



Safety Committee Regular Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2025, 2:00 PM, ZOOM

With a quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 2:02pm.

Order of Business:

1. The meeting began with the reading of the Land Acknowledgement and Anti-racism Statements.
2. A quorum was acknowledged: Tom Henning (Chair), Judy White, Kolleen Mitchell, Deb Davolio, and Daniele Harris.
3. The agenda was unanimously approved by the committee.
4. Welcoming of new member, Daniele Harris. Daniele was asked to introduce himself. A relatively new resident of Sudden Valley, Daniel shared that he has 20 + years of experience in safety-related roles, including in Fire Services, in the southern California area.
5. Announcements: Tom Henning (TH) reminded the group of the goals and responsibilities of the Safety Committee: To plan events and programs, to encourage involvement of the community, recruit volunteers, promote events, and develop articles for “The View”, and to regularly report to the Board of Directors.

6. Program Updates:

6a. Firewise Program: Judy White (JW) shared that she’s been able to arrange for the “Firewise” presentation to occur this year on May 12th in the Dance Barn, 6:30 to 8:00. Robert Walters of the Conservation District will be the lead presenter again this year. It’s confirmed that he will use the Fire Wise video in his presentation. It’s hoped that the technology available this year will allow for a useable copy of the video to be uploaded to the committee’s website. Mitch Nolze, Fire District #2 Chief, will speak again and respond to community members’ questions. Judy plans to ask a community member to share his/her experience of having benefited from a property assessment offered by the Fire Wise program after last year’s event.

A discussion ensued of ways of promoting the event and cultivating broad community participation. The sentiment was that use of the Eblast and an article in “The View” should be expanded upon.

Kolleen Mitchell (KM) suggested that events previously approached be organized and promoted as a 3-part Safety Series. These would include an information session on Go

Bags and another on Neighborhood Mapping. She suggested sending out a “Save The Date” for the 3 events that would help build awareness around the committee and suggest ongoing activity.

Daniele Harris (DM) suggested we might survey the community to ask for additional safety-related topics that residents may be interested in learning more about. KM suggested that using the SVCA social media page might be helpful in in regard.

Judy updated the group on the Department of Natural Resources grant that she mentioned at the last meeting. She reported that the DNR is facing a \$2 million funding freeze so availability is uncertain.

6b. Ted Wang was not present. An update on the Water Safety Life Preserver Program will be provided at the next meeting.

6c. Kolleen Mitchell began her update on School Bus Safety Program by referencing an email to Committee Chairs in which she explained that she’s been seeking quotes from local electricians for cost of constructing and installing the safety signs and beacons that Bellingham School District has requested for Bus Stops in Gates 5, 9, and 1. She’s waiting on a quote from Mac N’ Mac and has initiated conversations with City and County departments in hopes of getting additional referrals and estimates.

A clarification will be needed on where in Gate 1 the signs would be installed and most beneficial. Tom asked whether we should inquire with the County about a crosswalk on Lakeway Blvd. where children cross from the mailbox area inside Gate 3 to the actual bus stop. It was also questioned whether the more “informal” stops along Lakeway approaching Gate 3 ought to also have signage and lights.

7. New Business:

7a. Go Bags. This program was discussed only in regard to the suggested grouping of the events into a Safety Series. See Fire Wise Program (6a) for related details.

7b. Historical Disaster Preparedness: The committee discussed the previous Emergency Management Documents forwarded to us for review by Rick Asai. Our discussion was general in nature, reacting to the apparent intended audience (first responders), volume of information (151 pgs.), and the length of time since the documents had been updated. There was recognition that the task of updating the documents towards the stated goal of having a “single document available for distribution in the central office” is important yet daunting. There was full agreement around the need for a clear communication system and a clear evacuation plan.

It was noted that the intended benefit of the Neighborhood Mapping Program (a current and comprehensive mapping of the residents of Sudden Valley overlaps with Evacuation Planning. It's further noted that the importance of SVCA having a means of communicating with residents across the Association neighborhoods is significant. Dedicated time and conversation at a subsequent meeting toward these goals is warranted and timely.

For the HOA, the committee needs to directly address where and how homeowners can look for information in the face of an emergency or interrupted communication. It was suggested that Tom Fields be asked to write an article for "The View" about the Ham Radio Club and the history of 1620 AM. The importance of the Communication Manager position being refilled and the benefit that Norm Smith's efforts served in the past cannot be understated.

7c: The importance of the SVCA Emergency Management Program aligning with the Whatcom County Emergency Plan was reinforced. The importance and benefit of improved relations with the County Departments and the Sheriff's Department was also raised.

8. Other Business:

Tom shared that he and Rick communicated the importance of the Safety Committee being deemed as a standing committee with the Board. The matter will be on the November ballot.

9. Adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 6th. Location to be determined.