

Meyers Advisory Council

January 14, 2020; 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

California Conservation Corps Building
1949 Apache Ave, Meyers, CA
meyersadvisorycouncil@edcgov.us

<https://www.edcgov.us/meyers>

Members:
Leon Abravanel
Joseph V. Cardinale
Trevor Coolidge, Secretary
Greg Daum
Carl Fair
Josh Marianelli
James Marino
Amanda Ross, Chair
Judith Wood, Vice Chair

1. Call Meeting to Order and Establish Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 PM. Faire, Cardinale, Coolidge, Wood, Ross, and Marianelli were present.

2. Approve Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved with no updates.

3. Correspondence

Chair Ross noted that Tahoe Prosperity Center was completing a mountain housing

No members of the audience wished to speak.

Mr. Ferry noted that at the next meeting would review positions on the Council for the next year.

4. Minutes: November 5, 2019

The minutes as prepared were unanimously adopted. Vice Chair Wood motioned, Cardinale seconded, passed unanimously.

5. Public Matters: Informational items and persons wishing to address the Council regarding non-agenda items

Mr. Steve Robison, a resident of Meyers provided handouts and addressed the Council with suggestions that included such items as welcome to Meyers signage, reducing speed leaving the Agriculture Inspection Station from 45 MPH, changing the speed limits, noting that HWY 89 has 55 MPH signage coming into the roundabout (intersection with US50), citing concerns for residents coming out onto the highway in Christmas valley. Mr. Robison expressed concern about waste left behind from sledding activities and the possible need for fines or a waste collection. The Council thanked him for his ideas, and provided a brief update regarding the work that the MAC has been pursuing regarding signage, beatification, and concerns regarding the roundabout.

6. Agenda Items:

6A. Lake Valley Fire Department Funding Update & Discussion

Measure B Presentation from Lake Valley Fire Protection District (LVFPD) by Mr. Dusty LaChappelle.

Measure B is a special tax measure requiring 66.6% to pass and would be restricted funds. Mr. LaChappelle is currently an Engineer and Paramedic with LVFPD who is also active with the Lake Valley Fire Foundation. He provided a PowerPoint presentation that covered the history of the District that started in 1947, along with the range of services and number of calls that LVFPD responds to. Services range from backcountry rescues to medical calls and carbon monoxide inspections. Mr. LaChappelle noted a steady increase in calls to the current average of 1400 responses per year.

The last measure was Tax Measure M from 1986 (not to be confused with the current Measure M that is also on the March ballot for EDC snow removal) that will remain in place that incurs a fee for vacant parcels of \$10, residential parcels \$20, and \$40 for commercial properties on an annual basis,, providing \$150,000 annually. Additional revenue includes ad valorem (17% of 1% new construction fees), VHR inspections, an insurance cost recovery program for non-resident incidents, and AB 1600 residential development fees to provide for a total budget of roughly \$6 million.

He reviewed the equipment needs of the Department, with NFPA calling for a 20 year replacement plan, with many older vehicles going out of compliance. The most recent purchase occurred in 2011 for a \$500,000 fire engine that would cost \$700,000 today. LVFPD has experienced an average cost increase of 7% per year on maintenance and operation costs. Self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) air packs have a 15 year life and the current packs will be retired this year; grant efforts have been unsuccessful. Proposed Measure B will have an additional annual parcel fees for all parcels of \$52 (vacant, residential, and commercial).

Following Mr. LaChappelle, LVFPD Chief Alameda noted that insurance rates may increase if LVFPD is found to be substandard or decreases service. The LVFPD service area covers 5800 voters with 22 fire fighters. Vice Chair Wood noted Measure P for the City in 2016 that passed, and that local outreach was a major part of the measure passing. Wood recommended TV, mailings, and media. She asked if Measure B would be in addition to Measure M; LaChappelle confirmed that it would, meaning the new fee would be in addition to the existing parcel fees. Wood also asked about the purchase versus the lease of equipment and that a cost breakdown of proposed expenditures would help support the funding need. Alameda indicated that they had developed a business plan for each apparatus that drove the need for an increase in funding of \$450,000 annually.

