



**North Hills Comm Association  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Claremont Club and Spa, Berkeley Room  
May 20, 2024**

**Board Member Attendance:** Carolyn Burgess, Miki Chan, Donna Karch, David Kessler, Nancy Mueller, Anna Sarukhsnov, Elizabeth Stage

**Guest Attendance:** Fred Booker, Hiller neighbor and former NHCA board member; Lekshmi Nair (Pinewood neighbor), Brooke Schwartz (Pinewood HOA), Tracy Evans (Pinewood HOA President); Brian McCrodan from GANC, Glen Arms Neighborhood

**1. Call to order:** David called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M.

**2. Review and Adoption of Agenda:** Fred suggested that since three guests from the Pinewood HOA were present, we should move "Landslide on Tunnel Road at Bay Forest Drive" (Item #8) to Item #1, after the Treasurer's Report. The change was unanimously approved by consensus.

**3. Review and Approval of Draft Minutes of April 15, 2024 minutes:** The Minutes were reviewed and unanimously approved, as presented, by consensus.

**4. Treasurer's Report:** Donna reported that NHCA did not receive any donations in the past month. Expenses included \$36.25 (padlocks for water meters), \$170 (irrigation system check), \$160 (website maintenance) and \$2,836 (Alliance Insurance).

The current balance in the checking account is \$5,735.31. The current balance in the savings account is \$13,234.43. The total available funds (combined checking and savings) for NHCA are \$18,969.74.

**5. Landslide on Tunnel Road at Bay Forest.** Tracy Evans, president of Pinewood HOA gave a summary. The landslide started in January 2016. The City of Oakland put up the orange barricades. The slide has gotten progressively worse over the years, especially during the last two years with all the winter rains and atmospheric rivers. At this point the road is so eroded that the utilities which used to be underground are left hanging, under the road. Pinewood neighbor Patrick Dotkin contacted all the local news outlets several months ago and there was a report on Channel 5 and other stations. In response to inquiries from concerned neighbors, the City of Oakland has said that repairs "will start this summer." There is no timeframe. The engineering reports, and other reports, have not been shown to the neighbors. The HOA has been told it will cost \$800,000. Tracy estimated that the cost will be more than

\$1 Million. Currently, the road is a one lane passage with Stop signs on either side of the slide, but she said no one stops. The road is the main ingress and egress for their neighborhood and others. With the fire season approaching, time is of the essence. Bicycles, heavy trucks like Waste Management all use the road. The HOA has been in contact with an assistant at Public Works.

David reminded the Board that he had sent a letter on behalf of NHCA to City officials demanding immediate repairs to the disintegrating road in April, and had received a response from the City Administrator but no follow up.

NHCA board members suggested continuing to email and copy everyone. Carolyn suggested copying Joe DeVries, Jestin Johnson, John Corlett from the City along with Janani's office. Copy the NHCA board as well, so Oakland knows eyes are watching. July 1, 2024 starts a new tax year with lower revenues. (Falling real estate sales have a big impact as they generate a lot of transfer tax revenue for the City). Budget cuts are coming across the board.

Tracy, Brooke and Lekshmi thanked the Board and said that they will stay in contact.

## **5. Committee Reports**

### **a. Public Safety – Carolyn**

Carolyn's Public Safety Report had been distributed to the Board. She announced that the Public Safety meeting would be held on Thursday, May 23, 2024, at the Montclair Presbyterian Church. She has a budget from the City for public safety and will offer Pizza and Beverages. Janani will attend from 7:15pm-7:45pm. Our OPD area captain, Lisa Ausmus, will also be there to discuss crime reporting and why our numbers appear lower than what constituents are experiencing. (Attachment 1)

### **b. Gardens - Nancy and Fred**

Nancy reported that she went by the Gateway Demonstration Garden this morning. There was little trash, she found only one beer can. The trash bin was on the street and had been emptied. We do not know who is emptying the trash. The weeds, alas, are high.

Fred brought a site plan of the Gateway Garden approved by the WPAD, NHCA, and the Oakland Firesafe Council in 2014, of a proposed firesafe demonstration garden based on State guidelines. The Board discussed ways in which the garden could be updated and how to go about it. It was suggested that Fred, a former Master Gardener, could approach the Alameda & Contra Costa Master Gardener Coordinator regarding their participation in the project. Fred also mentioned Kathy Kramer of "Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour" as another potential source of ideas.

Nancy asked if the Master Gardeners have money or grants. Fred responded that they typically raise money from plant sales. Fred mentioned that the Diablo Firesafe Council gave grants of \$5,000. Brian wondered if we could get donations of plants from local nurseries.

Nancy asked Fred if he would work on the gardens and Fred offered to query the Master Gardeners of Alameda County to see if there is interest in them working on a garden for North Hills.

