

BLOCK CAPTAINS MEETING 22-01

March 17, 2022
MEETING MINUTES

1. Introduction

Block Captain Lead (BCL) Arlene Honbo welcomed all of the Block Captains, guests, and the First Responders.

The following were present:

Gene & Arlene Honbo
Debra Shrader
Leslie Stetson
Nicole Tangen
Carol Marrone
Arun Bhumitra
Kay Lupo
Dorothy Vinter
Maureen Hill
Marian Visco
Judith Haenel
Susan Collida
Clint Patterson
Kathleen Hughes
Leah Mirsch
Annie Occhipinti
Lisa Kopenhefer
Bill Ruth
Sandy Sherman
Chris Standley
Captain James Powers
Deputy Ben Russel
Deputy Darlene Beltran-Lopez
Chief Brian Bennett
Battalion Chief Keith Harter
Christian Horvath
Elaine Jeng

2. Proposed Goals for 2022 – Arlene and Elaine Jeng

BCL Arlene Honbo recapped Block Captain feedback from October 2021 meeting as follows:

- Difficult to get residents to attend Annual Zone meetings; Apathy or overwhelmed?
- People have too little time; no email; love Blue Newsletter; need something different
- How often should we communicate? How should we communicate?
- Emergency Preparedness should also emphasize earthquakes

- Need to introduce something new at Annual Zone meetings or conduct for “new residents”
- Survey residents to find out what they want/need; Evacuation? Preparedness? If it is a party they will come
- Would a drill focus people? Would it show bottlenecks? Would we hear First Responders?
- People still want specifics on “which way to go” regarding evacuation
- Create a video for residents on emergency preparedness?
- Annual Zone meetings may be repetitive but we are making progress on evacuation and exits
- Need more focus on evacuation of animals
- Good support by city staff, Lead BCs, and First Responders
- Need to focus on folks with special needs/disabilities

Analyzing the feedback, BCL Arlene Honbo shared adjustments to the BC program for 2022 as follows:

- Transition from even months (six per calendar year) to quarterly (four per calendar year).
- City staff would also work with BCLs to determine the best communication method with residents using city resources such as the Blue Newsletter and explore other means to help Block Captains.
- BCs to focus on educating residents, connecting with residents and not take on projects. City staff will spearhead emergency preparedness projects.

In addition to listing the adjustments to the program for 2022, BCL Arlene Honbo discussed the goals for 2022. The BCs would focus on completing projects/goals from past years, such as the evacuation brochure, and the Emergency Information System and the outdoor siren study. The BCs would also assist with a citywide evacuation drill or simulation with the assistance of the First Responders.

3. Citywide Evacuation Simulation Concept – AH, EJ, First Responders

BCL Arlene Honbo outlined the simulation concept as advised by the First Responders:

- Simulate a wildfire event on a date/time to be determined
- Notify residents of the simulated event using the Alert Southbay notification system
- Notify residents of a simulated evacuation order from the First Responders
- Have residents time household evacuation time from house to vehicle and evaluate for improvements
- Report to city staff if residents received notifications of simulated event and notifications of simulated evacuation order
- First Responders to test the Crest Road East gate as a part of the simulated event

BCs asked why the simulation concept would not include residents getting into their vehicles and exiting the city. First Responders advised that the important test here is to get residents prepared to, upon notification, leave the house and get into a vehicle to exit the city. There are safety concerns for the simulation to include residents getting into vehicles and exiting the city. Captain James Powers, Chief Brian Bennett discussed their safety concerns with the BCs and emphasized the goal is to get all residents prepared with respect to knowing the vehicle to take, the things to pack, people and animals in the household to account for in an expedient manner.

4. 2021 Priorities

- a. Evacuation Procedures – Quick Reference guide**
- b. Emergency Information Systems Rollout**
- c. Emergency Communications – Outdoor Siren Feasibility Study**

BCL Arlene Honbo showed a copy of the Evacuation Procedures, a quick reference guide for residents that highlight key information specific to Rolling Hills. The Evacuation Procedures reference guide was published and mailed to all residents in early March. BCs expressed that the evacuation brochure is helpful. One BC expressed that her household did not receive the evacuation brochure. City staff will provide additional copies as needed.

BCs expressed that education videos have been very useful in reaching out to residents and that additional videos on various topics (emergency evacuation, introduction to the BC Program) should be produced.

City Manager Elaine Jeng discussed the Emergency Information System (EIS) and referred the BCs to the recent Blue Newsletter listing the dates for the registration drive. The EIS came about because there was low registration rate for the city's emergency notification system Alert Southbay. In an effort to assist with registration, the city created a database to collect residents' data. The maintenance of the database would be administered by city staff with the help of BCs. BCs will have access to the database for the residents within their zone and can assist residents with inputting and updating information. The contact information would be exported to the Alert Southbay to get all registrants on the notification system. The EIS is live on the city's website and residents can call City Hall or come down to City Hall to have staff assist with inputting data into the EIS. Registration drive at City Hall will commence on the first Tuesday in April and conclude on the last Tuesday in May. In April and May, Tuesday afternoons between 4 and 5pm will be dedicated to residents needing assistance with registration.

