



Regional HOA voice - - - Smart Growth, Quality of Life, Community Engagement

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: January 11, 2025

Opening

Welcome: Meeting convened at 10:02

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions

Agenda

Speaker Presentations

Attendees

NEPCO Board:

President: Mike Aspenson, Vista Clara Villas HOA (not present)

Vice President: Bob Swedenburg, Gleneagle North HOA

Treasurer: Mike Pipkins, Cherry Creek Crossing POA

Director Membership: Larry Oliver, GCA (not present)

Member at Large: Harold Larson, Heights POA

Community Outreach: Dave Betzler, WIA

Board Observers: Bill Crimmel, Sun Mesa TOA, and Debbie Rusch, Elk Creek Ranches HOA

Guest Speakers:

Jonathan Bradley, Monument Fire District Division Chief for Community Risk Reduction

Roy Martinez, Tri-Lakes Preservation, Inc.

Other Special Guests:

Laura Kronick, Monument Town Council

HOA's: 21 HOAs were represented, 48 people attended

NEPCO Business Meeting

President Remarks

- Welcomed members and guests.
- 2025 Dues Invoices will get out next week.
- Identified the two committees: Wildfire Preparedness Committee (Beth Lonquist, Red Rock Ranch HOA) and Transportation and Land Use Committee (Chairman is vacant).
- Provided an overview of the preliminary planned meetings for 2025:
 - January 11: Fire Mitigation, Monument Fire Department
 - March 15: HOA Insurance and/or Sheriff
 - May 10: HOA Legal and Legislature
 - July 12: NEPCO HOA Feedback Session
 - September 13: Transportation
 - November 15: County Commissioners
- Provided a membership update and identified the honorary members.

HOA Open Forum

- Greg Parker, Sun Mesa Townhomes
 - 1.5 years ago, the insurance premium for the townhomes jumped significantly (from \$85,000/year to over \$1,000,000/year).
 - Reason cited for the increase was the risk of wildfires.
 - Would like to talk to others with similar issues.
- Lou Johnson, Arrowwood
 - Requested recommendations for HOA legal representation.

Guest Speakers [NOTE: presentations posted to nepco.org]

Jonathan Bradley – Monument Fire District Division Chief for Community Risk Reduction: Wildfire Safety Commission Hazards and Risk Assessment

- Provided home hardening guides, but there were not enough for everyone present. Jonathan will send electronic copies to the Board.
- Explained that fire needs heat, oxygen, and fuel.
 - Have found that heat isn't as much of a contributing factor, but low humidity and high winds are a big concern.
 - In order to fight a structure fire, normally removing the heat by spraying water is effective.
 - In order to fight wildfires, removal of fuel and favorable weather conditions are required.
- While it is important for each homeowner to apply mitigation measures in the Home Ignition Zones, many times the zones overlap with neighbors and neighboring HOAs, so it is important to work together on mitigation efforts.
- Presented an ember video to discuss home hardening.
 - Embers are the most common cause of house fires.
- A good rule of thumb is to look where snow piles up near a house to see where embers may accumulate as well.
- Asphalt shingles are the best protection for the house; however, pine needles building up in the gutters can allow a fire to get under the shingles and burn the roof.
 - Concrete, metal, or tile shingles are also okay, but the holes in the tile shingles should have fire blocking materials in the holes.
- Vinyl siding is a good option.
- Recommended 1/8" screens for vents to keep embers out.
- Shrubs under windows can cause an entry location for a fire to enter the inside of the house. The heat from the shrub under the window can cause the window to break. Non-tempered breaks at approximately 200 degrees, but tempered glass is good up to 400 degrees.
- Someone asked about rubber mulch. While it takes longer to ignite, it is harder to put out so it is not recommended by the house.
- Decks less than 4-feet high should have the opening below the deck screened with mesh.
- If a house has wood siding, it is best to keep it well maintained.
- The 30-foot zone was determined because of a Canadian study that showed the 30-foot limit to be the most effective.
- Wood fences are a big issue with fire risk. One potential mitigation would be to use non-combustible materials for the two sections closest to the house.
- The size (circumference) of a tree does not necessarily indicate the age.

