



COUNTY of MARIPOSA

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MARIPOSA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MINUTE ORDER

TO: RICHARD J. BENSON, CAO

FROM: MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board *MW*

SUBJECT: Discussion and Possible Further Action Regarding Continuation of the Local Emergency Due to the Recent Telegraph Fire and Receive Updates and Reports from the Following: County Fire, CALFIRE, Sheriff; Building Department; Human Services; County Administrative Officer

RESOLUTION 08-343

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF MARIPOSA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

ADOPTED THIS Order on August 5, 2008

ACTION AND VOTE:

Richard J. Benson, County Administrative Officer/Personnel/Risk Manager;
Discussion and Possible Further Action Regarding Continuation of the Local Emergency Due to the Recent Telegraph Fire and Receive Updates and Reports from the Following: County Fire, CALFIRE, Sheriff; Building Department; Human Services; County Administrative Officer

BOARD ACTION: Rick Benson advised that the following reports are being given to provide updates on what departments are doing and what has been done in response to the Telegraph Fire, and what they plan to do to help those that were affected.

Jim Wilson, Fire Chief, provided a brief report.

Battalion Chiefs Bill Hodson and Kevin Smith, CAL FIRE, provided a report on the fire and its behavior and their fire fighting efforts and commended the Sheriff's Department for their assistance and County Fire for their cooperation in this incident.

Paul Heffner, County Fire and Emergency Operation Center (EOC) Incident Commander, provided input on their work for the re-entry for those who were evacuated and he advised of the recovery plan that is being implemented.

Jim Wilson advised that the damage assessment teams are represented by the incident and the County Building and Health Departments. He advised that the current number of residences lost is 28 and 90 out buildings; however, the final report is not in.

Lane Pucket, Account Manager, and Bradford Applin, Construction Supervisor, with PG&E, gave an overview of their work to restore power to the area and to El Portal and Yosemite.

Brian Muller, Sheriff, provided input on the law enforcement aspect of the emergency and he commended CAL FIRE for their work and for keeping them posted of necessary evacuations. He clarified that the investigation on the cause of the fire is being conducted by CAL FIRE. He recognized the following Sheriff's Departments for their assistance: Fresno, Madera, Merced, and Tuolumne; Yosemite

Law Enforcement, CHP, Public Works, and the American Red Cross, and all of the others involved. He commended the communities that were involved for their support and cooperation.

Jim Rydingsword, Human Services, Director, advised of his department's involvement and he commended the Red Cross, Manna House, the LDS and the Chamber of Commerce for their work.

Julie Pardini, Red Cross, provided input on the services they provided and advised that the phone number to their call center is (559) 445-1000.

Paul Chalkins, Governor's Office of Emergency Services, thanked everyone and the agencies that were involved in this incident.

Kevin Nagata, Emergency Services Coordinator/Recovery Specialist with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, advised of the Governor's Proclamation and of the emergency Presidential Declaration number 3287 for the counties involved in the June lightning fires.

This matter was continued for the following hearings to be opened.

Chair Turpin opened the public hearing regarding the report of delinquent fees for unpaid water, sewer, road and standby fees charged to property owners in special districts and the public hearing concerning the adoption of a resolution reaffirming the current fee structure for County Service Area No. 1, Road Maintenance Zones of Benefit and County Service Area 1-M Lake Don Pedro assessment for structural fire protection service and continued the hearings until after the following items.

Reports on the Telegraph Fire continued:

John Davis, Building Director, gave an overview of their action plan for helping people with re-building.

Sarah Williams, Deputy Planning Director, advised of their efforts to streamline the re-building process and advised that an item for fee waivers will be coming to the Board.

Dr. Mosher, Health Officer, advised of their efforts in this matter; they have a request to modify the landfill permit to accept waste from the fire; and they have updated the County's home page on the web to reflect the services that are available to the fire victims.

Rick Benson noted that the Assessor's Office has been working on this matter. He advised, on behalf of Public Works, that there will be waste issues coming to the Board and that dumpsters were placed in the fire area for the removal of spoiled food. They are working with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for erosion control and watershed protection.