MAC member Cardinale asked if the measure would be competing with EDC for snow removal equipment; Alameda indicated that it wasn't competing, but would be on the same ballot. Alameda noted that Meyers has rural levels of funding but experiences urban issues. LaChappelle stated that LVFPD had completed a survey in May 2019 to determine what the community and voters would support. A member of the audience asked if there would be an adjustment or escalator for inflation; LVFPD indicated that there would not be based on the results of the community poll that did not favorably view an inflation factor or escalator over time. LVFPD stressed that the measure requires a 66.6% vote to pass and would not go to salaries and would be a restricted fund for capital expenditures such as equipment and facilities. LaChappelle and Alameda directed the audience to visit

www.lakevalleyfire.org or the LVFPD Facebook page for more information. The LVFPD webpage includes an equipment replacement plan that supports the \$52 per parcel fee; the website also details specific equipment items, such as LVFPD leasing 33 SCBAs for 15 years that include the latest safety features, such as infrared cameras and a rescue pack for rapid deployment with a recurring fee of \$50,000 per year. Alameda indicated that LVFPD had pursued grant funding, including FEMA funding, but had not been successful. In response to a question, Alameda clarified that the ambulance service that LVFPD is a part of helps to provide funding to cover the cost of six firefighting positions. Alameda also noted that a special oversight group would review Measure B expenditures on an annual basis.

Vice Chair Wood offered to write a letter of support, with Ross seconding - the MAC was unanimous in supporting the effort.

6B. El Dorado County Measure M Update & Discussion

Mr. Brian Mullens, Deputy Director of Maintenance with EDC DOT provided an update on the Measure M funding measure. Mullens noted many of the same funding issues that LVFPD struggles with regarding increasing costs that exceed revenue and that EDC BOS has approved Measure M to go on the ballot at the same time as the LVF measure. He elaborated that Meyers is known as Service Area 3 for snow removal and road maintenance, with parcels in the area paying a \$20 annual parcel fee that generates \$134,000 a year for snow removal services. The existing fee of \$20 was set in 1983, from which time snow removal equipment costs have gone up over 400%. Mr. Mullens noted that EDC previously cycled graders on a seven year lease cycle, but was unable to renew the lease and purchased the used equipment at the end of the last cycle. EDC has recently purchased a loader mounted blower from funding reserves and two new advanced Epoke sander units with TRPA funding. Mullens noted the age of equipment and the cost to replace (\$9M); due to the age of the snow removal equipment, CARB deems the majority of the equipment as gross polluters, but are allowed to operate under an exemption for emergency operations. Based on needed funding, EDC determined that a total parcel fee of \$80 per year is needed to update and operate equipment.

Mullens provided additional information that in 2018, 50% of equipment was down over the course of the season and \$500,000 was spent on parts. EDC had to use funds that are normally used for road maintenance to purchase parts, which impacted their ability to maintain roads.

If passed, Mullens stressed that the funds would go 100% to equipment and would not go to salaries. An oversight committee would be established to review expenditures. Mr. Kenny Curtzwiler of Meyers sought clarification of whether the funds would be approved before or after equipment was purchased.

As an example, the Tahoma area of EDC recently increased parcel fees from \$20 to \$50 per parcel on an annual basis; the demands in Meyers are greater. The parcel fee is the same for all developed parcels and would stay in the area. A member of the audience sought clarification that service would continue to decline due to equipment issues, which was confirmed; Mullens noted that the average blower age is 40 years, with the oldest at 50. A member of the audience from Angora Ridge noted being caught in the snow during the 2017 storms with concern that if there was a house fire, there would be no response; he also noted that a neighbor had their fire insurance canceled. Mullens noted that in 2005 the County had failed to receive additional funding for snow removal, potentially due to a cost escalator being included as part of the funding measure.

Vice Chair Wood and Chair Ross requested clarification of the parcels that were included. The parcels represent the entire South Shore in El Dorado County from approximately Echo Summit east, excluding Tahoma and the City of South Lake Tahoe. EDC BOS declined to provide funding for educational outreach materials for the measure due to opposition by the Taxpayers Association of El Dorado County. Mullens indicated that the measure had polled in the 60% range, with slightly higher support when voters understood that the measure required 66.6% approval and would have restricted funding with oversight.

