

**Fitch Mountain Association  
Annual Picnic and Meeting  
Villa Chanticleer  
July 14, 2019, 1 - 4 PM**

**Registration** - Starting at 1pm Dana and Chuck Eaton manned the registration table, received annual dues, and handed out election ballots to all members who had paid their 2019-2020 dues.

**Buffet Potluck Lunch** - A beautiful spread of salads, hot dogs, condiments, fruits, and desserts were laid out for people to serve themselves. Lunch was from about 1:30 - 2:00 PM

**The meeting began at about 2pm**

Pat Abercrombie, FMA President opened the meeting, introduced himself, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the current FMA Officers and Board of Trustees. Namely, Trustees: Ken Hite, Donita Proctor, Al Pucci, and Kate Symonds, and Officers: Pat Abercrombie, President; Rebecca Simons, Vice President; Marty Silge, Treasurer; and Dana Eaton, Secretary.

**Treasurer's Report - Marty Silge** - Marty reported as of June 30, 2019 the FMA has a total of \$9,020 in the bank: \$4,500 in the unrestricted accounts and \$4,520 in the account restricted to fire safety and emergency preparedness expenses.

**Septic - Pat Abercrombie** - Pat talked about the upgrades to septic systems that will be required in the future. Permit Sonoma will be changing the way building permits trigger septic upgrades. The Regional Water Board will be surveying us all in 2020 and requiring upgrades under some circumstances. We will likely have 10+ years to make the upgrades. Discussion arose regarding when the Regional Water Board will be surveying, how our responses will be "certified", how long we will have to comply and whether there will be funding. Pat provided answers as best he could and promised that the Septicians Committee will keep the community informed as the program changes are rolled out.

**Water - Donita Proctor** - Sonoma County CSA 41 Fitch Mountain, installed new digital water meters for all water customers on Fitch Mountain to replace our aging equipment. The new meters include an app that FM customers can download to monitor their water usage. The new meters should reduce the water loss we have been experiencing at the system level. Donita encouraged people to sign up for the app.

**Roads - Pat Abercrombie** - Sonoma County has included North and South Fitch Mountain Road their 2020-2021 Pavement Preservation Program. The FMA testified at the Board of Supervisors meeting that Fitch Mountain Road needs

fundamental repair to drainage and roadbed more than we need another layer of asphalt alone. The Road Safety Committee has been invited to walk the entire road with engineers from County Transportation & Public Works in the near future. Pat reported that the Federal funding for the repairs of The Slump and The Plastic-covered Slide had been released in the past week, which will allow geo-technical work and design to proceed this year. This should keep the two projects on schedule to be done in the summer of 2020.

**Del Rio - Pat Abercrombie** - Del Rio Woods is a small park off the main road and is difficult for visitors to find. The Del Rio Woods Committee proposed installing three new signs on Fitch Mountain Rd near the turnoff to Del Rio Woods to make it easier for visitors to find the park. After a short discussion the consensus of the attendees, was to proceed with the signs.

**Articles of Incorporation and 501(c)(3)** - Pat explained that the FMA was formed as a mutual benefit corporation and was designated as a 501(c)(4) non-profit by the Internal Revenue Service. The FMA has evolved into the public benefit corporation that we know today, meaning that every tangible benefit of our efforts is for the good of the public. Nothing but voting rights are strictly available to members. The FMA would like to become a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization so that we are able to apply for grants for FM community projects and so that donations to the FMA would be tax deductible. The question arose whether the FMA's mission statement, modified in 2016, was linked to the organization's purpose as stated in the restated articles of incorporation that the members were being asked to approve. Attorney Dennis Byrne, a FMA member, had been consulted to review the new articles of incorporation. Mr. Byrne confirmed to the membership that the mission statement has no legal standing on the articles of incorporation.

**Elections** - The 2019 candidates up for election Rebecca Simons, Vice President, and Kate, Symonds, Trustee were introduced. Their candidate statements were published in the Summer FMA newsletter. Both Becky and Kate were running for reelection to remain in the positions they currently hold. Vice President position is a two-year term, 2019-2021. Kate is running to complete the trustee's term, 2017-2021, Pat left to run for FMA President last year. Pat invited any member in attendance to have their name added as a write-in candidate on the ballot. No one raised their hand.

Also included on the ballots was the question of whether or not to approve the new FMA Articles of Incorporation.

**Election Results** - Ballots were collected after Pat's explanation of the Articles of Incorporation (see above) and introducing Kate and Rebecca. Al Pucci collected the ballots and counted the votes. Both Kate and Rebecca were unanimously elected, 55-0 each. The Restated Articles of Incorporation were approved with a 54-0-1.

**COPE** - Priscilla Abercrombie introduced her new co-chair, Carol Morrill and all the COPE Neighborhood Leaders: Bo Simons, Susan Steinman, Ann Boone, Mark Braunstein, Dana Eaton, Linda Mansell, Jim Resnick. Absent: Rhonda Bellmer and John Thompson.

**Go Bags** - Carol Morrill talked about the importance of having a Go Bag packed and ready to grab if one needs to immediately evacuate their home in the event of a wildfire or other emergency.

**Alerts** - Linda Mansell talked about the importance of signing up for emergency alerts apps on your smartphone. There are several apps that give alerts including, Nixle, SoCo, PGE alerts and notifications, FMA E-blasts, COPE, and WEA (Wireless Emergency Alerts).

Priscilla asked the attendees to turn to the person sitting next to them and share one thing they learned at the meeting and would act on when they got home.

### **Other Speakers**

Cal-Fire Battalion Chief Marshal Turbeville - Fire Season

Mark Themig - Fitch Mountain Preserve

Pat also Introduced, Officer Mike Rios from the CHP, and Stuart Tiffen, Field Representative for Sup. Gore

**Volunteer of the Year** - Ellen Silge had the pleasure to announce the winners of the 2019 Fitch Mountain Volunteer of the Year: Priscilla Abercrombie and Ginger Hobart, Co-Chairs of COPE Fitch Mountain. The two ladies were recognized for their efforts the past six years to research and implement the most affective community emergency education and response program. Ginger discovered the COPE program that had been developed in Oakmont. Together Priscilla and Ginger began to organize and introduce the COPE program to the Fitch Mountain community. Priscilla was also recognized for the work she dedicated to researching, organizing, and implementing of the CWPP (Community Wildfire Protection Program).

Before the end of the meeting Pat invited people to purchase reflective house number signs, signup for COPE, and to talk with and ask questions of the various visiting County representatives.

Pat also invited FMA members to help clean-up the picnic grounds. Several people stayed to help.

**3:45pm - The meeting was adjourned.**