### **c. Advocacy – Elizabeth**

Elizabeth provided the May and June Council dates of interest to NHCA. She opened the discussion that every committee was tasked with 20% cuts to their budget. Of particular interest to NHCA is the Vegetation Management Plan. The second reading and vote is June 4th, 3:30 pm. Expected approval that this will go on the Nov ballot.

Another critical vote for NHCA is for a special tax (\$99 for single family home, more for multi-unit buildings, reductions/exemptions for several categories of people; increases limited to Bay Area Consumer Price Index, etc.) The special tax is to provide wildfire prevention and preparedness for those communities within the boundaries of the City's Wildfire Prevention Zone (WPZ). It is the same area as the former Wildfire Prevention Assessment District (WPAD) or all properties that land in CAL FIRE's VHFHSZ (Very High Fire Severity Hazard Zone). The council's first reading is June 4th. Second reading and vote, June 18th. (Attachment 2)

## **6. Old Business**

**a. Management of Memorial and Gateway Gardens.** See Gardens above.

**b. Communication Plan.** David encouraged use of Open Forum for communication to our members. Members lamented lack of use of Open Forum. Both Miki and Anna stressed that Open Forum's style of communication is outdated. Miki said Facebook is outdated too, she prefers What's App groups which have two-way communication. Anna was curious about Instagram but said it needs to be updated and refreshed very frequently and it must have content to attract followers.

**c. Quarterly Newsletter.** This was discussed as a desirable goal but as of yet has not been formulated. The woman who laid out last year's fundraising letter might potentially help. We will not have this newsletter this quarter.

## **7. New Business**

**a. Letter to members re working groups.** David is working on the draft letter.

**b. Irrigation at Bentley School.** Donna asked Fred to join her at a meeting with Jim Nagle, the CFO/COO of Bentley School, to discuss the irrigation system. Nancy suggested they observe the water meter to make sure it is constantly going around to indicate there is a leak. She thought the first place to look in the Memorial Garden is in the area where two new Ceanothus bushes/trees were planted last year.

**c. Linking Benevity to NHCA website.** This item will be placed on the June 2024 Agenda.

**David Adjourned the Meeting at 5:11pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Donna Karch and Nancy Mueller, co-secretaries

## Public Safety Report April/May 2024 – Carolyn Burgess

April 16-3:30 p City Council Meeting-

April 24- 5:00p- Attended Oakland Firesafe Meeting. (E.Stage Chair) Sent evacuation and parking plans from Oakland study 1992/3 to their committees for review and action. OFS to move forward to pressure Oakland to establish set evacuation routes and support parking enforcement on narrow roads less than 20 feet wide.

April 26- 11 am- Attended Memorial Service for Ofc Wingate. His father, now retired, was involved with NW and meetings in NHCA area. Signed book in NHCA name.

April 27-11:30- Dist-4 Advocacy Dimond Library (E.Stage also present) Ramachandan organizer. Updates and Budget concerns. Additional 55 M added to the 177 M deficit.

April 28- 3:30 p- City Council Meeting, City Hall- Budget OPD staffing Wildfire Plan (sent back to 5/14 public Safety)

May 2- 1 p- City Hall -participated in Neighborhood Services “caution Tape Party” preparing for NNO.

4 people from NHCA present!

May 2- 6:30p Attended Montclair Community Meeting. Prep for Wildfire Inspections- Start date May 17.

May 3-Letter to Dalziel Parking (\*see below)

May 7- 3:30p City Hall-City Council Special meeting on Budget

May 14- Public Safety Meeting 3:30p City Hall- proposed change to OPD pursuit policy, Crime report and Oakland Wildfire Mitigation Plan review before being sent to CC for approval.

May 20- NHCA Board Meeting-4 pm Claremont

**ATTACHMENT 1**

\*May 3, 2024 at 3:51 PM Carolyn to Allan Obiacoro

Thank you for contacting me. I do have some questions!

There has been an ongoing misunderstanding of how validated parking is accessed at Dalziel garage, 16th and Clay streets. The City of Oakland encourages citizens to attend the Public Committee and City Council Meetings. 5 committees meet twice a month on Tuesdays (the earliest, Finance at 9:30 am). There are other days when other lesser known Committees meet some early in the day and not on the City Council days. I can understand the confusion on the part of the garage attendants.

*This is from the City website:*

"Visitors who are attending City Council meetings, whether full meetings or committee meetings, are eligible for validated parking.

Please arrive at the garage no sooner than one hour before the start of the meeting and plan to leave no later than one hour after the end of the meeting."

Is this still correct?

