

Winter Park Highlands



Annual Meeting Minutes August 6, 2022

Meeting was called to order at 12:15. Wendy reported we had a quorum. We only needed 45 for a quorum. We had 38 voting members and 24 proxies equaling 62. We had 44 attend the meeting. Mike introduced the board and awarded Mike Braddy a gift certificate to Fontenot's to thank him for all the work he has done over the past many years.

Lynette gave the Treasurer's Report (thru July): We have \$129,000min checking/savings. We receive around \$5500 in annual dues. On average, we spend around \$5000 in taxes, fees, insurance and electricity.

While waiting for our guest speakers to arrive Mike reported on some accomplishments for the previous year. The Trash/Recycle program has 107 users. We acquired larger dumpsters and that seems to have solved the problem of overflowing during the high vacation times. Discussion ensued as to asking the Trash Company to charge per quarter since they change the combo quarterly.

Bob Colosimo spoke about the BLM. Our BLM representative apologized for not being able to attend as it is very difficult to get to individual HOA meetings during fire season. Please continue to create defensible space **and** maintain your current defensible space. Even just de-limbing trees (removing lower branches) and removing brush can make a huge difference in fire behavior, and it can easily be the difference between keeping and losing a home. You do not have to remove all the vegetation surrounding your homes. It is important to create an open canopy (10-20 foot spacing of conifer species) and the first 5 feet surrounding the home is probably the most important. No flammable material within 5ft of a structure you are trying to protect.

Two IMPORTANT areas to help with potential future funding:

- 1) If you've done **ANY** work on your property, please stop by after the meeting and provide your name and address. By passing this along to our BLM representative, it allows us to show how much fuel we've removed and gives a better opportunity for future funding via grants. Needs to be submitted by mid-September.
- 2) Contractor expenses for our Firewise commitment. We receive credit for both 'in kind' labor and contractor expenses. We are very good at reporting 'in kind' labor but we lack

a bit in reporting the actual contractor expenses. These expenses are due by the end of October.

Colorado State Forest Service Input

Our partners with CSFS also provides important information about living in the forest. They have provided brochures for our review.

- 1) Colorado Forest Facts: An overview of Colorado's Forest Ecosystems, Forest Products Industry and Conservation Efforts
- 2) 2021 Report on the Health of Colorado's Forests (Managing Colorado's Forests During Drought)
- 3) The Home Ignition Zone (A guide to preparing your home for wildfire and creating defensible space)

Grand County Wildfire Council & Middle Park Conservation District

2 Specific Documents that impact our life in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)

- 1) **WILDFIRE** Prevention, Preparedness & **SURVIVAL**: The **ULTIMATE** Guide for Wildfire Mitigation and Survival in Grand County, CO
- 2) High County Rural Living & Land Management: The **ULTIMATE** Land, Resource, and Good Neighbor Guide

This publication is specifically adapted for: Middle Park, Colorado; Grand and Summit Counties. Every home in the county should have one. If we don't have enough at our meeting, we will arrange for every home in Winter Park Highlands to have one!

Key Issues:

Team Rubicon, a volunteer organization run principally by veterans were here in June to work in Grand County. The Winter Park Highlands were one of the areas they were in. They worked on the "Tabernash Chimney" which included three lots on Marmot Drive. They did not get as much done as they had hoped as the work was a great deal more involved. They would like to come back but do work all over the United States especially hurricane and disaster relief.

Board Members: We will lose two present members. Bob Colosimo is term limited and one due to other concerns. We would like to have 1-3 more join the board. Please see Mike after the meeting or give him a call.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Mike introduced Sue Hagerty as our representative to the WildFire Council. She introduced Schelly Olsen who is the new Chair.

1. They set up five chipping days throughout the county. If you would like to get some of the chips please contact her. They hope to receive a small amount of grant money but it may not arrive until September or October for pre-fire mitigation work. They have applied for another grant for a million dollars but hope to receive \$100,000 for pre-work. We might be able to set a chipping day up here in the Highlands if we are able to cost share.

2. Home Hardening: Ideally, we need to stop the fuel path from going directly to your home. That mitigation usually works to help contain wildfires but when you get 40+ MPH winds the mitigation is moot. The Highlands is in worse shape than her subdivision and they lost 22 of 30 homes during the East Troublesome fire. Although the Highlands has improved greatly in the past several years.

Mike introduced Grand Fire Protection Chief White.

