

Pinon Hills Home Owners Association

June 16, 2011 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 5:45. There were 25 persons attending.

Treasurer's Report: Balance 12/31/2010 \$ 3,642.70

Deposits \$ 1,640.00

Expenses \$ 221.48

Balance 6/15/2011 \$ 5,061.22

The report was accepted.

Minutes: There were no minutes read. Dick Russell explained the recent history of the HOA. Since the 2010 meeting all of the officers had to move out of Pinon Hills. An emergency meeting was held in September 2010 at which time Dick Russell, Trish Cullinan and Sharon Adcock accepted the positions of president, vice-president and secretary-treasurer.

Filings with the Colorado Secretary of State are current so the HOA is still a legal entity with the state.

Speakers:

Ron Dobson from the Division of Wildlife spoke on the bear situation in the area. Kim Woodruff is the DOW agent responsible for our area but she is on maternity leave so Ron is covering this area.

Ron has been in Pinon Hills for 24 years and said we have had at least (1) one bear incident each year. Chaffee County IS bear country. There are bear incidents from Salida to Buena Vista regularly. These occur because humans create situations that are attractive to the bears. If we provide a convenient food source the bears will take advantage of it. The bear will then become comfortable around humans and will return for the easy meal that has been provided. Bears visit our development regularly looking for easy food sources, usually after dark because they do not want to interact with humans. When they find easily accessible food, i.e. trash cans, bird feeders, hummingbird feeders, pet foods, dirty barbeque grills, etc. they will return We need to eliminate the attraction.

Ron offered advice to prevent attracting bears. If possible keep trash indoors until the morning of pick-up, mount bird and hummingbird feeders where bears cannot reach them or bring them inside at night, if you feed pets outside remove all food and food bowls before dark.

The DOW position is that humans are attracting the bears. A bear incident will result in counseling by the DOW officer. A second incident at the same location will result in a citation to the homeowner.

A point was raised about the lack of moisture and poor growing conditions this year. Ron agreed that there is less natural food available and that the berry growth may be low. This is going to create hungry bears so we should be more cautious in these conditions.

Mr. Dobson provided literature regarding bear, lion and coyotes. Telephone numbers to call:

Ron Dobson 539-4911 Kim Woodruff 207-0638 (but Ron is covering her area) or the Sheriff's dispatcher who can reach a DOW officer if Ron is not available.

Chris Bainbridge from South Arkansas Fire Protection District, Salida FD spoke to us about wildfire dangers and protection.

There is presently a large wildfire less than 30 miles from us; the Duckett Creek Fire near Westcliffe is over 2,000 acres. There are also fires below Pueblo and on the plains in southeastern Colorado. So far this has been an extremely active fire year. Chris stated that humidity levels have been lower than he has ever seen in his years of service. The humidity at the Duckett Creek fire was 1% when he was there on the line. The vegetation here has virtually no moisture content.

The Salida Fire Dept considers Pinon Hills the most at risk development in their coverage area. The south facing slope exposure and types of vegetation here place us at high risk in the event a fire starts. The sage, Russian thistle, kochia and rabbit bush are explosive burners (and are mostly invasive non-native plants). There has been minimal precipitation so these plants are also bone dry and will burn easily and rapidly.

We should be involved in protecting our property by clearing fuels from around our homes. SAFPD will inspect your property and recommend actions to reduce fire hazards. There is also a small amount of grant money available to help with expenses involved in land clearing and fire mitigation.

Chris stated that there is an area of growth that the FD would like to burn off to create a buffer zone in the community. This area is between W Cherokee and Piute and contains several lots with significant rabbit bush, sage, kochia and Russian thistle. He requests that home owners in this area discuss the issue so he can obtain permission for a controlled burn the clear these lots.

To discuss mitigation issues, grant funds or a controlled burn contact Chris or Chief Don Taylor at the Salida station 539-2212.