City Manager Elaine Jeng also discussed the status of the outdoor siren feasibility study. The BCs asked how would the city notify residents of emergency events in the event of complete power failure? In answering this question, the city hired an emergency communication expert. The expert HQE Systems recommended an outdoor siren system. Given the topography of the city, HQE Systems was commissioned by the city to conduct a feasibility study. The City Council will be reviewing the final study at the March 28, 2022 City Council meeting.

BCL Arlene Honbo thanked the BCs that lent their support to move forward with an outdoor siren system. BCL Arlene Honbo received emails from 24 households/29 names supporting the next steps in implementing an outdoor siren system.

5. Resident Education

BCL Arlene Honbo encouraged BCs to continue to push residents to sign up for the complimentary “hardening the home” inspection by the Los Angeles County Fire Department and be educated via the “hardening the home” education videos on the city’s website. Sign up for the complimentary inspections by contacting City Hall.

BCL Gene Honbo gave a brief presentation on the educational videos - “Fire fuel Management in the Canyons”. The video production was a collaborative effort among the BCs, residents, Rolling Hills Community Association, Los Angeles County Fire Department Forestry Division, Worldwide Productions, and the City Council. The educational videos advise to take actions in small steps.

- Start 200 feet from home
- Remember this may be a 1 to 5 year project
- Keep it affordable
 - Republic Waste bins (communal and individual)
 - Green waste days
 - Chipping days
- Do it in management steps

At the meeting, BCL Gene Honbo played the first video of the six part series on managing fire fuel in the canyons and asked for feedback. BCs provided positive feedback on the video played. City Manager Elaine Jeng informed the BCs that a small group would be convened to review the videos for quality control before presenting the final product to the City Council. Please see the power-point presentation on Fire Fuel Management in the Canyons.

6. Block Captain Meetings Schedule

- a. May 19**
- b. August 18**
- c. November 17**
- d. Annual Zone Meetings (October)**

7. Announcements

BCL Arlene Honbo announced that the Honbos will be transitioning off as BCLs. 2022 will be a transitional year for the program and new leads will take effect in 2023. BCL Gene Honbo will stay on to complete the educational videos on managing fire fuel in the canyons. BCL Arlene Honbo noted that the program is transitioning from a “start-up” mode to “operational mode” and as such there should be less work for BCLs and BCs in the future years. To transition, BCL Arlene Honbo noted that she would like to identify three to four BCs to step up as co-leads in the early part of 2022. These BCs will work with the City Manager, and First Responders and

will have an area of focus (recruiting, education, BC meetings). BCL Arlene Honbo asked that interested BCs reach out to Gene, Arlene and Elaine.

BCs expressed gratitude and appreciation for BCL Arlene and Gene Honbo with applause for their work to date.

The meeting concluded at 11:15am.



Block Captain Meeting

March 17, 2022

Fire Fuel Management
in the Canyons



Why is managing fire fuel in the canyons important?

- Rolling Hills has a unique setting. We are in a “high fire hazard severity zone”.
- Los Angeles County Forestry Division identified 11 canyons on the peninsula as dangerous under certain weather conditions.
- *Winds drive by northeast: Georgeff, Purple, Willow, Sepulveda, Blackwater, John’s and Agua Magna canyons*
- *Winds driven by southwest: Paint Brush, Portuguese, Altimara and Forrestal canyons*

Don't I already have an annual brush inspection?

Yes, but that is for maintaining defensible space of 200 feet from your structures...

Videos - Collaborative Production Effort!

- *Forestry Division*– Script writing, approval of scripts, including environment, soils and protected flora and fauna; videos feature Trevor Moore– LA Forestry Division
- *Block Captains*– Script writing, identification of canyons and homes
- *Residents*- Approval to video canyon properties
- *RHCA*– Transportation and trail access
- *Worldwise Productions, Inc.* – Expert videographers
- *RH City Council and Staff*- Funding and project support

What can I do to manage fire fuel on my property?

Watch the videos to learn the steps

Sign-up for a personal assessment of your canyon

Take actions in small steps

- Start 200 feet from home
- Remember this may be a 1 – 5 year project
- Keep it affordable
 - ✓ Republic Waste bins (communal and individual),
 - ✓ Green Waste days
 - ✓ Chipping Days
- Do it in manageable “steps”

Select demonstration projects

Identify “success stories” and “lessons learned”

Feedback....

We need your input...