



Westport Municipal Advisory Council

P. O. Box 307, Westport, CA 95488

Website: <https://www.wmac95488.org/>

Email: info@wmac95488.org

MINUTES OF THE WMAC MEETING

Thursday September 5, 2024

Westport Community Center, 24900 Abalone Street, Westport

1) **Begin Meeting/Roll Call:** Chair Quinton called the Meeting to order at 7:03 pm. A quorum of Directors was established and Chair Quinton referenced the previously posted Preliminary Meeting Agenda, and supporting documents that formed the Board Packet. In attendance at the Meeting inception: Directors: Robert Scott, Bill Knapp, Gary Quinton, Beck Regalia, and Sally Grigg (Alternate). Director Thad Van Bueren did not attend.

Public Attendance as recorded: Gary Markley, Sonny Grigg, Robert Finnell, Rob Holt, John Allison, Melinda McLaughlin, Dan Maxey, Eric Dumars, Rosalie Scott, Lee Tepper, Citizen Present, Michael Fox, Jeff Mathias, Sheila Winslow, and Carla Thomas.

2) **Consent Items:** Review and approve August 8, 2024 draft WMAC meeting minutes. Upon motion duly made (Director Scott) and seconded (Director Knapp) the Council unanimously approved the August 8, 2024 WMAC Meeting minutes as presented by voice vote.

3). **Public Expression: (Discussion Only-No Action)** Public comments are welcome on matters within the WMAC purview. Input is limited to 3 minutes per person and 10 minutes per subject. Topics raised here may be placed on a future WMAC agenda. Mr. Finnell voiced a suggestion that the WMAC draft and issue a letter expressing thanks to Director Van Bueren's extended service to the WMAC. Director Scott provided a brief overview of Director Van Bueren's role in the founding and involvement in the formation and operation of the WMAC over the many years. Director Scott stated a letter to this effect was a good idea and he would draft and issue to the Council for comment before sending the final to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors.

4. New Business (Discussion and Possible Action)

- a) Director Regalia referenced Agenda item 4a – (Conditions in the Westport Volunteer Fire Department) as an item warranting discussion. Director Regalia led the discussion and noting a recent WCWD board resolution approving an annual salary to the WCWD Fire Chief, funded from County Measure P funds. Chair Quinton stated the WMAC's obligation to discuss this topic was by way of a component of the WMAC mission statement (Emergency Response and Public Safety) and informing the WMAC public. Director Regalia expressed concerns regarding the job requirements, accountability, proper processes and transparency. Chair Quinton provided an overview of the purpose of the formation of the WMAC. Director Scott noted Mendocino County Municipal Advisory Councils were formed to represent County unincorporated areas. (7:15 p.m.) Chair Quinton opened up the floor for attending public input and discussion. Fire Chief Maxey deferred to WVFD Public Information Officer (PIO), Mr. John Allison for the initial discussion. Mr. Allison provided two documents to the Council as part of the extended discussion and disclosure: 1. "Chief



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Dan Maxey's Salary" and 2. "Job Description for Dan Maxey as Fire Chief and CEO - Westport Volunteer Fire Department." Mr. Allison noted that WVFD had received grant funds of approximately \$80,000 as part of Measure P, noting that the WVFD Board believed it was important to retain Fire Chief Maxey with an annual salary and this was reported out to the active duty WVFD membership. Mr. Allison continued with the discussion referencing various points and items noted in the two documents. Questions were asked and answered (7:25 p.m.) Director Scott inquired about comparable fire chief pay for other local fire chiefs. Mr. Allison noted compensation is paid by Fort Bragg, Albion, Mendocino is considering, and South Coast area. Mr. Allison noted that in the distant past, the Westport Water District and Fire Department were one organization. Questions were asked and answered. Director Knapp provided additional context and information regarding the formation of WVFD in 1972 and noted sales tax now funding for Measure P passed by majority vote November 2022. Chair Quinton reinforced the Westport community appreciation of the WVFD. Director Regalia questioned the process for determining and issuing the annual fire chief salary of \$50,000 as material percentage of the WVFD total annual budget. Additional input from Director Regalia on other WVFD needs (e.g., the relative value of funding a WVFD bookkeeper) Director Grigg inquired about remedies. (8:27 p.m.) Director Knapp questioned the need to delve into all the details and suggested exploring the possible opportunities that could arise from this status report. Additional discussion ensued with Mr. Allison providing additional details on the fire chief role, annual term and annual June elections for WVFD. Chair Quinton inquired about possible conversion of WVFD to a Fire District. Mr. Dumars indicated he had spoken to Supervisor Gjerde and Supervisor's Gjerde's concern about the substantial effort involved for establishing a Fire District for Westport with no likely certainty of success. Chair Quinton noted that value of having a District with property tax funding. Mr. Knapp noted property insurance aspects of WVFD response times. Mr. Allison responded to Mr. Knapp's comments. Mr. Holt provided input on accountability, transparency and qualification items. Chair Quinton summarily noted this was productive discussion. Mr. Finnell noted that currently, in his public opinion, the WVFD is the most consequential Westport charitable entity. Ms. Thomas inquired about the best manner to support WVFD. Ms. Dorine Real expressed the view that the WMAC gathering information is important. Director Regalia noted that from his chair, he believed this was an important agenda item for the WMAC to discuss for public input and information.

