

Town of Los Altos Hills

Emergency Preparedness and Response Committee

Regular Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, November 4th, 2025 @ 6:00 pm. PDT

[Public Documents Folder \(minutes & agenda\)](#)

1. Call to order (start recording) [6:00 pm]

The meeting was called to order by Chair Harter at 6:00pm

2. Roll call of EPRC members [6:01 pm]

Voting Member	Status	Comment
(S) Amita Sachdeva	Present	
Ben Gikis	Absent	
(VC) Dave Stewart	Present	
(C) Phil Harter	Present	
Rob Singh	Present	
Sam Wood	Present	
Terry Kearney	Present	

With **6** of **7** voting members attending, a quorum was present.

Associate Member	Status	Comment
Bill Lattin	Present	
Bill Ralston	Present	
David Gilmour	Absent	
Neil Katin	Absent	
Victoria Bebee	Present	

Other attendees

Name	Comment
Jay Bradford	LAH Community Development Director
Michael Lange	T-Mobile
Neil Mielke	
Denise Gluhan	LAHCFD Liaison
Steve Garcia	T-Mobile
Matthew Boggs	T-Mobile

3. Public comment on subjects not on the agenda

4. EPRC Chair Remarks (Harter)

- Thank you to everyone that was here last week
- Will share briefly the report/follow up from last week. It will be in some format that will be presented to City Council
- Will delete “current term” next to the names of current EPRC members
- EPRC Charter was presented
- EPRC 2025 accomplishments were presented (list that exec committee came up with)
- EPRC 2-year goals (2026-2027) presented
 - Staffing needs, maximize emergency mass notifications to residents, radio communications, disaster mitigation, other
 - Establish emergency action teams - hours listed around 500 hours for outreach & procurement support which will be separate from the EM role
- Hiring full-time Emergency Manager for LAH
 - Single most important goal for emergency preparedness
 - We have been unsuccessful at keeping up with required work with part-time contracts
 - Coordinate goals with EPRC (add from Dave)
 - Most if not all are annual tasks, not one & done (Bill L)
 - Steve Garcia (safety manager back in 2011) there was a job description for this person back in the time, and similarities to the current job description for the Emergency Manager position.
 - He retired and the responsibilities were then filtered into consultant’s role and weren’t filled at the time
- The goals presentation to City Council will be 2 hours long - the breakdown for each committee and order of speaking has not been set yet (Cody)

5. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes 10.7.2025

Member	Moved	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Ben Gikis							x
Dave Stewart			x				
Phil Harter			x				
Rabindra Singh			x				
Sam Wood			x				
Terry Kearney					x		

5 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain. Motion Approved

5. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes – Special Meeting 10.27.2025

Member	Moved	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Ben Gikis							x
Dave Stewart			x				
Phil Harter			x				
Rabindra Singh			x				
Sam Wood			x				
Terry Kearney			x				

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain. Motion Approved

6. Consideration of Katy Serventi as an Associate Member of EPRC

- Interested in emergency response for several years. Also a physician, CERT member, and has joined several EPRC meetings

Motion: Add Katy Serventi as an Associate Member to the EPRC

Member	Moved	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Ben Gikis					x		
Dave Stewart			x				
Phil Harter			x				
Rabindra Singh			x				
Sam Wood			x				
Terry Kearney		x	x				

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain. Motion Approved

6.2 General and Invited Reports and Q&A

6.1 T-Mobile presentation on emergency communications (20 min)

- Victoria presented T-Mobile guests who are present on Zoom (Michael Lange, Steve Garcia, Matthew Boggs)
- Steve Garcia - government account rep
- Michael Lange - public safety was on IMT committee for years
- Matt Boggs - solutions engineer - 21 years in the industry promoting public safety
- 40% of people are on T-Mobile - it's one of the top carriers now
- Drones, data, cell phones - everything needs to be transmitted wirelessly
- The capabilities we're seeing now especially with 5G are game changing and have a big impact on emergency management
- Starlink has also been a game changer for the industry
- In the wireless world, communication is the most important. Wireless party - created after 9/11
- AT&T has FirstNet, Verizon has Frontline, T-Mobile has T-priority (wireless priority)
 - The network can auto adjust themselves and give priority to first responders if needed
 - There is no change in the network, there are special markers (packet markers) which are given higher priority for those who are registered on T-priority
 - You can get this on your personal devices, but needs to be approved by your agency
 - T-Mobile is the only carrier with a special contract with Starlink
 - 750 satellites launched
 - Data, texts, certain apps, email, light maps are supported

