

Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Nevada Network of Fire Adapted Communities Board Meeting
Monday, October 9th, 2017 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Nevada Division of Forestry Training Room, 2478 Fairview Dr., Carson City, NV

Board Members in Attendance:

Mike Brown, Nevada State Fire Chief's Association
Liz Claggett, Community Representative from Southern Region
Ann Grant, Lake Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities
Clint Mothershead, Bureau of Land Management
Dagny Stapleton, Nevada Association of Counties
Ed Smith, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
Ryan Shane, Nevada Division of Forestry

Board Members Absent:

Sara Anderson, Nevada Landscape Association
Mike Heidemann, Nevada State Firefighter's Association
Wes Henderson, Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities
Pat Murphy, Community Representative from Western Region
Dawn Swinney, U.S. Forest Service

Board Positions Vacant:

Community Representative from Northern Region
Insurance Industry
WUI Planning/Code

Support Members in Attendance:

Jamie Roice-Gomes, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
Sonya Sistare, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

Guest in Attendance:

Elwood Miller, Former Network Coordinator, Retired
Joshua Woodbury, Deputy Attorney General

Ryan Shane began by apologizing for the delay in starting the meeting due to difficulties encountered getting into the building. Doors were locked due to the Federal holiday. He ask Ed Smith, serving as temporary interim Chairman, to call the meeting to order.

1. Introductions

Ed called the meeting to order at 1:19pm and asked for introductions. Everyone in attendance replied as indicated above.

2. Public comment

Ed read the public comment statement, and asked if there were any persons in attendance that wished to address the Board. There were none.

As this is the first time the Advisory Board meetings were held in accordance with open meeting laws, Joshua Woodbury from the Attorney General's Office was asked to attend and provide guidance and oversight. At this point, Joshua stated that the open meeting law requires specified time slots be included on the agenda for receiving public comment. Most often this occurs at both the beginning

and end of a meeting, or it can be included on every action item before voting as well as at the end of the meeting. At least one of those two options must be included.

He went on to explain that Public Comment is set up in this manner so that public bodies have transparency. The official definition of organizations and boards that must comply with open meeting requirements is now much more expansive and includes wording about any administrative body that is supported by tax revenue, expends or distributes tax revenue, or advises on the expenditure of tax revenue. For example, if the Advisory Board were to take a field trip where official discussions regarding priorities for using tax money took place, then open meeting laws would apply.

Joshua then asked if there was a quorum present, noting that unfilled seats on the Board should not be counted as part of the total. Ed replied yes there was a quorum with 7 of the current 12 Advisory Board members present.

3. Review of agenda and opportunity for altering the order of topics

Ed asked Ryan, as author, to review the items on the agenda (**Attachment 1**). Ed then asked if anyone would like to alter the order of topics. Hearing no changes, the agenda was accepted as written and the meeting continued. Questions arose at this time as follows:

- Ann Grant asked for clarification on public comment. For example, if there is a potentially volatile topic on the agenda, and we see many people attending who want to express their opinion, can we change the agenda to reflect public comment only at the beginning and end of the meeting?
 - Joshua recommended including public comment at the beginning and end, and that is it OK to add additional comment during a certain topic. If instead you include time for public comment after each action item on the agenda, it is hard to go back and ask for first public comment at the beginning and end only. Also, he reminded the Board that they can limit comments based on time, but not content. Typically, the time is restricted to two or three minutes each, and must be metered out the same for everyone.
- Ryan asked if there was a general liability insurance policy provided by the State to protect members of the Board.
 - Joshua was not sure and would have to check. His office does represent individuals in lawsuits, but not sure if that extends to board meetings.
- Ann stated that she and other community representatives are volunteers. Would they would fall under the volunteer statute where they are not liable?
 - Joshua's understanding is that yes, they would not be held liable.
- Elwood then asked if, for example, three members of the Board wanted to get together outside of a scheduled meeting to have coffee and discuss who might be best to serve as chairman, would this be allowed?
 - Joshua stated that small group discussions were allowed. However, if a quorum was present, then there would be a violation. He added that having small groups that rotate around to eventually hit everyone does skirts around open meeting laws, but should be avoided. Keep most discussions and deliberations open and during regular meetings.

