



September 23, 2021 Annual Meeting  
Via Zoom

Present: Russell Aubry  
Carolyn Burgess  
Fred Booker  
Ken Cohen  
Aileen Frankel  
Steve Hanson  
Brooke Hopper  
Diane Imus  
Chris Johnson  
Marilyn Kahn  
David Kessler  
Shelly Leventhal  
Ken Lipman  
Neil McElroy  
Nancy Mennel  
Blythe Mickelson  
Barry Miller  
Nancy Mueller  
Gordon Piper  
Sue Piper  
Gwyn Slack  
Susan Spae  
Elizabeth Stage

Guests: Angela Moore, Neighborhood Services Coordinator  
Keara O'Doherty, D1 Council Aide  
Courtney Ruby, City Auditor

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm by Chair Steve Hanson

The Chair shared the presentation of the year in review:

1. NHCA 2019-2020 Strategic Priorities
  - a. Public Safety

- i. Promote public safety through community involvement, information sharing and meetings with local elected officials, agency leaders and technical experts.
    - ii. Provide opportunities to community members to engage with official pls and leaders.
    - iii. Distribute important safety-related information through direct channels and the NHCA website.
  - b. Gardens and Community
    - i. Maintain and beautify the Gateway Emergency Preparedness Exhibit Center and the Firestorm Memorial Garden
    - ii. Serve as steward of these fine properties
    - iii. Coordinate activity with city and state agencies on matters of shared interest.
  - c. Advocacy and Communication
    - i. Engage with senior public officials, elected representatives on matters of importance to North Hills residents.
    - ii. Advance and advocate community concerns and issues with officials, leaders and stakeholders.
    - iii. Optimize NHCA's communication channels (Web, list-serves, direct mail, face-to-face) for maximum benefit.
- 2. 2020-21 Accomplishments
  - a. Public Safety (led by Elizabeth Stage and supported by Carolyn Burgess)
    - i. Held Public Safety meetings on Zoom, many in collaboration with other groups. Topics included vegetation management and other fire prevention and emergency preparedness issues. Oakland Budget. Hosted Police Chief Armstrong Town Hall Meeting on September 2.
    - ii. Promoted NHCA's interests via attendance at the City Council, Oakland Public Safety Committee, Planning Commission and others.
    - iii. Maintained close contact and had extensive interactions with Oakland elected and public safety emergency management and planning officials and staff, led efforts to close Grizzly Peak overlooks to reduce fire risks
  - b. Gardens and Community (led by Sue Piper with Committee help)
    - i. Firestorm Memorial Garden
      - 1. Relandscaped the hill along Tunnel Road with 800 purple needle grass (California's native grass), soap root lily and

- Terra Seca sage following City of Oakland construction project.
2. Replaced damaged drinking fountain with a new granite bench rededicated in memory of Battalion Chief James M. Riley, through a donation from the International Association of Firefighters, Local 55.
  3. Eagle Scout candidate Nate Catalano led a project to install edging between the garden and the sidewalk along Hiller Drive.
  4. Rejuvenated garden with major pruning and installation of new trees, shrubs and plants
  5. Many thanks to the teens and parents of Boys Charity Team for their hours of volunteer support this spring, summer, and fall.
- ii. Gateway Exhibit Center and Fire Resistant Demonstration Garden
1. Eagle Scout candidate Mason Chen lead a major project o replace 22 of the 62 steps throughout the garden. Raise more than \$5,000 in in kind materials.
  2. Eagle Scout candidate Nico Laub-Sabater lead a team of scouts in refurbishing the garden surrounding the Exhibit Center to better comply with new defensible space guidelines.
  3. Major refurbishing of the garden itself, along with many, many hours of ongoing maintenance.
  4. Many thanks to Shoreline Tree and Landscaping Services for pruning the olive trees.
  5. Man thanks to Mary Alice Rathbun and Dave McGuinness for their ongoing efforts to move the trans containers from Gateway to the curb for weekly trash pick up. Thanks to OFD for providing a new trash can at the turn out.
  6. Thanks to Casper Curto and friends for dividing the succulents.
- iii. Thanks to the following volunteers:
1. Gordon Piper (working 6 hours a day 7 days a week)
  2. Celine Gyger (and family) volunteering several days a week
  3. Andra Steinbach- Firestorm Memorial Garden
  4. Douglas Rodwick,- once a month volunteer
  5. Carolyn Burgess- workday volunteer