- If you're out in an area where there are no towers, you have a direct redundancy through your cell phone
- Low earth orbiting satellites that are purposely built
- WhatsApp is one of the apps supported, you can make voice calls, video calls, send locations real time. The service is real and viable and continuing to expand and grow
- Failing infrastructure - if cell phone access is done, is the satellite solution the solution in these instances?
- Your phone needs to be registered with Homeland Security, and sponsored by your respective agency (in this case LAH)
- Emergency Response and Management Organization
 - They are staged in Northern California and devices deployed in certain fires and are available 24/7
 - Deployables - all severe weather-related events (i.e. hurricanes)
 - 24/7 toll free - 888-639-0020
 - GETS 524-295-2220
 - ERTRequests@T-mobile.com
- Our cell phones can have multiple carriers now. They are no longer relying on just one carrier.
- People are having star link as a 2nd option in addition to their primary carrier
- Can now track personnel - firefighters, etc in rural areas. From an Incident Commander perspective, you can see where your personnel is now
- In LAH, there are a lot of dead spots, non-coverage zones. The motive used to be to build more cell coverage areas. Is there a hotline or conversation with T-Mobile to build that gap or will satellite solutions cover that gap? (Rob)
 - This is meant to only fill the gap but not replace it as a primary solution (Michael Lange)
 - There's always interest in adding towers, and if a need arises to enhance network, then it's good for both sides
 - If a tower is only at 4G, there may be something in the works to increase capacity
 - Adjustments can be made to towers remotely now
 - Challenge is getting through the challenges of communities not wanting a tower in their area
 - The only way to get coverage with T-Mobile for Sam is only through the La Cresta bridge
 - The tower at Town Hall has Verizon and AT&T
 - Bill Lattin - capacity planning have they done this especially if there's an earthquake?

6.2 SCCFD Defensible Space Issue (Davis/Bradford – 15 minutes)

- Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps & home hardening
- WUI map was presented by J Bradford
- There is a new defined area for coverage for fire severity zones and what the Fire Department is hoping to propose to have the same inspection criteria for all fire severity zones
 - For non-designated areas, they would not do their inspections
 - As new projects are coming online, that they comply with the new defensible space regulations
- The Fire Department would like the EPRC's input on this
- The Fire Marshall currently enforces the weed abatement program
- Once every 3 years by state code that a Fire Marshall can come by and do an inspection, but this is typically only a drive by and not a walkthrough of the property
- Through the code adoption process for the building code, what is the responsibility that the fire department is being assigned through the building code standards.
- We would still maintain defensible space for remodels/rebuilds through the Town, but that's not the department's requirements
- The engine company comes out, not the Fire Marshall, if compliance still does not happen, it gets turned over to weed abatement
- You will need to get a warrant from a judge if you need to go onto the property
- HIZ is all WUI and defensible space and offered at no cost by the fire district
- Does the Fire Department plan to use drones? And is it a violation of privacy? Drones are legal in the state.

6.3 Brief report on joint EPRC/EDPC meeting (Stewart – 10 minutes)

- Joint subcommittee meeting - with Phil and Dave
- Most of the people at this meeting are unaware of what the law requires
- First thing that will be done as a subcommittee is to drop all the items into a subfolder, get HIZ recommendations from Paige
- Next meeting has not been scheduled yet, but will be coming up reasonably soon
- Can laws be changed in town without destroying the rural atmosphere
- The code & informal standards are two pieces to this
- All these documents are being collected in the EPRC public folder under the joint subcommittee folder and there's an additional folder with questions

7. Town and Fire District Reports

7.1 Town Council Liaison Report (Bhateja)

- Had 2 meetings in October - most about housing elements and pathways, building code updates, adopted technical parts of the building codes. The City

Manager went on medical leave and announced his resignation. Cody Einfalt is acting City Manager.

