

**Town of Los Altos Hills
Community Relations Committee**

**Teleconferenced Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 26, 2020**

1. Roll Call; Committee Membership

The teleconferenced meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by chairman Roy Woolsey. Present: Members, Roger Burnell, Lana Einschlag, Karen Emerzian, Nena Price, Roy Woolsey. Associate member, Ron Knapp. Council Liaison: Courtenay Corrigan. Town Staff: Sarah Robustelli.

2. Introduction of Members of the Public; Public Comment

Captain Denise Gluhan, who spoke at length relative to agenda item four.

3. Review and Approval of Prior Committee Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the last meeting, held on February 25, 2020, were approved as distributed in draft form. Note that the March and April Community Relations Committee meetings were cancelled due to shelter in place orders.

4. Personal Emergency and Fire Preparedness – Captain Denise Gluhan

Captain Denise Gluhan, Emergency Services Manager of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District, spoke to the Committee about what she is achieving in the area of personal emergency preparedness and fire preparedness, and her work to reestablish our CERT program. This agenda item was originally encouraged by our wonderful former Committee member Duffy Price, a member of the Fire Commission.

Captain Gluhan has retired from county fire department, and now works about twenty hours per week. She started being program manager for the CERT program, a program requiring 21 hours of training time that one does after taking the personal emergency preparedness course. Then she realized the vegetation problem in Los Altos Hills, and she transitioned to fire preparedness. She is getting started with the Home Ignition Program, to inspect area around house for risks that might start fires. She is trying to improve volunteer efforts, and is doing training remotely these days because of social distancing. Mental health is also a focus because of the lengthy shelter in place.

We mentioned the Neighborhood Network Program, which Joan Sherlock took the lead on organizing as a member of the Community Relations Committee in 2009. Captain Gluhan said she met Joan Sherlock last summer, and noted that Joan is very passionate about preparedness. But efforts in these areas have not moved forward, because, for example, shelter in place prevents CERT training. CERT people and ham radio operators are very important for emergency preparedness.

General emergency volunteers should be connected with a neighborhood network. There is an educational component for emergency people, who should look at the fire district's website, where there are weekly topics, such as shelter in yard, chipping, and preparedness things one can do now. Currently there are about 60 active CERT people; there may have been about 200 originally. There are 58 zones in Los Altos Hills aligned with the Next Door neighbor platform. She would like at least one CERT person in each of the 58 zones, so she is working on recruitment. Dave Stewart is also involved, and we can reach him through Denise at DGluhan@lahcfd.org. She could use our contacts in Town to help with recruitment.

The Committee will put the preparedness matter and Neighborhood Network Program on the agenda for further discussion in the next Committee meeting.

5. Possibility of Organizing TEDx Program in Town

Medha Rishi advised Roy Woolsey that she is due this week with twins and will be out of the loop through probably July. She believes that this year, and perhaps even next year, due to TEDx requirement of having a large crowd (perhaps 100+) gathering in a compact room setting for TEDx, that a city would not entertain this idea at all. She recommends putting this project on hold for remainder of the year.

6. Discussion of Other Possible 2021 Events

Given the uncertainties with the corona virus situation, the Committee will put the matter of a possible new resident reception and/or other possible events on the agenda for the fall.

7. Review of Prior City Council Meetings

Courtenay Corrigan, as Council Liaison to the Community Relations Committee, led the discussion of various Council actions.

This Thursday night there will be the annual joint Council - Finance Committee meeting to deal with the Town's budget. Regarding the picnic funds which were not used this year because of the cancellation of the Town Picnic, in order to do a real "blowout" party for next year, Courtenay is asking that the funds stay as a line item carried forward to next year's budget.

Corona virus testing is now available throughout Santa Clara County -- testing at no charge.

As of next January, County Assessor Larry Stone will reassess all properties, lowering property taxes for some people, which will also lower revenues for public agencies and governments. This is as was done in 2008.

Courtenay would prefer some committees be unencumbered by Brown Act rules and requirements. She used the analogy of Los Altos Hills Club, a social club in Town. Some committees, like Public Art, History, etc., need to produce minutes, be appointed, live within Brown Act. These kinds of committees could be more informal and not have to operate within the Brown Act, she believes.

There was considerable discussion in the Committee meeting about associate members of committees, a topic which took a full hour of presentation and discussion at the last Council meeting. Courtenay sees the issue of being one where different committees are defining associate members differently. It might be better rather than having associate members to have ad hoc members of committee who would be a part of the committee for a specific job or task. This would really just be the re-titling of associate members. The site visit committees are really the focus of this item.

In the Council meeting, Roger Spreen gave a fifteen minute PowerPoint presentation with his comments about associate members, followed by 25 minutes of public comment and then 25 minutes of Council discussion. Roger's presentation was much more positive towards committee associate members than his memo which was with the agenda packet. Roger's biggest concern is "good governance," "standing committee effectiveness" and having the Council have more control over the standing committees. Several members of other committees spoke at the Council meeting noted this fact and were pleased; most public comments were in favor of Committees being allowed to have associate members.

