

Inter Canyon League
Minutes of the General Meeting
Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at 7:00 PM Live Streaming

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by President Sarkissian.

II. General Announcements & Discussion

a. ICL Election—Scott Breeden

Francesca Duff and Celeste Veerkamp, running unopposed, were elected to the ICL Board.

b. General Community Announcements

None.

c. Canyon History: Guy Sparks & Shady Brook Grocery—Melody McWilliams

Melody shared a photo of proprietor Guy Sparks from 1974. Born in 1884, Guy was a World War I cavalry veteran who had worked in Texas oil fields before coming to Silverado. According to Judy Myers, Guy “loved people,” and when he went into the hospital once for hip replacement, a “Guy Sparks Club” formed around him.

d. The ICL year in brief review—Geoffrey Sarkissian

Geoff listed ICL’s major accomplishments in 2021: distributing \$103,000 to fire victims, providing \$6,000 worth of wattles for erosion control, rebuilding the destroyed GMRS radio repeater, winning grants from Southern California Edison (SCE) and the California Fire Foundation (CFF), having around 400 radio users signed up, attending the Silverado Country Fair and Christmas in the Canyons, and \$5,000 raised by the Friends of the Library Committee.

e. The Great Cleanup & Recovery: Organization

Summarizing cleanup activity after the most recent rainstorm, Geoff began by noting the variety of volunteers—neighbors helping neighbors, heavy equipment operators, and volunteers from outside the canyons including Team Rubicon. Organizations involved included the Silverado-Modjeska Recreation and Park District (SMRPD), the Inter-Canyon League (ICL), the Fire Safe Council (FSC), the County of Orange, and Collaborating Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD).

Along with individual volunteers, the local organizations set up an Incident Command center at the Silverado Community Center to coordinate responses to aid requests from residents whose homes had been damaged by flooding and debris. Some residents also organized their own volunteer teams.

f. Cleanup: Incident Command, a view from inside

Danny Graham served as Incident Commander, while others took charge of processing aid requests, checking in volunteers, and supervising operations, safety, and documentation.

g. Cleanup: Results

Although some work was judged too big to attempt, about 9,000 county-supplied sandbags were deployed, roads were cleared, and much mud was mucked out from homes and yards. Bic Edwards and Isabell Kerins spoke to about 200 residents, and Danny counted 107 volunteers registered at Incident Command.

Geoff termed the Incident Command process “intense” but interesting, despite some shortcomings. Speaking from his firefighting and Hurricane Katrina experience, though, Bruce Newell said, “Don’t beat yourselves up. It’s always the same—you start with no knowledge,” and he congratulated everyone on their efforts.

h. Cleanup: Who is paying?

Isabell said that SMRPD will look into asking for donations and setting aside emergency funds for clearing roads. Francesca Duff said that ICL received \$2,750 in donations. A GoFundMe account originally set up for Wildcat Canyon repairs was able to offer some help for Anderson Way as well. Although some heavy equipment operators donated time and materials, others still need to be reimbursed.

i. Thoughts Going Forward—Geoffrey Sarkissian

Joanne Hubble contacted the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) about possibly qualifying for watershed mitigation funds. Isabell said that the county Board of Supervisors would consider flood-related aid. Noting that two homes are apparently directly in the path of the next Anderson Way flood/debris flow, Rich Pfeiffer said that there is a separate NRCS program for buying such properties at fair market value.

j. Calif. Declaration of Emergency

Geoff said that the mechanism for declaring an emergency was something that he did not yet fully understand. He also noted that Modjeska received NRCS funds in the past (with a 25% matching funds requirement) for bridge repairs. Isabell said that declaring an emergency allows discretion for government work on private property and creeks that is not normally allowed.

About debris from private property that was hauled to the Riviera across from the Silverado Community Center, the landowner, Saint Michael’s Abbey, does not want it there forever. They were fined in the past for violating dirt-related regulations. The county has an agreement with the Abbey for now, but currently there is no long-term plan.

k. Canyon Watch Update—Bic & Keith Edwards

Bic called December a busy month, mainly involving radio and 1-to-1 communication with residents, and working with block captains. She said that Incident Command was run by great people, Danny was very patient, and she learned a lot.

l. Friends of the Library—Fran Williams finds a successor?

Fran phoned in a “happy dance” to announce that Janet Coughlin had agreed to take over running Friends of the Library along with assistants Natalie Garth and Wendy Esteras. She declared that “what’s good for the library is good for the community.”

III. Director Reports

a. President—Geoffrey Sarkissian

No report

b. Vice President—Celeste Veerkamp

No report

c. Secretary—Scott Breeden

Recycling income for the last six months was \$683.90.

The minutes of the December meeting were approved 4-0.

d. Treasurer—Francesca Duff

The year-end financial report now also shows depreciation: The first amount is \$462.23 for the radio repeater, which will continue for ten years. Six thousand dollars in income was transferred from the Bond Fire fund, and the OC Community Foundation donated \$1,000 for the History Committee.

Insurance costs are expected to go up.

The November financial report was approved 4-0.

IV. New Business

As Jenny Scott mentioned in previous meetings, fire insurance can cover flooding if the flooding was caused by fire. Rich said to contact him for the name of a lawyer who wants cases where such claims have been denied. There is a 1-year time limit for filing claims. Canyon Emergency Preparation Academy (CEPA) training has been postponed until March or April. Some SCE grant money may be used for that.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm.

***** The next ICL meeting will be held February 1, 2022 via live streaming *****