

# **Bonsall Community Sponsor Group – Meeting Minutes (August 5, 2025)**

## **Call to Order & Establishment of Quorum**

Chair Steve Norris called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 PM at the Bonsall Community Center . Quorum was established with 5 of 6 seated members present. Members Present: Steve Norris, Mike Collier, Larissa Anderson, Meghan Leeuwen, Jared Rowley. Members Absent: Jennifer Haider. (Note: There is a vacancy pending the appointment of Sophia Kittell, which the County Board of Supervisors will consider on August 26, 2025 .)

## **Welcome to Audience & Pledge of Allegiance**

Larissa Anderson welcomed all in attendance. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the group and audience.

## **Approval of Agenda**

The August 5, 2025 agenda was reviewed and approved as presented. Motion: Steve Norris moved to approve the agenda; Second: Jared Rowley . Vote: Motion carried unanimously, 5-0. (Yes – Norris, Collier, Anderson, Leeuwen, Rowley; Absent – Haider.)

## **Approval of Minutes (June 2, 2025)**

The minutes of the June 2, 2025 regular meeting were reviewed. Minor corrections to the draft minutes were noted.. Motion: Mike Collier moved to approve the June 2, 2025 minutes as corrected and to adopt the updated Standing Rules; Second: Steve Norris . Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0. (Yes – Norris, Collier, Anderson, Leeuwen, Rowley; Absent – Haider.)

## **BCSG Board Member Reports**

Each Sponsor Group member or liaison gave reports on relevant regional committees and boards (E):

- Association of Planning Groups (APG): Steve Norris reported on the recent APG meeting. He noted that a City of Oceanside Councilmember attended to discuss regional planning coordination . The APG also provided guidance on updated standing rules for community groups, which the Bonsall CSG adopted as noted above.
- SANDAG: Mike Collier reported on San Diego Association of Governments activities. He mentioned ongoing development of the regional transportation plan and funding discussions, with no immediate direct impacts on Bonsall (informational only).

- I-15 Corridor Design Review Board: Jared Rowley indicated that the Corridor Design Review Board had no new updates affecting Bonsall (no meeting was held in the past month).
- Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC): Meghan Leeuwen noted that the County TAC met on August 1, 2025 . The TAC discussed lowering speed limits on Mission road but nothing was voted on.
- Bonsall Unified School District (BUSD) Board: Larissa Anderson reported that the school district is preparing for the upcoming 2025–26 school year. The results of a year long Bonsall Advisory Comity was to convert the Lilac site to a K-6 school and to redesign the site next to the community center to a 7-12 school.

## **Action Items (Voting Items)**

### **1. Extra Space Storage – Minor Signage Deviance (APN 172-091-11-00)**

Discussion: The project applicant presented a Minor Deviation for signage at the Extra Space Storage facility. The request was to adjust on-site signage, and the proposal details were reviewed by the group. The Sponsor Group discussed the signage plan and found it consistent with community guidelines (no significant objections were noted).

Motion: Steve Norris moved to recommend approval of the requested signage deviation; Second: Jared Rowley .

Vote: Approved 5-0 (unanimous) . All five members present (Norris, Collier, Anderson, Leeuwen, Rowley) voted “Yes.” (Member Haider was absent and did not vote.)

## **2. Parks & Recreation Updates**

(This item encompassed several sub-topics; no formal votes were taken, as these were updates and discussion only.) The Sponsor Group received updates on local parks and recreation projects from a County Parks representative (parks project manager) :

- **Bonsall Community Park Progress:** County staff reported progress on the new Bonsall Community Park project. (It was noted that ground-breaking has occurred and development is ongoing on the planned park infrastructure – informational update.)
- **Equestrian Trail Connections:** The group discussed efforts to maintain and improve equestrian and hiking trail connections in the Bonsall area. The importance of linking community trails (especially around the San Luis Rey River and surrounding developments) was reiterated. No action was taken, but the topic remains a community interest.
- **Rio Prado Park:** An update was provided on Rio Prado Park, a regional park project along the San Luis Rey River. The project is in the planning stages, and coordination with adjacent communities (such as Fallbrook) continues. No new action or decisions were required at this meeting (information only).
- **County Park Needs Assessment Survey:** The group announced that San Diego County's Park Needs Assessment Survey is in progress, and community members are encouraged to participate . A link to the online survey was provided during the meeting (available on the County's Bonsall planning webpage) . No formal action was taken on this sub-item aside from sharing information.