4. Review of accomplishments/actions from 6/21/17 retreat

Ed asked Elwood Miller to lead this discussion, as he was serving as Network Coordinator during the retreat. The material we discussed during the retreat was the section on Network membership as shown below:

- a. Amended and approved operating manual sections
 - i. Vision, Mission, Governance
 - ii. Network Membership

1. Individual
 2. Organizations, Agencies, NGO's, and Associations and similar groups
 3. Communities
 4. Benefits and Obligations of membership
- iii. Annual Renewal of Membership
 - iv. Organizational Support for the Network
 - v. Non-Renewal of Chapter Membership
 - vi. Recognition and Awards
 - vii. Disposition of Current Network Members
 - viii. Composition of the Board

Elwood continued that the specific changes and discussions were included in the minutes he distributed on 9/7/2017. The decisions made that day have been incorporated into the language and format of the draft operating manual that we will continue to update. Ed asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he continued to the next Agenda item.

5. Spring 2018 Statewide Conference (Action)

Ed asked for input from the Advisory Board for the 4th Annual Nevada Network of Fire Adapted Communities Conference. Noting that we are somewhat behind schedule from past years planning, we specifically need input on dates, locations, and agenda items. In the past, the agenda typically contained 2/3 educational topics and 1/3 Network organizational and operational topics. Ed then asked Jamie Roice-Gomes to discuss venue and date options.

- Jamie asked everyone to refer to for the handout on conference venue options (**Attachment 2**) and the handout on survey results on preferred dates (**Attachment 3**).
- The best location options were the Peppermill and Atlantis. Based on past experience and site visits, Jamie determined that the Atlantis is the better option as they have multiple dates and room locations available. The Peppermill was only available on Friday, March 9 and the room option was awkward at best. Based on rates and room availability, May 12 seems like the best option and it also was the most popular date according to survey results.
- Ann asked if we checked out the Grand Sierra Resort (GSR). Jamie deferred to Sonya Sistare, who explained that her past experience with the GSR was that for our group size, the room locations were typically hidden away in back corners, difficult to find, and required a lot of walking to get back and forth, from both the outside parking areas as well as for hotel guests.

Action:

- Jamie proposed that we hold the conference at the Atlantis on Monday, March 12.
- Mike Brown moved to accept this proposal, and Ann seconded that motion. Approval by the Board was unanimous.

Ed then conducted an exercise to determine what topics should be included on the conference agenda. He asked everyone to refer to the list of topics that were provided by participants at last year's conference (**Attachment 4**), as well as the five topics that resulted from the recent Advisory Board survey question, "What presentation topics should be included at the conference that would be most helpful to communities becoming more fire adapted?", that was distributed to the Board (**Attachment 5**).

Discussion and comments included:

