DANA 2020 Annual meeting minutes

The meeting was held on January 12 at the Diamond A Recreation Center. Brunch was served at 10 am and the business meeting was called to order by Craig Garcia at 10:45. Craig began the meeting by thanking the members who organized the brunch (Patti Anderson, Tia Pierce and Judith Walsh) and by noting the presence of two new members of the DANA Board (Patti Anderson and Bill Mapel). He then offered a brief eulogy to honor John Walsh, his predecessor as President of the DANA Board. In lieu of a review of DANA activities (and in order to preserve meeting time for our major discussion topic), Craig referred attendees to the handout entitled “DANA 2019 Review” (see appendix i of these minutes). The following items of business were then discussed.

1. Tom Jones announced the results of the balloting for members of the DANA Board. The members overwhelmingly appointed the following members to a 2-year term of office: Dave Duncan, Craig Garcia, Bill Mapel, and Christine Meacham.
2. Dee Young provided a table of DANA’s 2019 Income and Expenses
3. Tom Jones noted that traditional hill-warming parties have been suspended for the following reasons:
	1. Difficulties in locating community members who were willing/able to host such events
	2. Past problems with adequate parking and challenging access for community members with reduce mobility
	3. Absence of community members willing to organize the set up and catering for the events

He noted that DANA was still committed to supporting social events with both financial and personnel resources. That commitment was illustrated last year by DANA’s support for the Diamond A Annual Picnic and the Rec Center’s 50th year anniversary Gala. The Board expects to support two community-wide events in 2020.

In addition, the Board is aware that certain activities of our local fire safe council may well be expedited by monies originating from DANA “contingency” funds

1. The majority (and the remainder) of the meeting was devoted to an overview of the Grove Street Fire Safe Council. That overview was conducted by Dave Duncan. For further details please consult appendix ii of these minutes as well as exploring the Grove Street Fire Safe Council web site ([www.grovestreetfsc.org](http://www.grovestreetfsc.org)).

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon

Appendix i:

DANA: 2019 REVIEW

* DANA continued to be the major conduit for communications between the County and our neighborhood.
	+ DANA members stimulated the efforts by CAL FIRE and by the County’s Roads Division for the major brush clearance effort along Grove that was completed last year.
	+ DANA’s interests in improving the surface and safety of Grove Street have been championed by Bob Kraynak. The dip in the road just above George Ranch was repaired last spring and nighttime-visible markers were installed along “the narrows”.
	+ The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) continued to conduct monthly reviews of Diamond A homeowners’ permit applications for planning and construction. The ARC then worked with Diamond A property owners and with Sonoma County PRMD to ensure compliance with relevant Diamond A CC&Rs and with Sonoma County ordinances, including adherence to the County ordinance governing short-term Vacation Rentals (Diamond A is a recognized “Exclusion Zone” for short-term Vacation Rentals).
* In response to the increased awareness of wildfire risk, members of DANA have assumed new responsibilities.
	+ DANA members participated in regular and in *ad hoc* meetings of the Grove Street Fire Safe Council (a volunteer team that also includes residents from George Ranch and lower Grove). Dave Duncan is the current president of the GSFSC.
	+ Contributions from DANA members provided the majority of funds earmarked for the purchase of a type 6 Fire Engine for Sonoma Valley Fire and Rescue Station #4 in Diamond A. Due to contributors’ generosity, the goal of $125,000 has been surpassed.
	+ DANA members continued to keep residents informed regarding fire safety tips and measures such as the “glossy” piece titled “Evacuating—Things to Consider” and links on emergency preparedness on the Diamond A website.
	+ DANA members have been reviewing emergency call-out systems to determine feasibility/effectiveness for our community.
* DANA members have continued to support formal and informal interactions with other important Diamond A organizations.
	+ Members maintain the Diamond A website, manage the Diamond A community email list so that alerts for critical issues can be promulgated more efficiently, maintain the Diamond A Directory, and manage the Diamond A Google Group (diamond-a-poa@googlegroups.com).
	+ Members are developing an information packet for new residents. It will cover the responsibilities of our 4 main organizations (DANA, DARA, The Water Board, and GSFSC) and will be ready for distribution this spring.
	+ DANA has provided financial assistance to DARA (the Rec) for selected social events that are open to the community, such as the annual all-Diamond A community picnic.

Appendix ii:

**August 2019**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FIRE SAFE COUNCILS**

For the Sonoma Communities of Diamond A, George Ranch,

Westerbeke Ranch, and Grove Street south to Carriger Road)

**1.** **What is a Fire Safe Council?**

Fire Safe Councils are grassroots community organizations throughout California. Their goals are:

* To collaborate with State, county, and local agencies to assess wildfire risks.
* Prioritize community risk mitigation projects.
* Develop an approved Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
* Seek and obtain grants to conduct risk mitigation projects.
* Educate and motivate residents to understand and prepare for wildfire.

**2. Why have we formed a Fire Safe Council?**

Wildfire risks are more likely to be reduced and mitigated through a comprehensive plan at the community level. Short-term, small-scale efforts, while helpful, may not be as effective as prioritized community-wide projects. Addressing risks common to all of us in the Council area is best achieved through the Fire Safe Council and the grant funding it will seek.

The communities of Diamond ‘A’, George Ranch, Westerbeke Ranch, and Grove Street share common concerns and risks that can be assessed, prioritized, and managed through the Fire Safe Council. Evacuation planning, vegetation mitigation, defensible space initiatives, and public education initiatives can be tailored to address these common concerns.

**3. What is the difference between the Fire Safe Council and existing Emergency Preparedness Committees?**

The Diamond ‘A’Emergency Preparedness Committee provides information you and your family can use to prepare and plan for many types of incidents, including fire, earthquakes, and storms. It focuses on the individual and household, whereas the Fire Safe Council is primarily focused on fire risks at the community level. The Emergency Preparedness Committee and the Fire Safe Council will collaborate in many aspects of readiness planning. Community meetings, public education, fundraising, evacuation planning, and coordination with neighborhood associations are examples of such joint efforts.

**4. Is the Fire Safe Council a tax-exempt organization? May I make tax-deductible charitable contributions to help fund its efforts to make our community safer?**

 Not yet, and yes. We do intend to incorporate and apply for tax-exempt status, but we have just begun and plan to take those steps in a few months. In the meantime, The Sonoma Valley Volunteer Firefighters’ Association (SVFA) has agreed to serve as our fiscal sponsor. The SVFA is a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, so contributions earmarked for our Fire Safe Council are tax-deductible and will only be used for the Council. Please ask us for details when you are ready to make your contribution.

**5. How many properties are included in our Fire Safe Council?**

 Approximately 300.

**6. Is our Fire Safe Council part of a statewide organization?**

The California Fire Safe Council is a statewide tax-exempt organization. It helps establish local Fire Safe Councils. Importantly, it obtains funding for professional community risk assessments, assists with preparation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans, provides publications, and manages grant funding.

**7. Am I required to participate in the Fire Safe Council’s risk reduction efforts?**

No. Owning property or residing in the Council area does not require your participation, but we hope you’ll join the Council’s campaign to make our community safer. In general, the vegetation mitigation projects, fire breaks, fuel breaks, evacuation planning, and other projects envisioned by the Fire Safe Council will be conducted primarily on public land. Property owners’ consent will be obtained in advance if the successful execution of a project might be enhanced by using private land. The defensible space initiatives we hope to conduct will be intended to enhance your property’s survival chances and benefit the entire community. Your participation and input will be valuable to that effort.