

Holbrook, Marcia

From: jonathan@[REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 1:23 PM
To: Holbrook, Marcia
Subject: Please distribute and publish this. Thank you.

March 27th, 2024

To: The MOFD Board
Subject: As Regards Planning, (1) Evolution of the Prevention Bureau and (2) Standards of Coverage Study

Directors:

It has appeared to me that the substantial growth of the Prevention Bureau in recent years has occurred in response to grants which became available and other circumstances, rather than being guided by any deliberate planning process to which the public was allowed to give direct input. I would ask you to consider the idea that, going forward, a planning process would be useful to help ensure a successful transition in the years ahead.

- How will (or should) the organizational structure change as the grant money dries up?
- How will the goals and strategies change?
- Should these decisions be made in a relatively isolated manner by staff and yourselves, or should you deliberately invite concerned members of the public to participate in a planning process?

Over more than twenty years of observing the permutations of this agency I have noted that as Board and senior staff positions turn over, continuity often suffers. Creating such a planning process would be quite helpful in establishing and maintaining community standards which could guide current and future decision makers.

Secondly, maybe 18 months ago or so I understood that staff would bring information back to the Board about creating an RFP to hire an independent company to replace the District's outdated Standards of Coverage document, something which should inform the Board as to how the District's services are currently structured and how they may be structured in the years to come. Some examples:

- An independent review of the finances in terms of how fees are collected and how funds are expended, with any suggestions for improvement
- An independent review of the District's calls for service and how well current resources, and placement of resources, meet these needs. (Also including a projection of these into the future.) This should include things like reviewing the utility of having a single, very expensive ladder truck placed in the middle of the District as compared to having two cheaper and more versatile ladder trucks (Quints) located on either end of the District. It should also objectively take into account that something like 90% of the District's calls are medical in nature.
- An independent look at the staffing structure, including the plusses and minuses of increasing staffing at Station 45 in downtown Orinda from 3 personnel per shift to 5 personnel per shift
- An objective, outside review of how well the District is prepared to deal with larger scale catastrophic incidents might also be useful.
- A professionally organized assessment of MOFD at this time would also likely include a process of taking public input on these matters

However, at your March 21st, 2024 meeting, I was given to understand that the Standards of Coverage study will not be an independent assessment, but will be done in-house by District staff. It was not stated

that the decision to do this in such a manner was made by the Board, so I am confused as why this is happening.

There are strikingly obvious disadvantages to creating an in-house document and avoiding an independent perspective on these matters, and I cannot see how doing so benefits either the Board, nor those of us on whose behalf the Board operates. This approach does save money, but the District is currently acquiring hundreds of thousands of dollars per annum by investing millions of dollars of financial reserves at a five percent interest rate. ("It's free money," as one Director described it.) Therefore, the cost of professional services for this project should not be a disqualifying factor.

My hope is that the MOFD Board will place this matter on the agenda of its next Board meeting to openly discuss the benefits and detriments of having this periodic evaluation of the functional set-up of this fire agency done by a very good consulting firm, such as the one working for the City of Berkeley which the Fire Chief already presented to you quite some time ago.

Thank you very much.
~Jonathan Goodwin,
Canyon, Calif.

From: [Winnacker, David](#)
Cc: [Sasser, Gloriann](#); [Jon Holtzman](#); [Isaacs, Jeff](#); [Holbrook, Marcia](#)
Subject: FW: Message About Request #: 5833
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 12:28:18 PM

Directors,
For your awareness, please see below for correspondence received.

Respectfully,

Dave Winnacker
Fire Chief
Moraga-Orinda Fire District



From: Winnacker, David
Sent: Friday, March 29, 2024 12:27 PM
To: vcolber [REDACTED]
Cc: Isaacs, Jeff <[REDACTED]>; Holbrook, Marcia [REDACTED]>; 'Jonathan Holtzman'
[REDACTED]>; Graham, Gordon [REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Message About Request #: 5833

Valerie,
Thank you for contacting the fire district.

Clearance of vegetation around power lines is regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission and is outside MOFD's authority. The CPUC regulations for clearance can be found in [General Order 95, Section III](#) and the regulations for inspections can be found in [General Order 165](#). These regulations are derived from the legislative guidance contained in [California Code of Regulations Title 14 Sections 1250-1258](#) and Public Resource Code [4292](#) and [4293](#). If you believe these regulations are not being followed, I would encourage you to file a complaint with the CPUC directly using their [on-line form](#).

While we share your concerns regarding combustive vegetation around power lines, creating an alternative solution involving the fire district becoming the designated vegetation management overseers would require legislative action and is not allowed under current law.

Thank you,

Dave Winnacker
Fire Chief
Moraga-Orinda Fire District



From: Moraga Orinda Fire District <noreply@user.govoutreach.com>

Sent: Friday, March 29, 2024 11:30 AM

To: Graham, Gorden [REDACTED]

Subject: Message About Request #: 5833

The requestor added the following information to Request # 5833

Message: My suggestion is MOFD and ConFire become the designated vegetation management overseers and liable entities like utility companies and pay into a fund to get all the work that us necessary for everyone's safety and continuous operation and service provision. That may include MOFD and ConFire hiring and directing fully insured tree trimming contractors to local specifications and meeting all safety objectives. Unfortunately PG&E profit motivation and liability risks are a conflict of interest.

On Fri, Mar 29, 2024, 10:21 AM Valerie Colber <[REDACTED]> wrote:

> Actually I was seeking a response. Not an account in your system. Most of
> the information came from an ACRT supervisor named "Abe" and the fact that
> my property which normally needs trimming of 3 redwood trees and a
> cypress
> tree near or under power lines twice a year was designated as not needing
> any trimming by ACRT when it does, and is now only going to be checked
> once
> a year instead of twice a year. Also if you drive a long all the primary
> evacuation roadways, there are so many dead trees and branches still that
> will effectively take down power lines and close roadways during an
> emergency! The ACRT employees are afraid of losing their jobs instead of
> doing the correct actions.
>
> Is your response forthcoming?
>
> On Thu, Mar 28, 2024, 3:13 PM Moraga Orinda Fire District <
> moragaorindafdca@user.govoutreach.com> wrote:
>
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>>
>> ---

Request Information

Request type: Problem

Request area: Weed Abatement – File A Complaint

Citizen name: Valerie Colber

Description: Email received via Info@mofd.org

I have evidence that PG&E is cost cutting necessary vegetation trimming and their vegetation management contractor are hindered by PG&E policies. Also PG&E has severely limited what their tree trimming contractor can trim and PG&E refused to trim dead or overgrown branches that can threaten the power lines AND the evacuation roadways using a bunch of limitations of responsibility!

This is significantly affecting our ability to insure our properties or survive an actual wildfire.

How can we use the city council, state officials, CalFire, ConFire, and MOFD grants to coordinate with PG&E contractors and actually achieve the necessary safety objectives and preventive measures, instead of just pretending to or doing as minimally possible?

Report submitted by: M. Holbrook

Expected Close Date: April 7, 2024

[Click here to access the request](#)

Note: This message is for notification purposes only. Please do not reply to this email. Email replies are not monitored and will be ignored.