5. Old Business – Discussion and Possible Action (8:30 p.m.)

- a) **Cahto Road Petition and status report of litigation.** Mr. Gary Markley provided an update on his Superior Court litigation brought against an individual regarding the blocking access to and through Cahto Road, noting there is a settlement conference currently scheduled for early October 2024. Mr. Markley noted he had recently sent out a petition to an extensive list of residents/property owners in the WMAC area. Mr. Markley provided a brief history of Cahto Road and the actions taken by the local property owner to close access to Cahto Road, utilizing an installed metal gate and deep



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trenching. Sonny Grigg provided additional historical perspective on Cahto Road. Chair Quinton noted that both the Westport Village Society and WMAC have been involved to communicate local community concerns. (8:45 p.m.) Questions were asked and answered, with members of the public contributing comments and suggesting actions, such as a collective meeting of all Westport entities on this subject.

b) Coastal Development Permit CDP 2024-0011 (Save the Redwoods League – Applicant)

Chair Quinton referred to the Board Packet document and this request for a standard Coastal Development Permit (“CDP”) to demolish five structures which include a mobile home, three sheds and a barn-house, removal of a water tank, two propane tanks and a perched culvert and restore the riparian habitat. The Location is Coastal Zone approximately 8.5 miles north of Westport on the East Side of State Route 1, .2 miles south of its intersection with Usal Road (CR431) located at 49551 N. Hwy 1, Westport APN 013-390-15. Project Information can be found at: www.mendocinocounty.org. Questions were asked and answered and the process for the WMAC to respond to the County of Mendocino Department of Planning and Building Services letter dated August 19, 2024.

c) Save the Redwoods demolition permit with 45 page report. Case: CDP 2024-0015 dated filed 4/22/2024

Chair Quinton noted the following request: Standard Coastal Development Plan to demolish and remove an existing barrack structure, remove overhead electrical lines and associated panels, and install 315+/- linear feet of buried electrical conduit and associated electrical panels. Location: In the Coastal Zone 7+ miles north of Westport on a private road, .5+ miles west of its intersection with State Route 1 (SR-1) located at 44000 N. Hwy 1, Westport APN:013-410-14. The Mendocino County Coastal Permit Administrator will hold a public hearing on this matter on Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 10 a.m. at the Planning & Building Services Conference Room located at 860 North Bush Street, Ukiah. Virtual Meeting is live streamed and available for viewing on the Mendocino County YouTube channel. Public Comments can be sent to: pbcommissions@mendocinocounty.gov.

d) CDP 2023-2016 Gary Auble construct a home at 32900 N. Hwy 1.

Chair Quinton noted this CDP. Standard Coastal Development Permit to construct a one-story, 3072 sq. ft, single-family residence with 586 sq. ft. roof deck, driveway, connection to utilities, septic & primary leach field, and designation of replacement field. Location 3.2 miles South of Westport, 1.2 miles South of Bruhel Point Road (private) on the west side of State Route 1 (SR1) located at 32900 N Hwy 1, Westport APN: 015-370-14. Project Information can be found at www.mendocinocounty.org



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Director Knapp noted this proposed residence may not be located in the Scenic Zone. Chair Quinton that the WMAC desired to communicate these various CDP applications for the WMAC public and would communicate this disclosure to the County Department of Planning and Building Services.

6) Announcements/Correspondence (Discussion Only) (9:11 p.m.)

Director Scott announced that in conjunction with his retirement from a local Fort Bragg Credit Union Board of Directors, that he was offered the opportunity from the credit union to nominate a local charity for grant of \$5,000 by the credit union to the recommended charity. Director Scott announced that such \$5,000 grant would be issued to the Westport Community Church. Attendees applauded the news.

7) Preliminary Agenda for next Meeting October 3, 2024

Suggestions from the Board were inclusion of an update on the Cahto Road matter, discussion as to what the Westport Community can undertake to assist in the endeavor of a higher functioning fire department with more community involvement.

Mr. Quinton noted he would not be able to attend an October 3, 2024 WMAC Meeting. The Board then noted that since October 3, 2024 is the date of the Westport Village Society Meeting, it was likely that the WMAC would reschedule the WMAC meeting to the following week as October 10, 2024.

Adjournment. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Robert D. Finnell – Secretary of the Meeting