



# Coastside Emergency Corps Quarterly General Meeting Minutes Jan. 11, 2021 6:00 pm

**Presiding:** Michael Akana, President

**In Attendance:**

CEC BOD:

Paul Feldman – Treasurer and Newsletter Editor

April Loui – Secretary

Vic Froelicher – Board Member

Harvey Rarback – Board Member

Alison Akana

Ari Delay

B. Marshall

Barry KN6GSG

Carla Edwards

Casey

Cindy

Corie Stocker

Dan B

Deborah Penrose

Fran

Gina Silva

Jeneen Sommers

Jill Grant

Jim

Jim Holley

Jonathan Cox

Juli Barr

Laura Comodeca

Lisa Harris

Neil Panton

Patricia O’Coffey

Paul Grigorieff

Robin Camozzi

Russell Vissonnette

S Castoria

Vanessa Bezerra

(415-940-3392)



## Coastside Emergency Corps Quarterly General Meeting Minutes Jan. 11, 2021 6:00 pm

**Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm via Zoom**

**Recorded meeting is available at:**

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/yP-DcxTffAo>

short URL: [bit.ly/cec01yt](http://bit.ly/cec01yt)

Drop Box folder (mp4 video file) :

short URL: <http://bit.ly/cec01drop>

### **Agenda:**

Greetings and Welcome

Agenda review

Program CZU Fire Response

--Fire Chief Ari Delay

--Large Animal Evacuation Group

Committee reports/Agency reports

a) lessons learned

b) how can others help?

Priorities and Direction for 2021

### **Ari Delay, Chief of La Honda Fire Brigade: CZU Lightning Complex Update, Slides Presented**

National weather service information revealed a significant lightning series came through mid-Monterey Bay to SF Area prior to the CZU fire. This was an unprecedented lightning event in the area. Teams were sent to survey potential lightning strikes and to triangulate sites to determine areas sites of risk.

The La Honda Fire Brigade was deployed to support the 5-5 fire (eastern slope towards Portola State Park) in accordance to the Lightning Complex Plan which splits geographic area into branches. Under Battalion Chief Tim Schiffer, Chief Delay's team supported Branch 5.

The crew hiked 1.5 miles in to the 5-5 fire. Trucks were not initially accessible to the area, so they worked with hand tools, chain saws and back pumps (water). Crews faced tough conditions in steep terrain and heavy fuel. Crews manually worked to establish a "trench in" at the base of the fire for containment. Fire was low intensity, initially.

Two Cal Fire Engines 1765 and 1768 joined the crew to cut line around the fire for containment. There were insufficient hoses from the engines so crews cut line by hand tools. By afternoon, a Cal Fire crew joined to expand the fire line to 4 foot scrape to improve containment. Cal Fire remained onsite overnight.



## Coastside Emergency Corps Quarterly General Meeting Minutes Jan. 11, 2021 6:00 pm

In the following days, the smaller fires grew in size and crews were able to contain it in the north (San Mateo County) along the Old Hall Road (old logging road from Loma Mar to Hwy 9) to the North. Due to weather conditions Santa Cruz County to the south bore the brunt of the fires.

There were coordinated efforts to keep community informed with the support of CERT 4/SC-4 Ham Radio Group/ ARES. The teams maintained heat maps /evacuation maps / road closures updates and other relevant information posted for reference since not all community members are connected via technology.

County Parks helped to suppress fire on Old Hall Road. Fire intensity remained low which enabled containment.

The 5-5- fire was eventually supported via portable water tanks and hoses. Crews tended the fire for nearly 2 weeks to keep hot spots controlled.

The La Honda Fire Brigade also supported the county by managing logistics of swearing in disaster relief workers, some of which were supporting the Large Animal Evacuation Group (LAEG).

Along Old Hall Road, a contractor was able to cut a road in so crews would be able to connect from Loma Mar to Hwy 9 and Hwy 236. This was instrumental to the ongoing efforts for containment.

PG and E was onsite to secure infrastructure.

The community really came together to support the efforts, as an example, Farmer John donated pumpkins for a fundraiser.

The crews performed structure defense during the fire. They flagged residences with identified hazards (ICS 231 form), so rotating crews could quickly identify situation without repeat assessment.

Worked with San Mateo County Parks to provide engine support and mastication. Cleared area around key repeaters (Hiker's Hut Repeater) to safeguard communications.

The Large Animal Evacuation Group (LAEG) was mobilized and initially staged in La Honda. They then moved staging to Pescadero. LAEG did an amazing job to evacuate animals and support the residents.