7.2 City Manager's Report (Pirnejad/Einfalt)

7.3 Town Emergency Manager's Liaison Report (Bebbee)

- Victoria will be leaving the Emergency Manager Consultant position.
- She wants to make sure that she does not leave the Town unprepared, and she is working on bringing someone in that will be able to take over and take care of the Town.
- Jeff Walker sent an updated AlertSCC sign up list
- We started with 3830 residents signed up since June 1st and now up to 3907 as of November 1st
- Proposal to do a Nixle check in by December 1st, and she would like to do a test with Nixle and AlertSCC
 - What kind of metrics do we want to see with this? Will set up a meeting with Rob, Bill L, Dave, Cody, Victoria soon

7.4 District Liaison Report (Gluhan)

- Superbowl LX & FIFA World Cup 2026 - District priority to attend twice a week
- Dee King Raub attends meetings every week for monthly ops coordination for Superbowl & FIFA World Cup 2026
- Residential Concerns - Private Roads
- Concerns about down trees, private roads, one-way out
- Emergency Vehicle Easement Concerns from Residents: evacuation concerns - access, lack of maintenance plan, easement language, easement responsibility, locks present
- 8 recognized Firewise USA communities & 3 new communities organizing
- 2nd Firewise meetings - tomorrow, November 5th, the normally scheduled 2nd meeting has been cancelled due to it falling on a holiday
- HIZ postcards mailers - two targeted marketing groups - 1,670 total residents in focused mailings
- HIZs - September data: 24 HIZs completed, 18 HIZ requests
- 9 rebates processed in September \$20.6k & 59 rebates processed since program inception - \$125.9k
- Amita had a lot of CERT meetings with digitizing systems, EOC integration and work together
 - Had a drill last month in November on EOC/CERT drill (correction, should have been mentioned as October)
 - Denise and Dee attended Oktoberfest for Los Altos and Mountain View Community Foundation
- Brush Chipping - about 100 participants a month. Fire District is working with a secondary source to dispose of brush chipping
- Evacuation route maintenance for Robleda-Burke currently ongoing
- Dr. Daniel Swain spoke on climate change at 2nd Annual Wildfire Community Preparedness Day event on May 3rd

8. EPRC Subcommittee Reports

- **Community Outreach (Sachdeva – 5 minutes)**
 - Continue campaign to get AlertSCC signups
- **Code Changes (Stewart - 10 minutes)**
 - CA Building Code Standards - fence code updated to include non-combustible
 - Adopt WUI regs across the Town - recommended by EPRC
- **Mass Notification (Singh – 15 minutes)**
 - Next meeting there will be an add on of T-Mobile presentation
 - Work with Victoria on AlertSCC presentation. Assess LAH as an entire community to improve cell coverage within the Town
- **Town Emergency Plans (Stewart – 5 minutes)**
 - Look at general activation
 - Look at bigger EOP draft
- **Emergency Communications (Wood/Katin – 8 minutes)**
 - No updates on repeaters since the batteries
 - When will the Heritage House be reopened?

9. Review action items from the meeting

Discuss/Propose Future Agenda Items

Chief Davis will be put back on the agenda for next month

Add agenda item and motion to discuss the Fiber connection from the Town to the ARK, and if we should bring this item to council.

Motion to light up the dark Fiber and establish the connection between Town Hall to the ARK (tap into the Town's internet)

Working on updating Fire Severity Map website and will be consolidating the information and have it up within a week or two

Dave has two suggestions: Neil Mielke has 2 great presentations on California Live Oak & Invasive Species and on LiDAR and Paradise Fire. How the Town's landscaping used to look like when the Town was founded (20 minutes presentation)

10. Adjournment [19:53]

Chair adjourned the meeting without objection.