

RANCHO HEIGHTS ROAD AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
Annual Meeting Minutes – 2017

Date: October 21, 2017

Location: Vail Headquarters History Center / Temecula, CA

Time: 9:00 – 11:30

Committee Members Attending:

James Szepkouski, Bradley Lee, Mary Anne Schetter, Jan Geller, Jon Driscoll

Property Owners Attending:

A. Borges, M. Sherr, L. Wagner, J. Kilker, S. Thomas, J. Alamendarez, R. Steffey, R.& I. Bume, P. Smith, D.& D.Wilbur, D.& E. Rose, B. Shaw, J. Geller, M. Dudley, C.& G. Glasgow, R.& N. Martin, J. Lucas, N.& R. Njegovan, J.& B. Marquez, K.& L. Booth, A.& I. Miles, L. Pyle, C. Szepkouski, D.& L. Lowrie, P. Burke.

Call to order:

Chairman James Szepkouski called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Chairman Szepkouski as of today completes his term as he ends his 14th year of service on our RHRM Committee. He thanked the Committee members for serving with him and the Property Owners for their support. He remarked that he is proud of the many accomplishments of the Committee over the years and is excited for the continued progress he expects to see this coming year and the years ahead..

Results of Increase of Property Assessments

On September 30th, voting was closed on the Resolution to Amend our Benefit Unit Assessment. The measure passed with a 67.4% affirmative vote thereby increasing the assessment per Benefit Unit as proposed from \$200 to \$400. Of 293 possible votes, 181 were cast with 122 “Yes” votes and 59 were cast with “No” votes, equating to 67.4% voting for passage.

The ballot design and voting process was designed in accordance with that approved in the Superior Court ruling of RHRMC vs. Dunnick, March, 2015. Vote counting was performed by 11 non-Committee member, resident property-owners with 3 Committee members present. After being counted and re-counted multiple times by the parties present, the ballots were placed in a sealed envelope with the envelope being signed by those present. The sealed envelope will remain archived in the records of the Road Committee.

Election of Committee Members:

Committee Member and Candidate Jan Geller read and explained today's nomination and voting process. Two volunteers are selected for the counting of the vote.

Nominations:

3 Open Committee Seats: Those of James Szepkouski, Bradley Lee and Jan Geller, terms expiring October, 2019.

Candidates:

Jan Geller, nominated by James Szepkouski, seconded by Phil Burke

Jon Driscoll, nominated by Bradley Lee, seconded by Dan Rose

Sharon Wagner, nominated by Jan Geller, seconded by Liz Wagner

Jan Geller moved that nominations be closed. Seconded by James Szepkouski.

Nominations closed, unanimous agreement by Committee.

Summary of Statements of Candidates:

Jan Geller - Has lived in Community for 15 years and was appointed to serve on the Committee this past year as a replacement when a committee member moved away. Has admired positive changes over these past few years and sees the Community getting healthier every year and wishes to continue contributing. In the past year has been responsible for Small Claims Court collections which has been extremely successful as we no longer hire lawyers to take care of collections. Loves the community and wants to continue helping it grow.

Bradley Lee – Is a Retired Marine that continues to work for the Marines as an analyst. Believes in giving back and serving and has completely enjoyed his work over the past four years on the Committee. He focus on the core mission of the Road Committee, i.e., caring for our roads which he describes as similar to caring for the Golden Gate Bridge: starting on one end and when you finish going straight back to where you started.. He states that “Times have never been better” in terms of the Communities legal health and our abilities to care for our roads moving forward.

Sharon Wagner - Owns a Medical Billing/Coding company and has 15 years experience. Worked for years as Certified Paralegal. Worked for Coca Cola Legal department. Also worked in BioTech and is owner of Wagner Fine Art in Del Mar. *(Note: Sharon was not able to be present today due to a death in her family.)*

Explanation of Voting Procedures: Cori Szepkouski

Volunteers for counting of ballots: Dan Rose, Susan Thomas

Road Report: by Chairman James Szepkouski

Provided hand-out to attendees of color-coded map of entire road system. Color-coding represented;

- Road sections needing AC patching and seal-coating.
- Road sections needing AC overlay only.
- Road sections needing removal and replacement (new AC).
- Existing dirt roads.
- Existing dirt roads needing grading.
- Pot holes needing patching.
- New curbs needed to control water flow line.
- Flow line work needed / add rip-rap.

Commentary: We have 5 miles of paved roads and 2 miles of dirt roads. All have been maintained this past year and our passable by regular passenger sedan. Our original grader who built our emergency crossover, cut-off road was hired to this past year to restore it and it is in the best shape it has been in many years. Sunset Peaks and the far end of Rancho Heights Road was also regraded.