6. Casper Curto and friends—workday volunteers
  7. Laura Escobosa, workday volunteer
  8. Nancy Mueller, workday volunteer
  9. Mary Alice Rathbun- trash brigade
  10. Dave McGuinness-trash brigade
  11. Contact Sue Piper at [susangpiper@gmail.com](mailto:susangpiper@gmail.com) if interested in volunteering.
- iv. Advocacy and Communications (led by Chris Johnson and the Board)
1. Continually making improvements on Website.
  2. Coordinated community lobbying and advocacy efforts with the City and public officials on a variety of issues concerning Public Safety and the Garden.
  3. Managed and administered NHCA's Open Forum and Announcement programs
  4. Crafted donor appeals and thank-you communications
  5. Continued advocacy for issues with government entities and utilities to help preserve safety, city and state services, public health and security within our area.
  6. New push to get members involved in our community through the use of social media and social events.
- v. Community Comeback and the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1991 Firestorm
1. NHCA has a robust website with videos, photos, and other files with facts and reflections at [https://northhillscommunity.org/30th\\_info/](https://northhillscommunity.org/30th_info/)
  2. We are hosting a Community Comeback Picnic at Lake Temescal on Sunday, October 17 from 11-3 pm with food trucks, music, a pooch parade and informational tables. All are welcome.
  3. We are also co-hosting the Tree of Hope Lighting Ceremony at 4949 Grizzly Peak on Wednesday, October 20 from 5-6:30 pm. All are welcome—please bring wine and finger food to share.
3. Treasurer's Report
- a. We raised a total of \$22,027 through donations, of which \$10,533 was for general needs (including the Community Comeback Picnic) and \$10,255 for the Gardens. We spent a total of \$15,120, leaving a balance of \$6,907. As of August 31, 2021, we have \$21,466 in the General Fund and \$10,910 in the Savings Account for a total of \$32,377 cash on hand.

We anticipate drawing on that amount for expenses associated with the Community Comeback /30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities.

4. 2022 Program Plans

- a. We plan to continue to maintain and enhance the Gardens; host four public safety committee meetings in the coming year; continue to enhance our website and communications, and support our community through advocacy at the local, regional and state levels.

5. Election of 2020-2021 Board of Directors

- a. The following slate of Board members was unanimously approved:
  - i. Carolyn Burgess
  - ii. Celine Gyger
  - iii. Steve Hanson
  - iv. Chris Johnson
  - v. Nancy Mueller
  - vi. Sue Piper
  - vii. Elizabeth Stage

6. Election of Public Safety Chair—Carolyn Burgess was unanimously elected Public Safety Chair.

NHCA President Steve Hanson thanked this year's board, with special recognition to outgoing board members Ken Cohen, David McGuinness and Treasurer Brenda Roberts.

7. Open Forum

- a. Fred Booker raised the need for periodic street sweeping on Grandview where the hillside is impinging on the roadway.
- b. The fire hydrant on Charring Cross keeps getting buried- Carolyn noted that we'd need to contact EBMUD, OFD and Oakland Public Works.
- c. Martin Hooper added that the City needs to sweep and scrape the streets, especially on parts of Grandview and Tunnel Road. Dirt falls into the road and covers part of one lane, causing cars to swerve into oncoming traffic.
- d. A question came up about how to report these kinds of issues. First try calling 311 or use the "See, Click, Fix" app. If that doesn't work, contact Councilmember Dan Kalb (D1) or Sheng Thao's office (D4)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 pm.