Supervisor Fritz expressed heartfelt thanks to all of the fire agencies, including those that came from Australia and Greece and CAL FIRE, and to the Sheriff's Department and Public Works and all of the other departments that were involved in this incident. She referred to the community meeting held on Monday; and she advised that Assemblyman Berryhill and his wife visited the County, including the evacuation center and the SPCA. She thanked Total Waste Systems for their help with placing the dumpsters. She commended the County's volunteer firefighters and CAL FIRE; and she noted the need to be prepared for disasters. She thanked www.goldrushcam.com for providing current information and photos of the fire; and she thanked the Red Cross for their services.

Supervisor Pickard commented on the need to be prepared for disasters; and he thanked all of the departments, CAL FIRE and all of the fire agencies that were involved in this incident. He commended PG&E and staff for their work.

Supervisor Bibby noted that the Arebalo's lost their home; and an angel that was in their front yard and survived the fire is now missing and she asked for the community's support for its return. She expressed special thanks to the Governor's Office for keeping CAL FIRE, CHP and OES funded. She noted that the Board has three local emergencies appearing on the agenda now. She commended CAL FIRE for their work.

Supervisor Aborn expressed appreciation to all who were involved in this incident. He commented on the positive response from Red Cross on how this community pulls together. He noted that page 72 of the local telephone book has instructions on what to do in emergencies. He feels that there is a need to pursue all grants that are available for fire fighting equipment. He provided input on his personal experience of his family being evacuated and he thanked everyone that assisted – Sheriff's Department, Animal Control, SCOPE and the local volunteer fire fighters; and he thanked the Miner's Inn for working with the evacuees. He advised that he has comments on the high speed rail route issues; and Chair Turpin advised that input would be provided under Board Information. Supervisor Aborn commented on all of the inmates that helping with the fire fighting effort.

Chair Turpin commented on the work done by the SWIFT program and the Fire Safe Council for fire breaks. He commended the communities for their support with the evacuation centers. He noted that he attended meetings each morning to get updates on the fire.

Rick Benson referred to the County's website and information that is posted; and he noted that there is a "thank you" email address that people can use and staff will forward the emails that are received to the appropriate person. He noted that Red Cross, Salvation Army and Manna House are accepting contributions.

Ken Gosting presented the Board with a map of Highway 140 in the Briceburg area and stated he feels the area at the turn-off to the Bug Hostel would have been a better turnaround when Highway 140 was closed for the fire fighting activities. He commended the Tourism Bureau for their work in promoting the County and commented on the potential for increased visitation by the fire fighters and their families.

Ruth Catalan stated she is one of the lucky ones in that her house was saved – all of her property was blackened; and she thanked CAL FIRE and all of the agencies, including MPUD. She praised Dr. Mosher for assistance with a problem she had. She stated she hopes that CAL FIRE and the County will enforce the 100-foot clearance requirements.

Dawn Afman, District Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, reminded everyone of the emergency watershed protection services they offer and she asked that information on their services be included on the County's website. Chair Turpin asked that she provide information to the County Administrative Officer for the website. She noted that an item will be submitted for the August 12th agenda to request emergency watershed protection assistance.

Ken Wagner advised that they had a place in the fire area that they lost to the fire and he referred to rumors that there was a late response to fight the fire. He advised that he was surprised by the quick response by CAL FIRE and County Fire and the amount of resources that they requested to fight the fire.

Dick Hutchinson, on behalf of Manna House, advised of the clothing distribution at Pioneer Village for the fire victims and of the food items that Manna House gives to their clients and the fire victims.

MaryAnn Huff, Chamber of Commerce, commented on the number of calls the Visitors' Center received during the fire of people looking for maps and information and showing concern for the victims and relative to access to the Park. She advised that the Chamber, in partnership with the Mariposa Community Foundation, established a Telegraph Fire victim relief fund at Yosemite Bank. She expressed appreciation from both sides of the County and advised of the Chamber's willingness to help. Supervisor Pickard commended the Chamber for their assistance.

(M)Fritz, (S)Aborn, Res. 08-343 was adopted finding the local emergency due to the Telegraph Fire continues to exist, and continuing the local emergency based on the findings/Ayes: Unanimous.

Cc: Dana Hertfelder, Public Works Director
Jim Wilson, Fire Chief
File