Several of my neighbors from District 4 attempted to park in your secure Dalziel lot but were told by your staff that they would "have to pay the regular fee and that there were no scheduled meetings". These citizens had anticipated attending the Finance and Budget Committee and later the Dept of Transportation meetings, scheduled for 9:30 and 11:30 am. respectively. The citizens left.

I can understand the confusion since many people only attend the City Council or Public Safety Meetings scheduled for late afternoon and evening, however I know there must be a way to improve citizens in-person access to government and safe parking.

Here is the calendar schedule for this month <https://oakland.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

A new calendar is generated for the following month before the start of the new month.

If this meeting schedule can be shared with your staff it would assist them and the people who wish to be involved with Oakland legislation or at least be heard.

If there have been some changes to Oakland's policy please let me know and I can advise constituents of the Council.

Carolyn Burgess

North Hills Community Assn, NCPC 13y

**May and June 2024 City Council Actions of Interest to NHCA**  
**Report to Board May 20, 2024 Elizabeth Stage**

**Vegetation Management Plan**

May 14 <sup>th</sup>	Passed by Public Safety Committee
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Council first reading 3:30pm
June 4 <sup>th</sup>	Council second reading and vote 3:30pm

**Wildfire Prevention Zone (Special Tax, summarized on back)**

May 30 <sup>th</sup>	Rules Committee (getting Joe feedback for supplemental this week)
June 4 <sup>th</sup>	Council first reading (another time for feedback) 4pm
June 18 <sup>th</sup>	Council second reading and vote 3:30pm
July 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Due to Alameda County Registrar of Voters

**Oakland Budget for July 2024-June 2025**

May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Mayor's budget was supposed to be presented
May 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Council President Bas's webinar@7pm
May 29 <sup>th</sup>	Council Budget work session 3:30pm (department heads speak)
~June 7 <sup>th</sup>	President Bas's team to publish their amendments
June 12 <sup>th</sup>	Council meeting to consider Bas's amendments and others'
June 18 <sup>th</sup>	Council meeting to discuss and possibly pass budget
June 28 <sup>th</sup>	Special Council meeting if needed to pass budget by June 30 <sup>th</sup> Since this is a mid-year budget, they can delay into July without penalty from the state. The books actually close June 15 <sup>th</sup> and don't reopen until July 15 <sup>th</sup> , so they don't hold up spending any more than the current backlog of several months.

**ATTACHMENT 2**

**WILDFIRE PREVENTION ZONE**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5/17/24 Version, Elizabeth Stage edits 5/20/24**

Adoption of this proposed resolution will authorize the placement of a special tax ("Special Tax") on the ballot to provide wildfire prevention and preparedness services to those communities within the boundaries of the City's Wildfire Prevention Zone (WPZ). The WPZ is the same area as the City's former Wildfire Prevention Assessment District (WPAD). It includes all areas of the City that fall in the California Department of Forestry and Fire Services (CAL FIRE) Very High Fire Severity Hazard Zone (VHFHSZ).

(There's a map and a list of streets that Oakland uses to define the area, somewhat broader than the Cal Fire map that needs to be updated.)

(The tax is \$99/single family home, more for multi-unit dwellings, reductions/exemptions for several categories of people; increases are limited to Bay Area Consumer Price Index or the comparable index for the state of California.)

This Special Tax will create a dedicated funding source to support the City's efforts to address wildfire risk by:

- \_Implementing a comprehensive vegetation management plan,
- \_Expanding roadside clearing to protect emergency evacuation routes
- \_Enhancing fire patrols on high-fire danger days
- \_Expanding goat grazing fuel reduction efforts
- \_Performing annual inspections of all parcels in the WPZ
- \_Providing public education efforts to help residents, businesses, and property owners  
Protect themselves in their neighborhoods
- \_Providing community oversight and annual auditing of the funds

From the Resolution pages 8&9

**4.59.030. Planning, Oversight, and Accountability**

A. Commission. The City Council shall enact additional legislation establishing community oversight and accountability of the Special Tax through the establishment of a new board or Commission or through an existing City Commission. The purpose and duties of the commission shall include: reviewing the annual operational use of the Special Tax proceeds in reducing wildfire risk, making advisory recommendations, including policy recommendations, to the City Council regarding the use of the funds to further prevention efforts, studying best practices from other jurisdictions, participating in regional wildfire prevention forums, and supporting outreach and public education efforts in the Wildfire Prevention Zone and Citywide.

B. Annual Financial Audit. An independent audit shall be performed annually to ensure accountability and proper distribution of the proceeds of the Special Tax in accordance with the objectives stated herein as provided by Government Code sections 50075.1 and 50075.3.

C. City Auditor's Audit. The City Auditor may perform audits to ensure accountability and proper disbursement of all revenue collection by the City from the Special Tax in accordance with the objectives stated therein and in compliance with provisions of California Law.