house, components of the roof, vegetation and clearance around the home, and that with 100mph winds there is a possibility that whatever is in the path of the fire will burn.

Amanda Laflen from Supervisor Horvath's office related as to the erroneous alerts, she reached out immediately and started trouble shooting, spoke to Adam Schiff who spoke to Mayorkas at FEMA, and found out it was part of the accountability... calling for investigation into what happened. Email her if you get an alert that doesn't have anything to do with where you live.

At 9:15 Dr. Longcore noted that this is one of the first opportunities he has had to hear from people and closed this section of the agenda. [*Attention was turned to Item #2*]

7. Updates from Elected Officials and Agencies Unrelated to 2025 Fires - Deferred

8. Ad Hoc Committee on 2025 Wildfires and Urban Conflagrations

Dr. Longcore related that he had asked Legislative Affairs VP Evans to guide this process that would not be in regard to our overall response or our every idea but to be focused on legislation for developing CISs and prioritizing those; so next month we come with a subset of those for the most important ones. Member Evans had related that it's important to note that this is to take material already put out by City Council. Dr. Longcore added that he received an email from Bill Grundfest, who asked to serve on this committee, to which he noted that this is not the forward piece but the reactive piece.]

Motion: To establish an ad hoc committee of seven members, to be led by Vice President Legislative Affairs, Ellen Evans, for one year to review and make recommendations to the Board on legislation proposed in City Council in response to the 2025 Los Angeles wildfires and urban conflagration with Members Evans, Levotman, Steele, Mann, Grey, Schlesinger and Weisberg, to sift through those proposals and next meeting or meeting after, set a term for 6 months to a year. The motion **passed** by unanimous consent as **moved** by Longcore and **seconded** by Ryan.

9. Response to Red Flag Conditions and Particularly Dangerous Situations

Motion: To support the motion in Council File 25-0006-S35 by Councilmembers Raman and Yaroslavsky requesting an enhanced response to Red Flag conditions and Particularly Dangerous Situations and the enforcement thereof, **passed** by **25-0-0** as **amended** to include encouraging that their reports will all be based on science and data, as **moved** by Evans and Mann. We will draft a letter with Member Templeton's concerns. See: https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2025/25-0006-S35_misc_1-14-25.pdf

10. Support for Community Emergency Response Team

Motion to Support the Resolution from North Hollywood Northeast NC (**Attachment D**) to Support the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program, to be sent to Los Angeles City Council, Mayor Bass, and LA Board of Fire Commissioners. <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=24-1600>

- This item was introduced and **moved** by Member Kamin, who gave a brief explanation of what CERT does, and noted that it is up for funding in the budget. He would like to express support for North Hollywood's letter, and noted that this is a priority. The motion was **seconded** by Member Miner. Member Templeton noted that the whole

report was about how the city has cut civilian jobs throughout the Fire Department, which will make the job a lot more difficult as well as the \$7 million about overtime staffing. Her concern is that the CERT is only a small part of the taking away of the civilian positions and overtime, by only focusing on CERT, it is so many things that were delineated in that report; while she supports the aspect related to CERT, because there are many others that will be impacted... Battalion Chief Garcia responded that it is a valuable tool, to train members of the community things they could do in the event of a catastrophic event. His advice is that you have a weeks' worth of supplies not 72 hours. It can take more than three days for a first responder to get to them. Every section of LAFD is understaffed, they don't have the funding to get things completed. Board discussion was held. The motion **passed** by **24-0-1** with abstention from Member Evans, as **moved** by Member Kamin. Member Holmes noted, as to volunteerism, that we are having a tough time with a lot of misinformation. The Red Cross is not the government; it is a charity. The money is for the victims who need help; they don't have to pay back the financial aid. That is not getting out to the communities. They are getting too many clothes and junk food. Get the word out to your communities. You can get your own air monitor and water cheap.

11. Good of the Order

VP Operations Greenberg representing religious communities, noted that Stephen Wise has been doing a lot to help families. Tonight she attended a healing service at SW, they're having a drive for gift card drives.

Member Templeton noted that these meetings are videotaped and you can distribute it to your stakeholders.

VP Legislative Affairs noted that you can request your ballot. Everyone can vote for at large candidates.