Last winter was one of the wettest in many years. Arizona crossing was beat up by 5" of rain in one day last winter. Three 48" culverts carry flow underneath and the concrete headwall was breaking down. A concrete contractor was hired and the headwall has now been shored up with basically, a "new headwall" giving it improved flow with a large amount of concrete and rebar.

Starting October 30th, paving work begins: Lost Horizon has had problematic flow. It is now being addressed with a major investment: adding 18" culverts under the road. There will be a large overlay being done from the Wyatt Ranch to the east side of the Arizona crossing. Next year, we anticipate being able to overlay all the way from the Arizona crossing to the gate.

Gate: Re-painted stucco and capstones. A 2-part paint system was used to assure longevity and new lanterns will be installed on the top. The hinges on the gate were also replaced as they had served us well from the original 2005 construction of the gate. The motors of the gate are continuously serviced. Gate codes have just been changed. This is done for safety as codes get continuously corrupted. In an emergency, the gates are supported by battery back up and the community is on two circuits with SDG&E which is why the gate may be working when your home loses power. Emergency access has been arranged with Pala Fire having Knox Key access. The gate also has a Yelp feature which opens the gate when "yelp" sirens are sounded by emergency responders. Pechanga Fire and the San Diego County Sheriff all have pre-arranged access.

Signage: Two signs indicating Rancho Heights Rd were added on Pala-Temecula road both on the North and South sides indicating our road lies ahead.

Community Clean-Up: Two Saturdays had great community participation as we cleared brush, weed-wacked the gate area as well as the intersections of Rancho Heights and Magee Road. Major tree trimming was accomplished with many dead limbs being removed from above our roads. Thank you to all who participated!!

Open Q&A:

Gate Safety: The gate is not intended nor considered to provide absolute security. Rather, it is an effective deterrent which has greatly diminished non-resident traffic. Discussion included: security cameras and signs related to vehicles entering illegally by “piggy-backing” other vehicles entering legally.

Mailboxes: An additional mailbox is being added to accommodate current growth as well as prepare for future growth. Thanks to John Kilker for volunteering to oversee the operation of the mailboxes.

Information Sign: A new Community Information Box/Bulleting Board has been added - thanks to Jan Geller for spearheading this project. Community Notices will be posted. Please note: a contact list is also on our website, emergency numbers are posted and events like “Community Clean-Up Days” will also be posted. All information is also available on our website: www.ranchoheights.com

Road Frontage on Your Property: Please take care of your frontage along your road front. Please report problems you might see in areas like our culverts. We are generally trying to clear brush 4 feet back from asphalt. This is the responsibility of the individual property owners. If you trim along the road, you can pile up the clippings at the roadside and Bradley Lee volunteers to pick the pile up when he occasionally has the trailer to do so. Thank you for NOT including your personal landscape clippings.

Driveway/Road Transition Area: Where your driveway meets the road, if your personal use or construction traffic breaks down this transition area, it is your responsibility to see that it is fixed. Property owners often choose to fix these areas or complete other asphalt projects when we are doing our annual road paving. If you wish to hire the paving company while they are in the community doing our road work, you will get the best possible pricing since their equipment is already on site. Please contact the Road Committee and we can give you the contact information of the paving company we are using.

Financial Report:

Report prepared by bookkeeper Cori Szepekouski for Fiscal Year September 2016 – August 2017. Report was read by Committee Member Mary Anne Schetter. Note: A copy of this Fiscal Year's Financial Report was included in the Annual Mailing to Property Owners.

Discussion:

An **Emergency Account** is targeted at \$25,000 on ongoing basis. This is intended to be used for true road safety emergencies such as the loss of a road in a storm. This amount reduced below this level at this time due to paving and construction expense but will be restored with the upcoming collection of assessments.

Small Claims Court: 4 Assessment Cases were collected and 5 Liens on properties were placed. The Small Claims Court approach to collections has worked out well for the community. Thanks to our volunteer member on our Committee being willing to do this work, we no longer have to pay our Attorney for collections and then wait a significant length of time to collect the associated Attorney Fees from Property Owners. This has worked out very well with 12 Property Owners submitting their assessments when they got their notice to appear at Small Claims Court which is now moving from Vista all the way into San Diego.

www.ranchoheights.com

Our website is our comprehensive resource for all information. We recommend you visit it and use it as your primary resource. You can find the best way to contact us which is email which will connect you with Cori Szepekouski and Jan Geller.

Facebook

The Committee is happy to see more people looking and Liking our Rancho Heights page. It is full of reminders and invitations and serves as a great source of staying in touch and learning what's going on in Community.

