

INDIAN VALLEY ASSOCIATES
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 9, 2017
LOFTUS' BARN

Craig called the meeting to order at 10.15. Present were Craig Knowlton, Jonell O'Day, Nita Bruinsslot, Barry Sheppard, Kent Aue, Tanya Omran, Ladd Cahoon, Lynn Perry, Skip Fenner, Tom Tharsing and Monica Brett. Also present were emeritus board members Bob Abeling, Ron Witzel, Gary Frugoli and Carol Loftus.

Craig introduced Ron to present a plaque to Bob Abeling to thank him for his many years of leadership and service in the name of Indian Valley Associates. Ron expressed thanks for Bob's tireless service over the years. Years of attending endless meetings at the Board of Supervisors, CSA20, Novato City Council and many others. Bob steered the association through some troubled times and fought to keep us outside the sphere of influence of the City of Novato, as well as fighting the lighted ballfields at IVC, the intended widening of Indian Valley Road, many sewer/septic system problems and he also oversaw the updating of our Specific Plan. He also worked with Hank Varner of Black Point's association because of the similarity of our causes. Bob responded with thanks.

Craig then introduced our supervisor, Judy Arnold. Judy talked about the start of SMART – 43 miles with 10 stations. The addition of Larkspur is expected next year. She asked for volunteers to fill the vacancy on the CSA20 board. She also said that free passes to our local parks are available at the library. The Board of Supervisors will declare October disaster preparedness month. She suggested we register our cell phones with alertmarin.org. In the event of a disaster, each cell phone will be contacted. Next she addressed the flood tax initiative to be on the November ballot. It's a tax spread over 18 years and will cost each parcel \$47 a year. A watershed study is being done for flood mitigation. Mitigation work is expected to cost \$20 million.

Next John Heine, Novato Fire District Chief, reported that it's been a very busy fire season so far with some Novato firefighters being deployed around the country to help in fire fights in other states. With the weather changes and heat we are experiencing, wild fire protection is a priority. Because Indian Valley is at risk for wild fires, he proposed that we attempt to become a Fire Wise community and explained what a Fire Wise community is and how to become one. Chief Heine explained that Fire Wise is a partnership between residents and the Novato Fire Dept. First the NFD has to visit the Valley and make an assessment. Then when residents have met and formed groups and committees, the plan to make the Valley more fire safe is put into action. When the Valley is certified as Fire Wise, it's possible that insurance companies will offer lower rates because of lower fire risk. A question from the floor asked about animal evacuation if a fire were to occur.

Chief Heine said that NFD had trained for such evacuations. Bob asked about the gate to the Open Space. There are one of two keys kept with neighbors for use in an emergency. He asked if we should open the gate should a fire occur. Chief Heine responded that in an emergency – yes, but otherwise the Fire Dept. should make that decision. Tom pointed out that there is a great deal of dry dead wood lying under the trees. He said that this situation is very dangerous and a fire could start very quickly. Chief Heine responded that the Dept has been very active cutting fire breaks on ridgelines. Ladd asked what exactly an assessment would entail. Chief Heine replied that there would be a walkthrough of the Valley, noting dangerous situations around houses – debris, untrimmed or dead trees and brush; where there is no defensible space around houses. Then, using satellite technology, a plan could be made to make the situation safer. The San Marin Fire Station has a garden which is planted with fire resistant plants. All the plants are labeled.

Craig said that there would be no Chipper Days this fall due to the uncertainty of outside money to help the cost. However, the Fire Dept. received a grant to clear branches and debris on 2 private roads – Old Ranch Road and Upper Wilson.

Craig asked any new residents to introduce themselves. There were several new families present and Craig welcomed them all to Indian Valley.

For information on the proposed flood tax, go to MarinWatershed.org and for the fire resistant plants, go to FireSafeMarin.org.

The Urban Growth Boundary is up for renewal in November after being on the books for 25 years. Novato Council decided to have the voters in Novato decide to maintain the boundary until 2042. For information on Urban Growth Boundary, go to Greenbelt.org.

Tom reported that there would be no Chipper Days this fall. He explained that Chipper Days costs around \$3000 for each spring or fall session. NFD gives matching funds of \$1500 per year. In the past, we have also received money from FIRESafe Marin, but they have not committed to help us this year. So, although we have around \$10,000 in the bank account, the IVA would quickly run out of funds if we had to spend \$4500 a year with no reimbursement. It seems best to keep a reasonable account balance to cover costs and to be able to provide matching funds for projects that are needed within the valley.

Tom thanked Frank McGovern and the Cantarutti family for again generously allowing us to use their properties for brush drop off sites. We really rely on these two sites and we thank them both. Tom also thanked Hector Chan of Mr. Arbor who does a wonderful job of chipping all the brush and gives us excellent prices. He recommended Hector to everyone at the meeting.

Tom asked for volunteers to form committees for the Fire Wise project.

Jonell reported on the Treasurer's Report. The bank balance as of 9/9/17 is \$9,550.06.

She reported that the major expense is always Chipper Days and then also the newsletter (printing and mailing). The annual meeting costs around \$225 and the barbecue costs around \$450 but the proceeds of the raffle usually cover that cost. We're receiving \$2700 to \$3000 a year in dues, but we need more residents to become members. She suggested that we could all ask our neighbors if they would become active members of IVA.

Bob said that over the years, we have asked for improvements on the road and Judy has found us some money to which we have also contributed to cover the total cost.

Craig asked for nominations from the floor for new members of the board. There were no nominations so the board members up for election this year were automatically re-elected. Because of an anomaly in the election process, there were too many members up for re-election this year. To even things up, Nita, Craig, Claudine and Bill were randomly selected to serve a 1-year term and the others were re-elected for a 2-year term.

Kim Vogee announced that she would have a barn dance for the Valley on September 30th.

The meeting adjourned at

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Brett
Secretary