1. Team Rubicon was a pilot program. Usually, they work after the disaster instead of mitigation. They were here doing post fire work last year and wanted to return. There were 240 vets that were here over 6 weeks with crews of 20-30. They removed 267,000 cubic feet of fuels. They worked on 65 chimney areas, 56 areas of hazardous zones, 117 home assessments and 108 home mitigation work. The slash piles that they formed will be left to dry for a year and then will be burned next winter. They had over 30 more they weren't able to get to. Overall, it is estimated that they did from \$700,000 to \$1.2 million worth of work.
2. The State of Colorado rewarded a grant to do mitigation work, but it only applied to 7 counties on the Front Range. If you can talk to your state representative, please let them know that we need money as well. We may be able to get some state inmate crews for 26 weeks of work later this fall or possibly next spring. The area that is likely to be worked on is the back side of the Highlands near the railroad tracks.
3. They received a grant to complete a Community Fire Protection Plan. Watch for notices for possible meeting in the fall. They would like to have the plan completed by spring so they can have projects lined up for grant proposals.
4. They are aware of the possibility of dry lightning and the problems that causes. The fire break work is helpful to slow fire spread.
5. The state of Colorado has stepped up and made more fire fighting equipment (airplanes and helicopters) available. A helicopter is often based at the Granby airport. However, due to this the federal government has re-allocated their equipment unfortunately. WE need to have our equipment augment not replace federal equipment. We do have a "fire Hawk" helicopter that has a larger water capacity but is very maneuverable. It also flies better at altitude. Colorado should get another one soon.
6. The fire department will work with the board to assess where the next cistern should be located. More often the insurance companies are asking the distance from the nearest water to determine their charges.
7. Grand County is working on a new set of building codes that could require more fire-resistant materials and cost more.
8. He thanked us for voting in the mill increase. They will be building a new fire station in Granby. The station at Red Dirt did have fire personnel living there but those men have left the area. He is working on getting more staff in the station. He would like to have an officer and truck engineer stationed there. The majority of the fire fighters are volunteers; he only has five paid staff.
9. East Grand District is going to build a multipurpose (fire, police and EMS) at Winter Park resort in the coming years.

Egress concerns: The egress from Greenridge goes through 3-4 different properties until it reaches Silver Creek Drive. Bob Colosimo will check this route out for accessibility. Fire Chief stated that Granby Ranch has a new owner so there may be a way to work on egress through the red gate. It is his understanding that you would need at least an SUV to be able to exit through that gate. Question was raised “can we get grant money to assist with publicizing egress routes for the visitors especially those utilizing STRs?” No answer was given. Question about inspecting STRs. Hope for regulations to come about.

UPDATE by Bob C done after annual meeting: Regarding the emergency exit at the end of Tabernash Drive (GCR 854): Once the temporary cable is lifted, the entire road is passable for all types of vehicles. Approximately the first 400 yards are a little steep. Beyond that, the road has a very gentle slope all the way to Silver Creek Drive. There are 2 signs along the way notifying that it is private property and to remain on the roads. (Photo below)
There is also a very large trailer showing access to the area. (Photo below)



10. Lastly he stated that this year to date has been good for moisture. Green plants help keep the fire on the ground. He asks that we keep the grasses low and to remove juniper bushes – especially those by trees and buildings.

ACC Update: Scott McNary stated building has been fairly steady with around 2 applications a month. All construction is going very slowly. But if your property is going slowly please keep the committee informed. The committee is here to help. If anyone would like to join the committee please let him know.

STRS: Eric Richards gave the report. He is our representative to the county STR committee. He expressed his frustration as they only had two meetings and the employee from the county has already left. They did not accomplish anything except to get an adhoc committee going. He was told that AirBnB will no longer have “party” rentals. The committee is trying to keep the house occupancy within the home capacity and especially within the septic system capacity. Eric is a STR owner and is highly motivated to keep the homeowners around the STRs happy.

He does not want any bad apple STR owners to aggravate homeowners. His focus is better education for the STR owner to keep the properties safe. Being a better owner keeps the neighbors happy too.

Discussion by the group ensued regarding problems that have come up this summer and the lack of accountability by the owner. Often the neighbors don't have a contact for the owner or if they do often their calls are not answered promptly. It was stated that there is quiet time from 9PM. Anything over 50 decibels at the source is not allowed. It was recommended that the offended party call the sheriff's non-emergency number to register the complaint. Even if an officer is not able to respond the county has a complaint that can be acted on. Supposedly after three complaints their permit is not longer valid. Neighbors would also like the contact number of the local representative so they can call them as the owner is often out of the area. Can we get "rental" signs or some other marking on those properties to assist the renters in locating the rental property? Answer: unknown unless the owner decides to put the sign up themselves.

Eric offered to be a liaison between the county and the neighbors to help alleviate problems. We will be putting his number and email on the website. However, he WILL NOT be answering calls in the middle of the night to control problems.

Other business: The HOA needs a lot of volunteers. New ideas and additional helpers would be great. If you have website development skills or would like to update the website your help is desperately needed. We also need volunteers to assist property owners with fire mitigation support.

We have a chipping program set up with a local contractor. The information and form is on the website and needs to be returned to Bob Colosimo within a week or two.

Bob will be in contact with the state of Colorado for additional funding opportunities in the next couple of weeks.

2023 Goals

1. On going fire mitigation
2. Applying for and receiving more grant monies
3. Putting in another cistern

Meeting adjourned at 1:53pm.