- Ann stated that many people may be starting from scratch in their community, so it would be important to include details on how to form a chapter. Ed noted that this topic was indicated already for The Network section of the survey and will be discussed next.
- Ryan suggested a new topic of “Community Spark Plugs: Who they are; What they do; How they find success.” He noted that most people who actually attend our conference tend to be that spark plug. It would be a positive topic.
- Clint Mothershead suggested to include lessons learned in forming The Network and what will happen as we move forward. Ed noted that this would fall under The Network section as well.
- Mike added that he is currently working with a small community in Washoe County that struggles with getting cooperation with their local fire district. How can we get across the idea that it has to be a cooperative effort with everyone working together? The difficulty is in how to get everyone on board. This particular community needs to update their CWPP, but is having difficulty in engaging the fire district. Perhaps we can offer some type of training on how to get everyone on board. Mike offered to be the presenter if this topic is selected.
- Ed noted that this is a sensitive topic as it often points a negative finger at local fire services.
- Mike’s approach is to ask local fire to establish a community liaison to be that connection.
- Sonya reminded everyone about the results of the small group session held at the 2015 Conference. The community representatives stated that their fire district is just not engaged or interested in helping them and the fire department/district representatives stated that their community representatives were not engaged or interested in doing anything.
- Ann added that community members need to meet with their fire district as a group. This approach will help make it a priority for the fire district. Also, this helps with building a positive relationship, an important key to success.
- Ryan felt that what Mike and Ann proposed really dovetails with topic 1-4: What does a fire adapted community look like. You can only see very little on the surface. It’s all the actions that take place underneath, including support from local fire, county, etc. that make a fire adapted community. Find a successful community and ask “How did you do this?” Present the underlying support that has to be in place to have success. Show different ways...where fire district is more involved, and where community takes more of a lead.
- Liz Claggett explained the current situation in her community and all of Mt. Charleston. The main focus and passion for the residents, fire services and county officials is currently on tree mortality, concerns about use of salt on the roads in winter, and lead in the water...not fire! No matter how hard she pushes, that is all anyone wants to talk about.
- Ann liked the topic 1-1 on updating a CWPP, but added to include an explanation on the whole process of creating a CWPP from scratch. Many people have no idea where to start.
- Mike felt that this requirement for membership in The Network will be a hindrance for the same reason. Many don’t know how to begin.
- Dagny Stapleton asked for clarification on who the attendees of our conference typically are, since she has never gone to one in the past.
- Ed explained that it is mostly community members with some local fire representation.
- Dagny replied that it couldn’t hurt to go back to the nuts and bolts of the importance of a CWPP and then how to complete one. This principle applies to topic 1-4 as well...tell the whole story! What does a FAC look like, and what is the process to get there? These two topics (1-1 and 1-4) really should work together.

Ed updated the topics and continued with the exercise by asking members of the Board to pick their top three topics, and mark them on the big poster using three sticky dots. The results were:

- 6 votes for 1-1 Updating community CWPPs. Take CWPP template and educate how to do it. Importance and how to update.
- 1 vote for 1-2 Grants available and how to apply and how communities can secure funding for programs in their neighborhoods.

- 0 votes for 1-3 How to overcome complacency by community members and taking responsibility for themselves, their property, and vegetation management.
- 7 votes for 1-4 What does a fire adapted community look like. End result and process on how to get there.
- 0 votes for 1-5 Present a case study of a WUI fire...like Caughlin Ranch Fire.
- 0 votes for 1-6 Community Spark Plugs: Who they are; What they do; How they find success.
- 3 votes for 1-7 How to engage local fire agencies.

Ed presented the results of the next survey question, “What questions about the operation, organization and transition of Nevada Network of Fire Adapted Communities would you like addressed?” ([Attachment 6](#)), and called for discussion.

Discussion and comments included:

- Ryan asked that “Current status of The Network” be included in topic 2-1.
- Elwood added the topic “What is the role of the Advisory Board and how will it function.”
- Ryan agreed, and ask that “Roles and Responsibilities of the Advisory Board” be added to topic 2-2.
- Ann mentioned that participants may wonder about membership fees. That could be included as part of topic 2-5. She also asked if there are going to be funds available to get started. There are costs such as postage, or hosting refreshments during a community meeting, etc.
- Ryan responded that there still is a lot of comparisons between the NFSC and NNFAC, so there are three competing models in the public’s minds. We need to address this!
- Dagny felt this could be included in topic 2-1, to give a general overview of what came before and who we are now.
- Mike stressed the importance of explaining the advantages of joining.
- Ryan added that this is addressed in the operating manual under Network membership as Benefits and Obligations.

Ed updated the topics as discussed and again asked members of the Board to mark their top three topics on the big poster using three sticky dots. The results were:

- 7 votes for 2-1 What are the next steps and timelines. Current status, update and history.
- 0 votes for 2-2 How independent will the NNFAC be since it is a part of NDF? How much input will the chapter leaders have and who will they contact?
- 0 votes for 2-3 Will the Network pursue and manage grant funds on behalf of member communities?
- 0 votes for 2-4 How are events and planning going to change under the new network? Difference between Nevada Fire Safe Council and NNFAC operations.
- 3 votes for 2-5 Membership options and transition from past to future with the program.
- 3 votes for 2-6 Chapter expectations and roles, how to form a neighborhood chapter, what will a chapter leader need to do, and how much time should it take.
- 5 votes for 2-7 What is the advantage of joining? What are the benefits and obligations to joining The Network?