Chair Ross proposed writing a letter of support with Cardinale seconded the motion, with the MAC supporting it.

6C. Discussion on Support to Request County Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) for Meyers

Chair Ross asked for Ferry to provide an update on TOT in Meyers. Ferry indicated that TOT money is designated and discretionary funding to promote tourism and visitor activities. Typical expenditures for TOT funds included the Chamber of Commerce, films, advertising or marketing.

The BOS recently made a change to the general plan language to allow TOT funding to offset tourism impacts. The definition of tourism impacts is not clearly defined. Mullens noted that the recent traffic impact studies for Meyers traffic, such as the turn restrictions and closures were funded.

Chair Ross asked about the TOT revenue split between Tahoe and the balance of the County. Ferry indicated that the Tahoe share of revenue had increased substantially as a result of the rise in vacation home rentals (VHRs) that now total close to 800 VHRs.

Vice Chair Wood asked what was needed to secure TOT to address several of the items that are of concern for the MAC, such as signage for Meyers, public nuisance issues such as bathrooms, and the visitor center that is currently closed. Wood requested to know what the cost split was for the TOT. Chair Ross motioned to write a letter to the BOS to review the use of TOT funds for use in the Meyers community during the upcoming budget cycle. Wood sought to push for an amount proportional to the amount generated.

Vice Chair Wood motioned to make a request, Cardinale seconded, and it passed unanimously.

6D. Discussion of County's Cannabis Ordinance

Mr. Ferry noted the approval of the Cannabis Ordinance and the unintentional omission of unique landuse designations in the Meyers Area Plan being omitted.

There will be two hearings, regarding the potential addition of the Meyers Towncenter and Industrial area in Christmas Valley. Ferry is seeking a dedicated storefront license in Meyers due to the original seven retail applications being granted out of the Tahoe basin.

MAC member Faire asked about setbacks. Ferry indicated that the ordinance would currently prohibit the use in the majority of Meyers, but that exceptions could be granted. Ferry would also seek to reduce setbacks. Mr. Curtzwiler indicated that the original yoga studio could have been a medical shop, but that the BOS voted down the permit 3-2. There was no further discussion and the item was closed.

6E. Discussion of Closed Visitor Center in Meyers

Chair Ross and Ferry indicated that they had contacted the USFS, but had received no replies. Coolidge indicated that he would also reach out to Mr. John Dayberry of Meyers to contact the USFS.

LVFPD Chief Alameda indicated that he would contact the Forest Supervisor to help apply pressure. Ferry noted that there may be restrictions on the parcel and the high costs for operating a property. Cardinale indicated that Tahoe Paradise Park has sought funds for a restroom as well, but had been unsuccessful. A number of ideas for the property ranging from a property transfer to State parks to a concessionaire were discussed. The item was closed with no further action.

6F. Letter of Support Request for Grant to Fund El Dorado Transit Bus Route from Placerville to South Lake Tahoe Through Meyers

Chair Ross provided an update on EDC transit, Dial-a-ride costs, and the effort to provide transit service out of the Tahoe basin. Ross is pursuing funding for a grant to provide transit service for one year, with two trips, 365 days a year, to and from Meyers to the west slope. Vice Chair Wood asked about transit for seniors and a park and ride option. Ross indicated that the goal was for the bus service to go as far as was needed to connect to light rail on the West Slope. Mr. Curtzwiler asked about engaging Amtrak or a public-private partner. Ross indicated the EDC Transit was not interested in partnering or funding and that Amtrak's ticketing and stop requirements precluded Meyers.

Vice Chair Wood moved to provide a letter of support for the grant, Marinaelli seconded and it passed unanimously.

7. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned and the next meeting was set for March 11th from 4 - 6 PM. Requests were made to help notice the community of the meeting. Mention was made to get info onto the events listing on South Tahoe Now for future meetings.