



Sonoma Disaster Council

Thursday, May 17, 2012

MINUTES

Minutes of May 17, 2012 Sonoma Disaster Council meeting held in the Emergency Operations Center, 177 First Street West.

Mayor Sanders called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

1. Introductions. Introductions were made.

Present: Mayor Sanders, City Manager Kelly, Management Analyst Rogers, Water Operations Supervisor MacCarthy, Sergeant Crum, Captain Morrison, Toni Castrone (Sonoma Community Center), Paul Gradolph (VOMWD), Zachary Hamill (Emergency Services-Sonoma County), Daryl Jones (Skypark Airport Emergency Response), Skip Jirrek (Sebastopol CERT Program), Wendy Peterson (Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau), Charlene Rundstrom (Creekside HOA Emergency Program), Hans Steuck (Chantarelle HOA Emergency Program), Rhonda Stallings, Arroyo Veterinary Hospital, Kelsey Scanlon (Emerson College, Boston)

2. Comments on items not appearing on the agenda.

No comments from the public.

3. Approval of February 16, 2012 Minutes. The minutes of the February 16, 2012 meeting were approved as corrected.

4. PG&E's New Safety Measures & Effects on Gas Pipeline Safety.

Michael Velasquez, PG&E's Public Safety Specialist, was recruited with 37 years of fire service, including the position of Deputy Fire Chief of Daily City, following the disaster in San Bruno. Mr. Velasquez provided details on changes made to improve the safety of PG&E pipelines.

PG&E met the challenges of the disaster in several ways. 1) Initiated programs in a new division, Emergency Preparedness and Public Awareness, offering training to citizens and city responders, to augment communication between agencies during a disaster.

2) Safety Specialists also serve as a resource at EOC's during a disaster. They would assist the incident commander in the field and collaborate with fire and law enforcement agencies.

Regarding infrastructure, there is a major transmission line at Sonoma's southern boundary; gas lines are under 30" with 10" to 12" lines that come into the City; reducing down further to 4" or 6", then ¾" into a specific building such as the EOC building.

3) Testing and Safety: PG&E is conducting hydrostatic testing, moving water through lines to test the integrity of the line. There are 6,000 miles of transmission lines in California. Another change since the San Bruno incident was a policy change to provide maps (e.g. gas lines) that PG&E utilizes to check infrastructure including water systems and water treatment areas. PG&E was able to demonstrate to Homeland Security how to give map access to First Responders on the website for educational program material and to secure access to gas transmission infrastructure maps within city jurisdiction.

For example, Zach Hamill, Emergency Services-Sonoma County, would log-on to the First Responder Website (as would the Mayor, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Public Works Director) and be able to look at gas lines in their jurisdiction.

In addition to training First Responders, PG&E will provide training to S.C.O.P.E. and C.E.R.T. groups. City Manager Kelly asked what kind of information they present, since they are not first responders and will not have access to the website with maps. Velasquez wants citizens to be prepared for 72-96 hours; hazards of electricity, natural gas and solar power in the home would be discussed (some overlap of the S.C.O.P.E. trainings).

Charlene Rundstrom asked about automatic gas shut off valves that HOA residents have inquired about. Velasquez said there was some legislation pushing PG&E and other pipeline companies, to go towards automated valves. The line that exploded in San Bruno was a 30" pipe. Automatic valves are important, but once you shut of the valve, there is still some migration of gas through the line (in the Central Valley values are 18 miles apart).

(Attached PDF brochure: "Gas & Electric Hazards – Training Resources for First Responders")

5. Communication Structure of Disaster Council. Kelsey Scanlon, Disaster Communications College Intern (Majoring in Political Communications in Boston)

Kelsy Scanlon said her background in disaster preparedness includes working as a marketing manager for a company making disaster kits "Prepare Us" in San Francisco and is currently training to be a Disaster Action Team Member with the Red Cross.

Explaining the Intern Project, she will interview Disaster Council members to discuss their individual roles on the Council, and what the Disaster Council does for the community. She will focus on communication that works well and areas to improve. Following those interviews, she will apply communication theory as it relates to disaster preparedness. At the end of the summer she will bring recommendations based on her interviews and research.

City Manager Kelly said that Kelsey will be using the Disaster Council roster to set-up interviews with commissioners individually.

6. Requests for Future Agenda Items.

Rhonda Stallings, Arroyo Veterinary Hospital, said she is an active member the California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corp and expressed her continued interest in disaster preparedness. Stallings stated one of the most important things for Sonoma is for the local radio station to be up and running during a disaster; what is needed is a higher tower. A membership drive is underway to help raise money to upgrade the radio tower (currently the transmission does not always reach Boyes Hot Springs). The fundraiser will also go towards a back-up generator.

Charlene Rundstrom asked in the event of a bad earthquake, where visitors should go as a center for gathering.

City Manager Kelly said it would depend on what type of disaster and if designated shelters where structurally damaged. City emergency personnel (building inspectors) and the American Red Cross would open shelters, after determining the soundness of structures. The Visitors Bureau has increased their emergency preparedness, has open discussions at Board meetings, and encourages its members to assist tourists in Sonoma (e.g. providing proactive information at hotels). Either the Plaza or the Visitors Center would be a gathering center for visitors.

If buildings cannot be entered, an information table would be set-up outside in the Horseshoe. The City also has an emergency hotline number that has been set up.

Sergeant Crum said the radio will have updates regarding roads that might be down, electrical outages, and advise if you should be sheltering in place or go to a Red Cross shelter.

Zachary Hamill, Emergency Services-Sonoma County, said KCBS 740AM is the primary radio station for the greater bay area (LP1) and KZST is the primary broadcast for the County (LP2). All broadcasters in Sonoma County have an association they belong to and have agreed to broadcast emergency messages. The radio stations are linked together to simultaneously send emergency messages. It could be hours before police and fire personnel assess the damage and are able to report to the radio broadcast systems. Local radio stations are important for details pertaining to Sonoma.

[The City of Sonoma Important numbers magnet, lists **KSVY 91.3 FM** local radio station for Sonoma and the **City's Emergency Hot line 256-0121** with recorded messages and updates].

Sergeant Crum said phone messages can be created to send out disaster information but they are not automatically generated. Here in Sonoma County we call it Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS). Citywatch is the vendor we currently use but that could change so we don't use the vendor name.

Mayor Sanders said communication between the Radio Station and the EOC is an important link the City is counting on during a disaster. Sanders said it would be a good idea to have Bill Hammett, an expert in his field, to come to the Disaster Council meeting as an agenda item.

7. Updates

City Manager Kelly announced that Debra Rogers is transferring to the Public Works Department due to the dissolution of Redevelopment and the City no longer has Affordable Housing funding to support the position at City Hall. Her duties will change to include water conservation and will continue to work with the Disaster Council.

Rogers said rattlesnakes are active now in Mountain Cemetery and the Overlook Trail and it is important to follow current practices for medical help. Dr. Stallings said she tells listeners on her radio show that if your dog has been bitten, stay calm and go to the nearest vet; previous directions to apply tourniquets and cutting are no longer appropriate. People with bites would go to the nearest emergency room.

City Manager Kelly handed out PG&E information on extreme heat emergencies.

8. Adjourn

Mayor Sanders adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for Thursday, August 15, 2012, at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra N. Rogers
Management Analyst