

Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council

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Summary of Tuesday, January 23, 2018 Meeting

Emergency Response and Communications Associated with a Large Fire on a Ship While at a Plant Dock

Phil Glenn, President of the Clean Channel Association (CCA), discussed the role that his organization plays in responding to ship fires. CCA was established by industry to provide emergency response capability for large spills and specializes in open water recovery and containment. Their primary operating area is the upper Texas coast, Galveston Bay, Freeport, and the Intracoastal Waterway, but they can be deployed to other areas. Some of the available resources are barges, skimmers, and decontamination trailers (which can be adapted for wildlife rehabilitation). Glenn stated that the best response in the world can be overshadowed by not recovering affected wildlife in a timely manner. He briefly described the changes in national regulations and shared stories about various ship fires and incidents that he had been involved with.

Joe Leonard, who has retired from the Coast Guard and now works with the Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health, once was a firefighter for the Pasadena Volunteer Fire Department (PVFD). He said that the good relationships between the various entities within this area help everyone to be successful. He also shared stories about the fires that he had been involved with. A question was raised about new technologies. Leonard indicated that aerial drones give a big advantage in fighting ship fires. Drones were also used after Hurricane Harvey to evaluate environmental impacts. He believes that this area benefits from the number of PVFD firefighters who also serve on their plant's fire response teams because they have both municipal and industrial firefighting training.

Pat Cooney, also retired from the Coast Guard, described his role as a lawyer as protecting the ship's owners during the incident. The first item to clarify is jurisdiction, who does what, and then determine what cargo is on board the ship. A fire at a dock would be considered a local matter. The Coast Guard are not firefighters and assume the role of lead federal agency due to environmental concerns. Cooney also shared stories about incidents he had been involved with.

Glenn's presentation about the Clean Channel Association is also posted at www.pasadenacac.org