The community was very supportive of the fire department. They helped out with meals and supplies. Local doctor in town volunteered to support team medical issues. Dept. Operation Center helped to provide logistical support to community, residents and fire fighters.

There was a great community effort during the event. Special Thanks to the many individuals, volunteers, and teams that pulled together to keep things running smoothly and safely.

Slides will be made available.



## Coastside Emergency Corps Quarterly General Meeting Minutes Jan. 11, 2021 6:00 pm

**M. Akana:** What did you learn, what preparations worked well? Where in the future do you need additional help from volunteers or other agencies?

**Jeneen Sommers:** You can never be prepared enough. Keep up with supplies and be ready to go, at all times. Have pet food and supplies, have full gas tanks. Keep working on it, consider communication and evacuation plans, prep go-kits.

**Robin Camozzi- LAEG:** When activated, team was up and running with first animal picked up within 1.5 hours. There's never enough preparedness or training. This year will be spent educating teams and preparing evacuation plans. Efforts were a long haul. The final animal was returned home 33 days after initiation of the event. The scope of the team activities was greater than what was planned. Over 190 volunteers provided support. The community went above and beyond. Teams from Marin, Sacramento and other areas came to support as needed. LAEG initially had 13 holding areas which was difficult to manage and the team was stretched thin. In big events, the team needs to centralize to one holding area. Cow Palace was a relief for the team and they centralized the 13 animal holding areas to one location. Need future volunteers to help with administrative support, HAM radios.

Angelo went above and beyond for support.

**Ari:** One of the contributors to success of LAEG is the foresight to embed HAM Radio operators with the trailer teams. This helps in the remote areas.

**Robin Camozzi:** Having a lead car for the trailers was also a tremendous help. Avoided road pile ups

**Juli Barr:** Thank you to the LAEG! Evacuated over 1000 animals. Does LAEG have their own ICS Structure?

**Robin Camozzi:** Yes. Also utilized team at the Feed and Fuel to support. When a holding area reached 50% capacity, team was deployed to set up the next holding area. When the 11<sup>th</sup> holding area was being prepared, a request was sent to secure the Cow Palace. Laurie Morton was key in helping to secure the Cow Palace.

**Michael Akana:** What is the message to the community when they ask "how can I help?"

**Ari Delay:** Capture the volunteers through the official process. There are specific criteria for being sworn in and we want to dissuade spontaneous volunteers. Steer all interested volunteers towards the process.

**Robin Camozzi:** LAEG appreciated the spontaneous volunteers, but many didn't know how to follow ICS procedures which resulted in glitches which resulted in double work. As a result, they had to be assigned to menial work such as cleaning coops, etc. All volunteers need to go through the process to become a volunteer. Avoid spontaneous volunteers.



## Coastside Emergency Corps Quarterly General Meeting Minutes Jan. 11, 2021 6:00 pm

**Ari Delay:** Spontaneous volunteers can be a distraction during an emergency. They need to be trained volunteers.

**Pat O’Coffey:** We are never as prepared as we need to be but training and drills pays off. Portola Heights has been practicing evacuation drills for 5 years. Some residents remained behind, but due to radio structure, they were able to stay in contact. Communication channels remained opened in the community during the event.

**Ari Delay:** Evacuation Process was a success during the event. Citizens could visualize evacuation lines.

**Jonathan Cox:** We are the first county in the state to build out Zone Haven to manage evacuations holistically. Team was 6 weeks out from going live when CZU broke out. Still working on system integrations, but it was the right platform at the right time. Moving forward to centralize platform to communicate evacuations. There are now 10 counties who have signed on to Zone Haven. **Chief**

**Cosgrave:** provided link: <https://community.zonehaven.com/?latlon=4496147.2744,-13614428.55825&z=10>

**Battalion Chief Cosgrave:** Coastside CERT was very helpful in supplementing staffing. People were trying hard to get into the fire zone. There were people trying to donate items at the fire house that were not needed there. People want to help and have good intentions but there needs to be better management of spontaneous volunteers and donations.

**Jim:** Cross-branch assistance/Cross-jurisdictional assistance. Teams need to be able to improvise as needed.

**Juli Barr: Peninsula Humane Society:** The PHS Team was stationed at the high school evacuation center, volunteers manned table with PHS employees. There were 2-3 Animal control officers and trucks. People could report animals left behind and request wellness checks. Information was then relayed to PHS in Burlingame who would then dispatch animal control officers once cleared to enter an area. They required police or civilian escort to enter evacuated areas.