The lack of a water supply for fire fighting was also briefly discussed. Salida FD response time to here is about 3-4 minutes. They do have several tankers and can bring 5-7000 gallons of water with them on a run so in a wildfire situation they could save 1 or 2 homes with the water immediately available. Then the rotating runs to the river to refill start. This is not a very good scenario for fire protection in our community. SAFPD has been given title to Tract C and has been looking for grant money for 2 years to place a large cistern on that lot and install hydrants in the community. The current economic situation has pretty much dried up the grant money for this type of project. We need to find a way for the community to fund the cistern project.

A suggestion was made to investigate a dry hydrant on CR 156 at Scanga's ditch. Chris will discuss this with the FD chief. This may provide a small additional water source, but only when the ditch is flowing.

The Salida Bike Classic will be the weekend of July 29-31. Events in town will be July 29 and 30 and the race loop through Pinon Hills will be Sunday July 31st. The start/finish area has been moved to CR 153 to relieve the congestion that occurred on CR 156 last year. Traffic patterns will also be changed to make CR 175 traffic flow up from 291 to 156 which is opposite what it was last year. The race committee is looking for volunteers for traffic control and other assistance from the community. To volunteer contact Dana Porter at 207-332-6241 or on-line at www.southcentralracing.com. A suggestion was made that the race committee put notices in the Mountain Mail regarding the traffic patterns. Angela Damon from the committee stated that they are already working on inserts for the paper.

Dick Russell has contacted Chaffee Co Highway Dept and was told that CR 156 should be top coated within the next 2 weeks. They are waiting for a State job to be completed which is using a different asphalt mix than is needed for the 156 job.

The Cistern issue was discussed. Dick Russell informed the meeting that the deed to Tract C has a time limitation in it. Construction of the cistern must start by January 2014 or the property reverts to HOA ownership. The HOA would then have a taxable property and need to pay property taxes on it. Chaffee Co assessor will be contacted to see if we can determine what the taxes were on this land prior to granting it to the FD.

An estimate for constructing the cistern and putting hydrants at the top of each street was gotten a few years ago. This cost was \$150,000.00. At the HOA's income level of less than \$2000.00 per year and no grant money available, the community would have to come up with some means of funding the project. Fire Chief Taylor previously told Dick Russell that they have found only 1 grant, \$25,000.00 that required matching funds.

The members present all agree that having the cistern is important to protect the community in the event there is a fire.

How to fund the cistern was discussed. A suggestion of assessing a \$1000.00 per property fee was made. The existing by-laws do not provide a vehicle for making any type of assessments against the owners. Dick suggested that the community become a "special taxing district". We could then create a mill levy to fund the cistern project. At the present property valuations a \$5.00 mill levy would raise about \$20,000.00 a year. The association could obtain financing for the cistern and repay it at that rate. The mill levy could then be continued, probably at a reduced rate, for other projects to benefit the community. Dick stated that he had heard that the county does not maintain our roads so we would need money for repaving at some time in the future. This information was questioned. Susan Jesuroga volunteered to contact Chaffee Co Road to see who had responsibility for our road maintenance.

A motion was made and passed to develop a letter to state the importance of fire mitigation and the cistern funding and to ask SAFPD to assist by sending this on FD letterhead and envelopes. This mailing will be to all Pinon Hills property owners. The HOA will bear the cost of the mailing. Trish Cullinan and Marsha Sherry will work on this. They will approach Bill Donovan to help with this project.

A question was raised about what were the benefits of paying HOA dues. Dick Russell responded that at present the only benefit was that you had a vote in HOA matters. The existing by-laws do not grant the association a lot of power over what happens in the community.

Voting rights were questioned and Dick read the by-laws which state that all property owners and residents, including renters, were "members" of the HOA but only those paying dues had a vote. A motion was made and carried to review and consider amendments to the by-laws.

Dick and Mary Cuyler and Dick Russell will review and propose amendments to the by-laws.

Nomination of officers for 2011-2012 was discussed. Those present requested the same slate continue in service. Dick Russell, president, Trish Cullinan, V-P and Sharon Adcock. sec-treas were elected for the upcoming year.

The meeting was closed at 8:15 PM.