Ed then reviewed the last survey question “Who would be a good Master of Ceremony for the conference?” ([Attachment 7](#)) and called for discussion. Discussion and comments included:

- Dagny stated that we really need someone who can reinvigorate the crowd, and who really knows the history.

- Liz asked if we really want to go back to the history, or instead move forward with the new! Maybe if it looks totally new with a new face to represent the organization, it will help with moving forward.
- Ann felt that Forest Schaefer would be really good, as he represents the Nevada Fire Board and is an excellent MC and speaker.
- Mike suggested Bart Chambers, the new Nevada State Fire Marshal. Adding that we really need to get him involved, is very passionate, a good speaker, and not afraid to push the limit when appropriate. Perhaps a team approach to hosting the event would work. Mike offered to reach out to Bart and get him engaged.
- Elwood reiterated that we could start by reviewing where we've been, then hand off to Bart to run the new era discussion.
- Sonya asked if we really need a host/MC? Something new and different would be to just roll from one topic and speaker to the next, with short introductions by current speaker about upcoming one. This approach might avoid complaints from last year that there was too much time wasted with long bios and introductions.
- Ed and Liz both felt that we need someone for continuity, someone to be in charge.

At the conclusion of this discussion, Ed updated the list and called for a vote by sticky notes for the top three choices. The results were:

- 4 votes for 3-1 Elwood Miller.
- 0 votes for 3-2 The New Network Executive Director.
- 4 votes for 3-3 Forest Schaefer.
- 3 votes for 3-4 Reno Fire Chief Dave Cochran.
- 0 votes for 3-5 Ed Smith.
- 6 votes for 3-6 Bart Chambers.
- 1 vote for 3-7 Miller sets stage with overview then hands over to MC.

Ryan asked Joshua if we need to vote or indicate approval on these decisions, since it is listed as an action item on the Agenda. Joshua confirmed that there should be some formal action taken.

Action

- Ryan made a motion that the board supports the results of this exercise so that the Living With Fire (LWF) Program can make logical decisions about the agenda, dates and venue moving forward. Mike seconded that motion. Approval by the Board was unanimous.

Ed asked if participants needed a break, but all agreed to keep going in the interest of time.

6. Finalize Board approval for the following sections of the operating manual (Action)

Ed asked Elwood to lead this discussion. Elwood stated that he would like the Board to use the same process as that used during the board retreat. As we go through each section, beginning where we left off at the retreat, Jamie will then update the document projected onto the screen with any changes or corrections as needed. Once each section is updated, we will call for a motion and second to accept the changes, then call for a vote. Acceptance of the change will be noted with an X in one of three columns: Approve as written, Approve with changes noted or Do not approve. Final results of this action will be included in the updated draft operating manual which will be distributed for final review at a later date. At this point the Board proceeded to work section by section through the proposed language for inclusion in the draft operating manual following the outline below (See **Attachment 8** for the results).

a. Advisory Board

- i. Board Membership
 - 1. Qualifications
 - 2. Composition, Terms, and Vacancies
 - a. Representation and Terms (Table 1)
 - b. Elected Regional Representatives
 - c. Appointed Representatives
 - d. Vacancies
 - 3. Duties
 - 4. Performance
 - 5. Deliberations and Decisions
 - 6. Officers
 - a. Qualifications, Nominations, Elections, Terms of Office, Removal, and Resignation
 - b. Duties
 - ii. Meetings
 - iii. Committee Creation and Operation
 - iv. Compensation
 - v. Community Coordination/Communication
- b. Organizational Structure
 - c. Nevada Fire Board's Cohesive Strategy
 - d. Staffing
 - e. Marketing and Communications
 - f. Financial Management
 - g. Monitoring, Maintenance, and Reporting
 - h. Strategic Planning
 - i. Amendments and Changes to the Operating Manual

Elwood stated that it was 4:30 and the Board had been working hard for an extended time with no break. Since several items remained for the Board's deliberation, he suggested tabling the remaining items for discussion at a later meeting. He called for a three-minute break before deciding.

Action

- Mike made a motion to table the remaining items and Clint seconded the motion. Approval by the Board was unanimous.

