

TUOLUMNE COUNTY FIRE SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at 3:00 pm
Location: Board of Supervisors Chambers, 4th Floor, 2 S. Green Street Sonora, CA 95370
Contact: Office of Emergency Services at oes@co.tuolumne.ca.us (209) 533-6395

Chair

Supervisor Ryan Campbell

Vice Chair

Supervisor Steve Grierfer

Member Representatives

- Tuolumne County Fire
- Tuolumne County Sheriff
- City of Sonora
- Tuolumne County Fire Chiefs Association
- Public Representatives
Scott Fremd
Charles Sloan
Betsy Hurst-Younger

Advisory Members

- Chicken Ranch Band of Me-Wuk Indians
- Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians
- Tuolumne Fire Safe Council
- USFS Stanislaus

Staff

OES Assistant Director
Dore A. Bietz

2025 Strategic Goals

1. Support recommendations to improve and secure sustainable funding for fire safety.
2. Support increased education and outreach of Fire Safety and Wildfire Preparedness campaigns.
3. Support coordinated fuels reduction projects and secure funding for prioritized fuels management projects.
4. Support advocacy to address fire insurance rate impacts for Tuolumne County residents and businesses.

I. CALL TO ORDER at 3:05 pm

II. ROLL CALL – In attendance.

Supervisor Campbell
Supervisor Grierfer
Tuolumne County Fire – Chief Gorham
Tuolumne County Fire Chiefs Association – Chief Gamez
Tuolumne County Sheriff – David Vasquez
City of Sonora Fire – Chief Gary Carlson (interim FC)
Public Rep – Scott Fremd
Public Rep – Betsy Hurst - Younger

Confirm quorum requirements are met (Quorum = 5 members) – MET w/8

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Alert/Siren Test – Chief Gamez thanked OES and Sheriffs dispatch for successful test in May.
Greenly Oaks Firewise – Solid Waste Dept aided with green waste and wanted to say thank you.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING 4/23/2025

Motioned by Supervisor Grierfer, Seconded by Chief Gamez, All in favor no abstentions. Motion approved.

V. PARTNER AGENCY UPDATES/PRESENTATIONS

PGE Wildfire Mitigation Plan – Nathan Alonzo gave a presentation on PGE Wildfire Safety. Reducing Wildfire risk in community is a priority.
USFS – gave update on personnel capacity on Fire staffing in Stanislaus Forest. 50%

CAL FIRE -updated resources, as of June 2 last of the seasonal hand crews are on. As of June 16th, will be fully staffed. We also have a third dozer in the unit (have not had since the 1990's).

Presentation on Fire Risk Reduction Communities List – presentation and discussion of the process, pros and cons. Staff will speak to county counsel on opinion of whether accepting Cal Fire Severity zones could impact down the road. Mandate #1 on ordinance and timing. Mandate #2, Does this hold us to the severity zones. Mandate #3, safety element may have to come back. Mandate # 4 on a progress report to obtain list of parcel maps, subdivision correct findings. Staff will bring presentation pf subdivisions with only one way in and out and status of recommendations.

No public comment.

VI. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

a. Staff Reports and Recommendations –

- OES presented on Emergency Alerts and outdoor audible alert tests May 13th. Lots of calls into our public information line thanking us. Several folks who wanted to be removed from the list. One caller in PML who didn't like the siren and wanted it turned off. OES staff are doing several presentations on wildfire season readiness, upcoming presence at local HOA and or Firewise community meetings.
- Update on Pinecrest Fire Lane parking (map attached).
- Shelter Planning – updated on our three preferred locations, Sonora Senior Center, Tuolumne, and Groveland CRC. Redcross is our partner, but we will likely have to assist with the initial setup. Training set for end of June for our county staff and volunteers.
- Home Hardening Project Manager selected, county counsel going through contract and will go to the board on consent June 17th. Once on board, we will have a public meeting to introduce and start taking homeowner applications.
- Community Wildfire Defense Grant is up and not to be confused with the Tuolumne Fire Safe Council grant. Reminded members our grant focuses on three communities. Mi-Wuk Village, Cedar Ridge, and the Yankee Hill side of Columbia. Everyone else outside of those can be served by the Tuolumne fire Safe Council grant. It will also cover about 22 miles of county maintained roadside brushing that will be cleared by Sheriff's Jail Crew.

Public Comment (limited to three minutes per person)- none

VII. **DISCUSSION and APPROVAL OF**

- Support recommendations to improve and secure sustainable funding for fire safety. No current issues brought up.*
- Support recommendation of increased education and outreach of Fire Safety and Wildfire Preparedness campaigns. Discussed bringing back a list of communities to do Community Tabletop Exercise and how we can fund or look at grants for.*

Public Comment (limited to 3 minutes per person) –

Work with Sheriff's office in writing grant.

Look at Sierra Nevada Conservancy grant coming out in June.

VIII. **COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS (10 minutes)**

Betsy spoke about fire insurance and comparable to the fair plan.

Public Comment (limited to 3 minutes per person.

IX. **ADJOURNMENT at pm**

The Next meeting will be held June 25th, 2025.