**Allison Akana:** It was a lot of long hours from AM to 11PM at night each day for a couple weeks. Team had available food, crates, and provided information about sheltering at the humane society. If people were unable to transport the animals, the animal control officers would shuttle them as possible. PHS would provide free care for 30 days.

The Red Cross was providing lists of hotels and some would accommodate pets.

**Ari Delay:** Special thanks to the NGOs and disaster service workers. All the CERT teams, SC4 ARES Ham Radio, LAEG, PHS and others really stepped up to the plate to make the efforts successful. Chief Cosgrave and I have worked coastside for many years. All the training over the years paid off. Thank you!



## Coastside Emergency Corps Quarterly General Meeting Minutes Jan. 11, 2021 6:00 pm

**Jim Holley:** Focus has been on debris and mudslides, and coordinating with OES and HSA. Joint community planning effort with Puente, PMAC and South Coast and Coastside CERT. In the event of a mudslide, Red Cross will be managing shelters (logistics, PHS, mental health). The model now will primarily be hotels and providing meals. Depending on the situation, will also support remote feeding to those impacted. Very impressed with other organized teams who provided phenomenal support.

**Michael Akana:** Can someone comment on the NOAA weather radio distribution?

**Ari Delay:** Chief Cosgrave and I met with OES a couple weeks ago. They delivered 20 NOAA radios, for distribution. Will utilize SC4 ARES group to pre-program them to this area and will deploy them to the areas requested by OES. The NOAA radios are important as they carry a Sample Code, so when NOAA or NWS (National Weather Service) issues a warning, the radios will go to alert mode and broadcast a message. The south coast is challenging when it comes to radio communications. Radios will be deployed as soon as possible.

**Michael Akana:** DART had received a request for a flyover. No additional details from the team available currently.

**Corie Stocker:** City learned a lot from CZU fire and participated in the support. The city worked with the school district to open the information center. Grateful to Sheriff's office and Coastside fire for working closely with the City. Red Cross, CERT also supported the efforts. Learned a lot about internal, inter-group communications. One of the big lessons is that assumptions are not always correct.

Smith Field was opened quickly to accommodate RVs. Citations lifted for parking RVs in residential neighborhoods in time of need. The city is working on mudslide emergency evacuation plans and will be working with volunteer and government partners in preparation.

City is still performing free Covid testing on Monday nights.

**Michael Akana:** Do we have an update from County OES?

**Mike McKeon:** Shout out to Laure in a big way, communicating info from EOC and distributing information. Engaged in recovery aspects of the event. Emphasis on rich community organizations that are active to help preparation in advance of emergencies. Big push from the county to distribute the NOAA radios. Pushing to get cell towers to improve communications on the south coast, but it's a challenge.

**Corie Stocker:** Huge applause to the coastside community. Volunteer communities were wonderfully involved. The community provided huge donations of food and refreshments at the high school. HSA could not believe the robust amount of volunteers and outpouring of community support. We are very fortunate to have that.



## Coastside Emergency Corps Quarterly General Meeting Minutes Jan. 11, 2021 6:00 pm

**Harvey:** The city is working on an operational emergency plan which will be coming out in a few months. We are looking forward to it.

**Michael Akana: Priorities and Direction:**

To the members in attendance, any request for CEC regarding how we can best support ongoing efforts?

**Corie Stocker:** Would be helpful to define what the CEC mission is. In the last CEAP meeting, there was discussion about closer collaboration between CEC/CEAP.

**Juli Barr – MRC:** Starting up a county-wide MRC group. Plan is to develop a pilot program on the coast first then create network of chapters across San Mateo County. The County has submitted application to form an MRC for the county with a national or regional approving body. Hope to finalize by end of January. Harrison Stein is working with the county supervisors and attorneys to address the indemnification and liability, insurance coverage issues for MRC members to ensure they are covered for any actions as MRC members. Thereafter, the county will send out an email to the community, targeting 3 databases of individuals who are current disaster volunteers, MRC members or interested volunteers.

A communication plan and strategy for call outs will be developed to meet emergency medical needs in the community. More to come.

**Michael Akana:** Thank you everyone for spending the time with us tonight. Thank you Chief Delay for your presentation and for everyone's participation. It would be great to resume quarterly meetings, which places the next meeting in April, 2021. If there are any ideas/suggestions for agendas or programs, please let me know. Any feedback/suggestions are also welcome.

Thank you everyone for attending.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.