As Council members discussed the matter, there seemed to be general agreement associate members were important and valuable volunteers, with different committees having different needs regarding associate members. Courtenay and Roger will form a committee of two to look into how associate members apply to each and every committee in Town. There seemed to also be general agreement that the Council should appoint associate members for terms (2 or 4 years were suggested) just as full members are appointed. Roy Woolsey stated in the public hearing that he agreed with this point, and suggested that committee chairs or the committees themselves could make recommendations to Council as to who to appoint, so the full application process would not be needed. Roy noted that if associate members were appointed by Council for specific

terms, we would not have had the problem we had with terminating inactive associate members Michael Schoendorf and Dennis Duffy. Their terms would have run out and that would have been the end of the matter.

Courtenay's view that perhaps there should be some committees outside of Brown Act, maybe by ad hoc groups, is that such a structure would help minimize any "straight jacket" effect that may be imposed by Brown Act compliance. The Council took NO action to change the standing committee resolution, and will not take any action until after Courtenay and Roger report back to Council. Staff will, however, start a markup of the standing committee resolution to include Council appointment of committee members for two or four year terms, and all of this will be discussed at some future Council meeting.

Roy Woolsey reported that his four-year term as member of the Committee ended in March, but Council reappointed him to another four-year term at its meeting last Thursday.

8. Report on Recent Town Activities

Sarah Robustelli reported that in spite of the shelter in place order, there are certain events going on in Town. Two weeks ago was a yard waste cleanup at Purissima Park. A paper shredding event is scheduled for Saturday June 20, 9 AM until Noon (or when truck fills) at Town Hall parking lot.

Sarah is working on a new proposal for something like a 4th of July parade, perhaps a caravan type event, maybe with vintage cars. These types of events are apparently allowed again. Modifications are being made to the riding camp; Tory planning to have summer camp. The Town also released virtual resource page, with lots of free offerings. The Town is not making any announcements yet regarding the Hoedown, but will be watching the situation month by month so it could be held if conditions warrant.

9. Welcoming of New Town Residents to Town

Roy Woolsey reported that files for printing of new resident welcoming letter mailing labels were sent to Town Hall in early April for mailing the welcoming letter from Council to the 13 new residents in Town for the months of February and March, and for mailing of the follow up welcoming letter from the Committee to the thirteen new residents in Town for the months of December and January. With Town Hall being closed, however, nothing has been done with these labels. Roy also said there were seven new residents for April, which will be sent to Town Hall along with May new residents as soon as Town Hall re-opens.

10. "Our Town" Newsletter Discussion

The Committee noted the Town Picnic cancellation article.

Some members of the Committee expressed concern about the possible loss of the print edition of the newsletter, given that the Mayor had a proposal on the agenda for the last Council meeting, that was postponed but that would have shifted the newsletter to all digital news. Comments were made that the "Our Town" publication is very nice, beautiful, with lots of interesting information, and that a lot of Town residents don't want everything on their computers. Other Committee members observed that the print cycle for the Newsletter is so long that any news is a couple of months old by the time it appears, and that the newsletter does not serve a useful purpose when it is so old.

The Committee seemed to develop a consensus that perhaps both forms of communication should be used: a quarterly print newsletter for general articles, "know your neighbor" type articles, the calendar, etc., and e-mail, text or social media messaging for fresh information with time value. The print newsletter would be kept but we would also have more current electronic means of communication.

Sarah noted that the Town doesn't have all e-mail addresses, so people have to opt-in to an e-mail distribution of news. Sarah is concerned with long lead time of publication. Sarah says we take advantage of social media platforms, but most news items should be just for LAH, so we don't want to blast them out to others including non-residents. Sarah said we have Constant Contact, lists of committee members, can get on lists through website, Facebook, Twitter, Next Door, etc.

Roy Woolsey, as chairman of the Committee, suggested that he could write Council a letter summarizing this discussion.

11. Discussion of COVID-19 Antibody Testing in Town

Corona virus testing capacity has increased, but presently there is not so much antibody testing. Good Samaritan, Quest and Lab Corp all apparently have a serology antibody test. Abbott labs is offering an antibody test for free, and Ron wondered if maybe we could set up a LAH day.

The Committee could suggest to Council that Council look into having testing for the Town. Ron said he will look into this. Sarah recommended that Kathy Evans talk to County, etc., about it.

12. Discussion of Candidates for Joint Volunteer Service Awards

Roy Woolsey asked Committee members to be thinking about possible candidates for the Joint Volunteer Service Awards this year, and suggested that Scott Bryan might be a candidate, since he has donated so much of his own wine production to many, many Town events, and poured that wine at these events. Duffy should fill out the nomination form, get at least three letters of recommendation. Ron will write a recommendation. Minimum number of recommendations is three, better five or so. Weighting factor for choosing -- product of contributions multiplied by time in which they did it. The Committee should also consider the possibility of other Los Altos Hills volunteers; the matter will be discussed further in the September Committee meeting.

13. Additional Items or Contributions from Committee Members. None.

14. Date for Next Meeting and Adjournment

The Committee agreed to meet next on the usual fourth Tuesday of the month in June, which is June 23, 2020, at 7 PM. The meeting will be in the Parks and Recreation building, or perhaps outdoors near the heritage oak tree, if in-person meetings are allowed then; otherwise, the meeting will be teleconferenced.

Committee members thanked Roger Burnell for arranging the Google Meet teleconferenced meeting. The meeting worked well.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Minutes prepared by Roy Woolsey, May 27, 2020