

# **Jemez Mountains Firewise Association**

## **Annual Meeting**

**Wednesday, January 31, 2024, 7:00 pm via Zoom**

### **Minutes**

**Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order at 19:03 by President Paul Lisko. Attendees: Paul Lisko, Ann Cooke, Harrison Jones, Tom Swetnam, Basil Swanson, Tom Bennion, Allie Lindman, Lee Taylor, Adriana Foris. All five current Directors were present, establishing a quorum. Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting (Harrison Jones, motion; Ann Cooke second) were unanimously approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasure Tom Swetnam reported no income for 2023 following a year of considerable private grant income including approximately \$20,000 for the Sierra Los Pinos water tanks and \$2,000 from the Los Alamos Community Foundation for recovery from the Cerro Pelado fire. Expenses totaled \$3,136.18 including \$1862 for materials for post-fire road repair in Sierra Los Pinos and the remainder for a camera and projector to facilitate virtual and hybrid meetings. The current balance for JMFA is approximately \$23,870 with the bulk of those funds allocated for the SLP water tank. Filing of the federal 990N tax form for 2023 is in progress.

**President's Report:** Paul Lisko presented his annual report, largely following the written version which he previously emailed to the board (see <link to pdf>). He discussed the following five topics:

1. Survey and engineering for site of water storage tank in SLP.
2. Developing alternative SLP access route along FS Road 4AM.
3. Update on CWPP contractor and FEMA funding for mitigation plan.
4. Dredging Fenton Lake near dry hydrant to make it more functional.
5. Availability of crew from Forest Stewards Guild for thinning projects.

#### **Additional Discussion and Comments:**

Item 2: Paul stressed the importance of identifying alternative access routes for each community with which the Forest Service could assist. Typically,

these routes would involve land or paths which do not require environmental and archeological assessment. He urged community representatives to attend any future meetings with District Ranger Golston and will advise JMFA members of meeting details.

Item 3: Lee Taylor noted that the CWPP contractor has been selected, focus areas have been determined, and meetings will begin this spring.

Item 4: Tom Bennion mentioned that a recent engineering study found that dredging all of Fenton Lake will be very costly and also involves fixing a leak in the dam. Paul said that he was focusing on limited work around the dry hydrant. Lee Taylor said that the hydrant is functional but supports dredging around it to improve and maintain performance.

Item 5: Regarding possible thinning help from the Forest Stewards Guild, Tom Swetnam clarified that the area involved is steep, privately owned property at the south end of Area 3 which connects to a Forest Service thinning project around Agua Duerme Spring,

**Air Curtain Burner:** Harry Jones summarized information concerning a possible proposal for an air curtain burner. The most likely candidate is a “Char Boss” which facilitates processing of the biochar produced by burning. It is a heavy, expensive device which requires attended operation and would of necessity be the responsibility of organizations with greater operational resources than JMFA. The idea was discussed at the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting at the Jemez Springs ranger station and, with further development, is a possible candidate for inclusion in the upcoming county CWPP.

**Thinning Report:** Tom Bennion discussed thinning projects for Gallagher Springs and Seven Springs. Three owners of property near Gallagher have expressed interest in applying to the Cuba grants program for assistance. One application for 4 lots, one containing the spring, has been submitted. One property owner plans to apply, and another is uncertain. Tom knows of about 10 applications from Seven Springs plus 2 that were denied (one too small, another already at 60 basal area). Five of the projects have been completed, one has been started, three have not yet started, and one owner has decided not to proceed. Tom lacks knowledge of other areas and notes that a major difficulty is attracting contractors. Jason Redmond, the local contractor, is fully booked. Tom Swetnam pointed out that there are two other potential applicants for thinning near Gallagher Springs.

**Fuels Treatment for Source Water Protection:** Tom Swetnam reported on a well-attended meeting of several interested agencies and people at the USFS Jemez District Ranger Station on December 8, 2023. Martha Graham’s summary of that meeting as well as an agenda and zoom link for a follow-up meeting on February 14, 2024 will be made available to attendees of this meeting. (Secretary’s note: as of 2/3/24, these documents have been forwarded to all JMFA members.) Tom noted that the December 8 meeting was very effective in promoting interaction between mutual interests and urges anyone interested to take part.

**Fire Preparedness Workshop(s):** Lee Taylor said that no date has been set. Paul pledged JMFA support as usual, and Harry mentioned the possibility of an additional workshop in Jemez Springs as was done in 2023.

**Other Discussion:** Lee Taylor mentioned that La Cueva Fire and Rescue had difficulty finding a suitable hydrant as a water source for an Area 2 structure fire in December 2023. Since then,

Lee has worked with the Jemez Springs Domestic Water Association to identify hydrants which can be used for future fires without endangering the water system. However, he also notes that there are currently no good water sources for Areas 1 and 3. The Water Association is willing to work with the fire department to construct appropriately located hydrants. Tom Swetnam endorsed the idea and discussed some details. Harry suggested that if financial support is needed, this would be a good “shovel-ready” project for the CWPP.

**Election of Members:** Harry Jones moved, and Paul Lisko seconded, a motion to make Adriana Foris a JMFA member. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Election of Board Directors:** Ann Cooke announced her resignation from the Board effective at the end of the meeting.

Ann Cooke nominated, and Harry Jones seconded, Tom Bennion to serve the remaining two years of a vacant position, effective immediately. All approved.

Paul Lisko nominated, and Harry Jones seconded, Allison Lindman to fill the three-year position vacated by Ann Cooke, effective immediately. All approved.

Tom Bennion nominated, and Paul Lisko seconded, Tom Swetnam and Harry Jones to continue as Board Directors for another term. All approved.

**Election of Officers:** Tom Bennion nominated, and Basil Swanson seconded, Paul Lisko, Tom Swetnam, and Harry Jones to serve respectively as president, treasure, and secretary for another year.

Tom Bennion nominated, and Tom Swetnam seconded, Harry Jones to also serve as Vice President for one year, as is allowed by the JMFA bylaws. All approved.

All officer terms are for one year, ending January 2025. The composition of the Board at the end of the meeting will be:

Paul Lisko, Director and President; Director term ends January 2025.

Harry Jones, Director, Vice President, and Secretary; Director term ends January 2027.

Tom Swetnam, Director and Treasurer; Director term ends January 2027.

Basil Swanson, Director, term ends January 2025.

Tom Bennion, Director, term ends January 2026.

Allie Lindman, Director, term ends January 2027.

Vacant Director position, term ends January 2026.

After unanimous acknowledgment of Ann Cooke’s 22 years of service, Paul Lisko accepted a motion by Harry Jones, seconded by Tom Swetnam, for adjournment. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 20:12.

