**Town of Green Mountain Falls**

**Fire Mitigation Advisory Committee meeting minutes**

**Monday, July 24, 2023, 6 pm Mountain time**

**Committee Members Present Trustee Members**

Chair David Douglas None

Vice Chair Paul Yingling

Member John Bell **Town Staff**

Member Kelly Hunter None

Member Lisa Huizenga

**Recording Secretary**

Carolyn Bowers (on Zoom)

**1. ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER** Chair Douglas called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm Mountain time

**2. ADDITIONS, DELETIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Chair Douglas wants to make comments regarding the three committees’ (FMAC, PRT, Planning) presentation to the Board of Trustees Tuesday, July X. These comments are about the committees’ recommendations regarding the Capital Improvement Plans and the Strategic Plan. Kelly Hunter moved that Chair Douglas’ comments be included as 5a under Old Business; John Bell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS** None

**4. CONSENT AGENDA** Minutes for the June 26, 2023 meeting not yet available.

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

a. Feedback from Committee Reports Regarding Strategtic Planning and Capitol Improvements.

Chair Douglas reported that he had received negative feedback, mostly from town staff, on the committees’ presentations at the Board of Trustees July 18 meeting. Town Manager Becky Frank and Town Clerk Bo Ayad felt they had been “blindsided” by the committee reports and had been attacked personally by them. Douglas challenged the “blindsided” charge, noting that each committee had held separate public meetings with facilitator Paul Yingling to come up with recommendations. After that, the three committee chairs met with Yingling – also a public meeting -- to determine areas of agreement and disagreement. The committee chairs signed off on the final document. A summary of the report was sent to Frank, Ayad and Mayor Todd Dixon on May 31.

Yingling noted that the document did not go back to the committees for review as that would have added three months to the process.

Douglas said he met with Frank and Ayad Friday, July 21, and told them his comments had been anecdotal and meant to support points in the committees’ report. Comments he made about the pool’s priority status were not in FMAC’s lane, he acknowledged. He said the meeting ended on a positive note.

“I deeply regret that any of my comments made people feel they were personally attacked, that I was unfaithful to this committee with my comments. I want to offer my apologies if I was offensive in any way,” Douglas said.

Yingling reiterated that the three committees’ identification of fire mitigation, road maintenance and enforcement of ordinances as Green Mountain Falls’ core public safety functions is still valid.

b, CUSP Grant ROW Remediation Project – Update, David Douglas

Contractors begam work today on mitigating rights-of-way (ROWS) under the direction of the Coalition for the Upper South Platte River (CUSP) forester Adrian Knight. Douglas estimates that about 5.8 acres of ROWS will be cleared of fuels, out of 14 acres that need them. That’s because the town budgeted only $15,000 to pay for its share of the mitigation. Each acre costs on average $4250 to mitigate. The town is paying for 60 per cent of the work; CUSP pays 40 per cent.

c. Education Program and Update and Recommendation

Bell moved the committee accept a 45-minute video produced by the North Florissant, CO Posse (NoFloCo) as its vehicle to educate GMF residents on its priorities and to show how to mitigate their homes. Hunter seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Hunter will be in charge of arranging a community meeting to show the video. It will likely be at Church in the Wildwood in August.

d. Recent Developments – Mitigation Training CO-CO – John Bell

Bell said that if the NoFloCo video satisfies the committee’s training needs, there may be no need to pursue further training with Co-Co. Members agreed. No vote was taken.

1. e. Red Cross Program

Douglas said he is disappointed by the Red Cross’s delivery of the pilot program for mitigating homes in GMF and its lack of response to residents who want to participate. He is going to call Cori Tanner, disaster program manager for the Red Cross’ Colorado and Wyoming region, for guidance on what to tell residents.

f. Bronc Day

Use of SignUp Genius yielded no volunteers for the FMAC booth. \

Members discussed logistics of setting up the booth and information materials for distributing at it.

g. September Chipper Day publicity/volunteers

The committee discussed Lisa Huizenga’s comment that she and others don’t participate in Chipper Day because the chipper can’t reach her house and that there is nowhere to put finished chips. She suggested stacking slash in piles in locations the chipper can reach.

Bell moved that, in anticipation of the September Chipper Days, the committee work with the town to designate a location that will place both unwanted chips and slash from areas the chipper cannot navigate. Hunter seconded. Passed unanimously.

Bell then moved that the committee coordinate with the GMF fire department in moving slash piles to the designated spot. Hunter seconded. Passed unanimously.

Yingling noted that fire mitigation’s inclusion as one of GMF’s three top priorities means the town’s Public Works vehicles can be used for transporting slash.

Huizenga will be the volunteer coordinator for this project.

1. GMF resident and property owner data base update (information only)
2. people have signed up for the data base.
3. Formation of Volunteer Groups

Block Captains Yingling introduced Ed Johnson (Cottage St. & Iona Ave.) who is interested in becoming a block captain. He’s attending the meeting to learn about FMAC and what it does,

Yingling said appeals to recruit block captains through Tip of the Month has no traction. He suggests committee members personally contact potential block captains.

Neighbor-to-Neighbor Douglas noted that the committee voted at its June meeting to not make the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program part of FMAC.

Huizenga asked if there would be releases of liability for volunteers working on Chipper Days. Yingling said he was not asked to sign a liability release when he worked the chipper. He said we risk “self-deterrence” if we manufacture concerns about liability. There’s a real risk of “paralysis” if we worry about liability. If the lawyers tell us to stop, we should stop, he said. But going on neighbors’ properties to “pick up sticks” == that’s a very low-risk activity. He doesn’t want concerns about liability to keep them from helping their neighbors. Douglas agreed, noting that the town’s concern centers on operating dangerous equipment.

Grants

David moved that in lieu of creating a volunteer group to write grants that the committee will rotate responsibilities for helping write them. Bell seconded. Douglas, Bell, Huizenga, Yingling voted aye; Hunter nay.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

a. The town has submitted an application to Mile High Youth Corps for the CoSwap grant in 2024.

b. Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) – Discussion David said grants are going to be more contingent upon updated CWPPs. One exists encompassing Crystola, GMF, Chipita Park, maybe Cascade. However, it’s 12 years old, and needs updating. Laura Thomas, CUSP, is writing Teller County’s CWPP and has offered to help us. Douglas is following up with her.

c. Fire-Adapted Communities Douglas sent out website to guide FMAC members on work involved in becoming a fire-adapted community and living with fire. Stresses individual responsibility.

**7. REPORTS** None

**8. ADJOURNMENT** 7:56 pm Mountain time