- Dense areas of trees weaken the trees because they are competing for sunlight, nutrients, and water.
- Thick bark on trees (like a Ponderosa) is resistant to fire.
- Forest Service will burn the underbrush and leave the taller trees.
- Recommendation is no more than 25-60 Ponderosas per acre, with no more than 15-40 in the Home Ignition Zone.
- Recommends leaving 10-foot crown spacing. If trees are in clumps, leave the 10-foot space between clumps.
- Limbs on trees should be higher than 6- to 10-feet to remove ladder fuels.
- While insurance companies do not like to see pine needles, they do hold moisture and are resistant to fire. They are also easier to put out if they do catch fire. However, pine needles should not be more than 4-inches deep.
- Pine needles should not be present 0-5 feet from a house.
- Scrub oak leaves burn easily and should be removed.
- An air current incinerator allows for materials to burn completely but it is difficult to find a safe place to have one and insurance is expensive (@ \$100,000/year).
- Recommends keeping healthy trees and a variety of species. Also keep younger trees for succession and interesting trees.
- Trees lining the road and overhanging the road are a fire concern. It doesn't give the firefighters any place for their vehicles and provides lots of fuel.
- Densely treed areas may not get as much attention during a fire—risk vs reward concerns.
- Ideal roads would have vegetation 30-feet from the road, properly limbed, and spacing between trees.
- The Woodmoor neighborhood would last approximately 5-6 hours in a big fire. One thing that helps Woodmoor are the pockets of open space.
- Fox Run Park is too densely treed. Would recommend taking out about half of the smaller trees for fire mitigation purposes.
- Cost is a factor when trying to remove trees. The recommendation is to try to remove the smaller ones first. The fire department may also be able to help out with grant funding.
- It was mentioned that the International Fire Code requires there to be ingress for the fire department, but does not require egress for people to get out.
- The state will be passing a Wildland Urban Interface Code that may help.
- Recommended that new developments should have statements in the bylaws about keeping roadways cleared.
- Vegetation may be more of a concern than high-density housing because it burns faster.
- Insurance companies are not looking at individual houses, but the community as a whole.

Roy Martinez – Tri-Lakes Preservation, Inc.

- Slides will be available on the NEPCO website.
- Buc'ees was founded in 1982.
- It is a 24/7 convenience store and is seen as a "destination". It is touted as having the cleanest restrooms.
- It is predicted that 90% of customers come from outside the country and 70% from out of state.
- Buc'ees is recognized as the largest gas station in the world.

- The planned one for the SW corner of I-25 and County Line Rd is to be between 65,000-75,000 square feet and service 8,000 to 20,000 cars per day.
 - The one planned to be built is looking at 120 fuel pumps.
 - If you take all the fuel pumps between Baptist Road and County Line Road, there are 110 fuel pumps.
- Buc'ees cannot move north because it is Douglas County and there is a conservation easement.
- Concerns:
 - Estimated to use 860,000 gallons of water per month.
 - There are currently no fire hydrants in the area, but the proposal to annex into Palmer Lake would require fire hydrants to be installed.
 - Excessive consumption of water, power, and other natural resources.
 - Negative impact to wildlife/habitat.
 - Violates the Dark Skies ordinance.
 - Egress/safety of the Palmer Divide.
 - Increased traffic for on ramps and off ramps.
 - Negative impact on small businesses.
 - Negative impact on home value and attractiveness.
 - Potential negative impact on home insurance prices.
 - Fire egress routes.
 - High speed accidents.
 - Weather conditions.
 - First responder resources.
- Goal is to hold the Town of Palmer Lake Mayor and Board of Trustees accountable to the values they established in 2022.
- For more information can contact: woodmoor.writer@gmail.com
- Additional information provided in the attached documentation.

Closing: President thanked the speakers for their presentations, and voiced appreciation for the attentiveness and active participation of HOA members.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm.

Minutes compiled by Dana Pipkins

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Approved by Bob Swedenburg
NEPCO Vice President