Fire Safety – Bradley Lee

Encourage you to maintain defensive space around your home! This is the best possible defense against wild fires. Also, County website is a great resource for being "Fire Smart". If you live in an oak hollow, that's your choice and responsibility, something you have to seriously consider. You should also think about evacuation routes and have a current Family Emergency Plan which includes your personal evacuation plans and evacuation route. We do not advocate "Sheltering in Place" but this is also a technique which is a personal choice. Another consideration which may be of help is "Safe Sights" such as some of our larger, open meadows. We strongly encourage you to work for mutual support and establish phone trees with your immediate and other neighbors. It is extremely

helpful if people work with “clusters”, groups of immediate neighbors to assure all are notified of current status during emergencies. Also remember to consider your animals and know that when fire breaks out, Pala-Temecula Road will be closed to thru traffic and that if you are not home, you will not be able to get home.

Fire Safety Council – Jon Driscoll

Committee Member Jon Driscoll presented a new opportunity regarding the establishment of a resident-based group to serve as a “Fire Safe Council” for our community. If residents choose to establish a Fire Council, it will be an entirely separate nonprofit organization, unrelated to the Rancho Heights Road and Management Committee. The intention is that collaboration in fire safety efforts, messaging and community service will dovetail with the responsibilities and goals of each entity.

Fire Councils are resident-based, independent entities working within a community who organize as a 5013C and work with similar organizations to seek grants to provide fire-related support services to their Community. After such groups of residents organize themselves as 5013C organizations, they apply for government grants which can support efforts such as brush removal from along roads and other fire-related services. The size of these grants can be substantial and of great value to communities who have such a Fire Council.

Again, these Councils are completely independent of other organizations within a community. It would be an independent group of Property Owners organizing themselves to seek and obtain Grants to benefit our Community with fire-related services and benefits. The intention is to provide a conduit for dissemination of fire safety information, organize fire safety activities and obtain public grants to improve the fire safety of our community.

Jon is involved with a Fire Council in a community in Julian where he is a property owner. He has significant experience in this area and the Council he is involved with in Julian has volunteered to serve as a mentor should we have property-owners who would be interested in exploring this possibility.

The first hurdle of gaining initial participants for a Fire Safety Council has been achieved. Jon will be engaging the San Diego FSC and asking for assistance in setting up a Council in Rancho Heights. A relatively small amount of funding will need to be raised to cover filing fees for establishing the nonprofit under IRS code 501(c)(3). In addition to making our FSC eligible to apply for public grants to improve fire safety, this also enables all money and goods donated to the FSC to be written off by the donor as a charitable contribution.

If you are interested in working with Jon in this area, you can get in touch with him at jondofs@gmail.com.

Law Enforcement Activities and Neighborhood Watch – Bradley Lee

First Rule: “See Something, Say Something”. Your first call should be the Sheriff and then the Road Committee would appreciate you also sending us the information. The SHERIFF’S NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER IS 760-751-4400. Everyone should have this programmed in their phone. The Emergency Number is obviously 911. To get in touch with the Road Committee, please go to: www.ranchoheights.com and click "Contact".

This year we have had to deal with Squatters, Campers, Large Wild Parties with Traffic, and Dumping Crime in the general area has included: Pot Cultivation, Burglary, Theft, Murder and Pursuit We encourage you to stay informed through local community publications and the County Sheriff website as “awareness” is always the first step in protection.

Open Discussion Items

Traffic Speed / Crossing Center Line / Dangerous Spots / Collisions, Near-Collisions

Discussion was held regarding where residents consider to be our most dangerous areas and where they have had problems and/or near-accidents. The first sharp corner inside the gate was one area of emphasis and the steep corner on the Rancho Heights grade was another. Some residents suggested speed bumps as a solution while other residents suggested they don’t favor speed bumps while admitting when asked, that they do slow down for speed bumps. Painted lines and yellow reflectors were also discussed as a means for controlling flow and speed of traffic. There was general agreement that slowing traffic and keeping traffic flow in the proper lanes is a definite safety concern and priority. While speed bumps aren’t considered popular, there was no more substantial alternative suggested. It was explained that the reason for the speed bump at the mailboxes was three accidents that occurred at that site, with it’s sharp corner prior to the installation of the speed bump which has succeeded at mitigating traffic problems at that site. .

Ballot Results / Voting for Candidate Committee Members:

Three Candidates ran uncontested for three open seats on the Committee. As such, Jan Geller, Sharon Wagner and Bradley Lee all won seats on the Road Committee serving terms through October, 2019.

Adjournment

Move to adjourn by Chairman Szepkouski at 11:42 a.m.

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