7. Election of Board Officers (Action)

Ed then moved on to the next agenda item, noting that two positions are available. Note that action taken during the previous discussion eliminated the Secretary position. He opened the floor to nominations, suggesting that the Vice Chairman position could be filled by whomever receives the second most number of votes. After a long period of silence:

- Mike nominated Ryan Shane, who was reluctant to accept the nomination based on a perceived notion of too much governmental oversight.
- Ed nominated Clint, but Sonya reminded him that Vanessa is the actual BLM representative and that Clint was participating in her place today as she was on a special assignment in Washington.
- Ryan suggest waiting until the next meeting in January to continue with the election of officers, encouraging 100% participation.
- At this point, many current Board members indicated that they would be stepping down at the Annual Conference, allowing for new representation:

- Mike will be replaced as the chair of the Nevada Fire Chiefs Association at their meeting on October 25.
- Liz and Ann both stated that they will be stepping down.
- Ed reminded everyone that Pat Murphy had also stated that he would be stepping down, and that Jessica Santoyo had already resigned as the Northern representative.
- Dagny announced that she has replaced Jeff Fontaine as Executive Director of NACO, and will be bringing on a new deputy director soon. She may or may not continue as the NACO representative on this Board, but had not yet made that determination.
- Sonya suggested waiting until after the election of new Board members during the Annual Conference because of the limited pool of candidates. Many current Board members are stepping down or have stepped down.
- Ryan then asked Joshua if there are any concerns on how community representatives are selected, nominated, and elected. Joshua stated no, but they have to be accepted during a regular scheduled Board meeting.

Action

- Ryan moved that we table Item 7 until the quarterly Board Meeting that will occur in conjunction with the Annual Conference.
- Ed asks that Ryan take on the duty as Acting Chairman from this point forward, because he had completed his commitment to serve in the position for the October meeting only.
- They reached a compromise: Ryan would serve as Acting Vice Chairman, but being responsible for all of the behind-the-scene duties he has been doing, such as organizing the meeting Agenda, posting it as required, establishing the meeting dates and locations, contacting Board Members, etc. Ed would continue to serve as Acting Chairman, just running the next two meetings.
- Ryan moved that we accept this compromise and Mike seconded the motion. Approval by the Board was unanimous.

8. Status reports on filling vacant seats

a. WUI Planning Code

Ed reported that at Bill Whitney's suggestion, he contacted the Nevada Chapter of the American Planning Association. He has not heard back from them.

b. Insurance Industry

- a. Ed reported that he had contacted the Nevada Insurance Council and they were interested in being represented on the Board. He is waiting to hear back from them.

c. Rural community

- a. With Jessica's resignation this seat is now vacant.

Ryan stated that other than Ed's efforts there was no progress to report at this time.

9. Status of finalizing the operating manual

Ryan noted that the remaining items were tabled until the next meeting.

10. Status of hiring Executive Coordinator

Ryan indicated that candidate interviews were already set up for all day on November 15 and 16.

11. Website Construction Status Update

Ryan stated that the website construction became complicated because the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is redoing all of their websites in order to avoid hacking. For now, they have just copied all of the content from the LWF Program websites.

- Sonya noted that at least one of the sections, “It Takes A Community”, is not functioning as it should on the NDF page as it is an interactive page. She can instead send a link to that content.
- Ryan would like us to transition and fade out this page on the LWF Program website to reduce confusion, but for now, send any links to Eric Antle, who manages the website at NDF.

12. Meeting schedule (Action)

Ed asked how the Board would like to proceed with selecting a date for the next meeting.

Action

- Mike moved that we allow Ryan as Acting Vice Chairman to communicate with the Board on future meeting dates. Clint seconded the motion. Approval by the Board was unanimous.

13. Public Comment

Joshua asked Ed to read the public comment statement again, which he did.

- Sonya wished Ed Smith an early Happy Birthday and presented a card from the group.
- No other public comments were provided.

14. Adjourn (Action)

Action

- Dagny moved to end the meeting, and Mike seconded the motion. The Board approved unanimously.
- The meeting adjourned at 5:12 pm.