

## **Pacifica Chamber of Commerce Candidates Forum**

### **Question #10:**

Given that we have had record breaking fires seasons in California for the last few years, and given that more than half of the City is Green space, what do you believe the city should be doing in terms of planning, prevention, and enforcement to prevent the scenarios we see playing out on the news in other California towns and cities?

#### **Sue Beckmeyer:**

With the extreme and increasing danger of wildfires over the past few years, it would be prudent for Pacifica to engage in planning, prevention, and enforcement to educate the community about how to make the City of Pacifica safe. I would recommend that the City work with our partners in the county to see if there is a way to reduce costs and increase awareness.

#### **Mary Bier:**

Currently there are insurance companies that are dropping folks because of fire danger. I believe our leadership should be working closely with the state insurance commissioner to help prevent this from happening. Widespread outreach and education about prevention strategies to protect property by creating defensible space around homes and cutting back growth need to be available to the community. CERT training can be offered more frequently and at times where community members can participate. Neighborhoods can organize emergency networks with their neighbors and create a plan in case of fire that includes block captains and information about how to turn off the gas lines in the neighborhood. It is time for our community to educate about prevention, work closely with each other to keep our neighbors safe and learn how to protect our property from fire dangers.

#### **Bridget Duffy:**

Being more careful with electrical poles. PG &E is apparently responsible for most of California's fires.

#### **Vickie Flores:**

I believe that the city should be informing the public that if they don't have at least 100 feet of defensible space around their homes that their home fire insurance may be canceled. Secondly, I think the city should be reviewing properties that don't have that space cleared and working with them to make it happen. In addition, because of the drought there should be review of possible dried out or dying trees and a plan put in place to remove them as they contribute to large fires. We are lucky that we live on the coast as the fog really helps in keeping most of our trees moist, so our fire danger is not as high as it is inland.

**John Keener:**

Seems like an extension of question 7. If you talk to the Fire Department, they're doing a lot in terms of planning. Prevention is feasible to the extent we can get folks to keep their weeds down and follow the recommendations given during events like the one I mentioned earlier. Enforcement, I wonder what you mean? Get after PG&E about tree near their lines? One thing we have in our favor is the more moist climate than where most of the fires have started. Should we tax specifically for fire prevention? I don't think that will have much support.

**Mike O'Neill:**

The best we can do as a City is education to our property owners. The individual owner is the person that can best handle what needs to be done to lessen the threats of wildfire. Most of our open space is government owned either by San Francisco, GGNRA or San Mateo County. We have very little influence regarding forcing them to take fire prevention measures. The best solution except for individual homeowners acting in their self-interest is in place and that is mutual aid from other departments if needed.

**Adonica Shaw-Porter:**

I believe we need to update and promote an evacuation plan. In the event our parks and open spaces was to catch on fire, people wouldn't know where to go to meet their families or get help. Our seniors and the disabled would be abandoned with no dedicated group (aside from first responders) to get them to safety. I would be in favor of creating a citywide safety commission that would help with the dissemination of information in an emergency situation, and who would be willing to volunteer alongside the police and fire departments to move our residents to safety. Additionally I would work with the fire department to host informational sessions on fire safety for the community.