Dr. Longcore thanked Battalion Chief Garcia, and noted that one reason he didn't want to focus only on Q&A because every neighborhood here is different; communities have to get together, an HOA or a street within an HOA; one reason why he wanted an open forum so everyone can hear what's going on. There will be responses from having these lines of communication open. That is what he thinks our function is here as a NC. He knows that it has been a rough few weeks, and that you have all been working with your communities to get the word out. It is risky living here and while we can all reduce that risk, the reality is it will never be zero... California is a whole different thing from Maine! You have to be ready and aware and to lean on your neighbors in time of need, because it will come, because LA, Altadena and the rest of the county is learning that. Chief Garcia related that he appreciates the opportunity, to work through issues.

Member Kamin thanked Dr. Longcore, noting that leadership is a rare thing sometimes in this world, and he is fantastic.

Member Templeton noted that the MysafeLA website doesn't work unless you accept cookies.

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 pm to return to a virtual Zoom meeting February 26th (4th Wednesday) at 7:00 pm.

MOTION

The ongoing extreme wildfires and windstorm events in the City and County of Los Angeles are unprecedented in scope and scale for the region. Yet the frequency of such extreme weather events is likely to increase as the impacts of climate change intensify. It is critically important for future public safety that the City formalize, operationalize, and expand its response to National Weather Service Red Flag Warnings and Particularly Dangerous Situations (PDSs).

Currently, the City of Los Angeles' Red Flag restrictions only apply to limiting street parking on specific streets throughout parts of the City's Very High Fire Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) to ensure emergency vehicle passage. From the January 7, 2025 wind and fire event that is still ravaging our City, it is clear other mitigation measures are needed to reduce the risk of fires sparking and spreading on high wind days.

Council offices in impacted areas were left to coordinate with multiple departments and agencies in seeking park closures in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs), and while parking restrictions are meant to be implemented automatically by LAFD and LADOT during Red Flag Warnings, they were unfortunately not adequately monitored. Additionally, construction work in hillside areas and debris hauling continued during this time as well. Gatherings in at-risk areas for the purpose of viewing the fires and grilling in public parks in hillside areas were also reported. Council offices served as a conduit for residents who observed these dangerous activities, communicating the need for additional resources to Departments throughout the course of these wildfire events.

This experience highlights the need for more proactive work from the City to secure high fire risk areas and implement restrictions in advance of major fires. There is a clear need for enumerated processes and protocols to be implemented during Red Flag Warnings and PDSs, and the lessons that we continue to learn from this most recent event offer an opportunity for the City to prepare for future fire disasters before they occur.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Emergency Management Department, the Los Angeles Fire Department, the Los Angeles Police Department, Department of Recreation and Parks, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, the Department of Building and Safety, the Department of Transportation, FilmLA, and any other relevant Office or Department, to report within 30 days on existing and new protocols and measures that the City does and should implement in response to the issuance of Red Flag Warnings and declarations of a Particularly Dangerous Situation (PDS) by the National Weather Service. The report should include recommendations to improve the City's automatic response to these conditions, including:

An inventory of resources that are deployed by various departments during Red Flag Warnings or PDSs, as well as a description of the process for determining their allocation during an emergency;

Public safety and precautionary measures implemented in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) or other high-risk areas by various departments that are triggered by Red

Flag Warnings and/or PDSs, including, but not limited to, enforcement of Red Flag parking regulations, park closures, construction and haul route trip moratoria, suspension of filming permits, additional neighborhood monitoring for dangerous fire activity, resource and readiness assessment for the mobilization of evacuation zones, and temporary pauses in City-performed and City-contracted work in VHFHSZs that pose a fire hazard or could present a complication during emergency response;

A notice to all residents in Red Flag warning areas to cease all outdoor activities that increase risk of fire, such as use of outdoor barbecues or fire pits;

The identification of any high fire risk areas, or areas of multiple fire incidents, in the City outside of state-designated VHFHSZs where special provisions should also apply;

Interagency communication protocols with agencies outside the City to proactively respond to Red Flag Warnings and PDSs, including the protection of public land under the jurisdiction of SMMC/MRCA and the issuance of air quality alerts with South Coast AQMD; and

Public messaging protocols and education surrounding these restrictions.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Administrative Officer, with assistance of the City Attorney, report on an increase to the fine for violation of any existing or future Red Flag Warning ordinances.