## **3. Proposed Event Venue – Ocegüera Property (Initial Consultation)**

Location: 2636 Gopher Canyon Road (APN 170-192-22-00) . The property is currently zoned RR/SR-2 (Rural Residential) and would require a General Plan amendment for use as an event venue .

Discussion: This item was an initial consultation for a proposed private event venue (wedding/event facility). The project applicant (Oceguera family) introduced the concept. Approximately 20 community members from the surrounding area were present and spoke in opposition to the idea . Neighbors voiced concerns about potential noise, traffic on Gopher Canyon Road, and incompatibility with the rural character of the area. Given that this was a preliminary discussion, no vote or formal position was taken by the Sponsor Group on this item . The feedback from residents was noted, and the applicant was advised to consider the community's concerns in any future plans.

#### **4. “Innovative Energy Station” Project (I-15 & Old Hwy 395)**

Location: Interstate 15 at Old Highway 395, on the “H & T Land & Cattle” property. This project proposes a new energy station/truck stop facility. It requires a Rezone, General Plan Amendment, and Site Plan. A County scoping letter and project issue checklist were published on July 11, 2025 , outlining preliminary analyses of the project's impacts. The project representatives failed to show up again so there was no vote.

Discussion: Over twenty people showed up in opposition to the project. A community member gave an overview of the Innovative Energy Station proposal, which may include fuel services (including alternative fuels) and amenities for travelers. Several community members raised questions and concerns. One Sponsor Group member asked whether establishing a truck stop at that location could cause a nearby organic farm to lose its organic certification status (due to potential pollution or traffic) . Other concerns included increased traffic on Old Hwy 395, environmental impacts, and consistency with the rural community character.

## **5. Cultural Arts Designation Application (Fallbrook Center for the Arts)**

Issue: The Fallbrook Center for the Arts is preparing an application for a designated Cultural Arts Area. Discussion focused on whether Bonsall should be included in this regional cultural arts designation . Examples of potential arts events that could involve Bonsall were mentioned (such as local film festivals, community murals, art shows, etc.) .

Discussion: Sponsor Group members discussed the benefits of being included in the Fallbrook arts designation. Inclusion could promote local art and cultural events in Bonsall and strengthen regional ties. No objections were raised to the idea. There was general consensus supporting Bonsall's participation.

Action: No formal motion was recorded for this item. However, the group expressed support for having Bonsall included in the Cultural Arts designation. The Chair agreed to communicate Bonsall's interest to the Fallbrook Center for the Arts or appropriate County contacts. (Information and discussion only; no vote taken.)

Motion by Steve Norris to include the Bonsall commercial corridor from River Village down to old Bonsall 395 Bridge, as well as the old school house and the Lilac school to all be included in the limits of the proposed Cultural Arts Designation. Jared Rowley Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Vote: Approved 5-0 (unanimous) . All five members present (Norris, Collier, Anderson, Leeuwen, Rowley) voted "Yes." (Member Haider was absent and did not vote.)

## **Information Items (No Formal Action)**

(The following items were presented for information only – no votes were taken.)

## **1. Bonsall Learning Academy – Introduction**

A proposal to establish the Bonsall Learning Academy, a licensed daycare and preschool, was introduced. Location: 5425 Mission Road, Bonsall, CA 92003 . The property is currently permitted for office and residential use; operating a daycare/preschool will require a change of occupancy classification to “E” (Educational) under County and State regulations . The proponent (or future applicant) provided an overview of the concept. This was an informational presentation only – the group asked questions about traffic, parking, and licensing, but no action was required at this stage.

## **2. Farm Bureau – 2025 Agriculture Impact Report**

The Sponsor Group acknowledged the recent release of the San Diego County Farm Bureau’s “Agriculture Impact Report 2025” . A link to the report was provided (via the Farm Bureau website) for members and the community to review. Highlights of the report (such as county-wide statistics on agriculture and economic impacts) were noted informally. Bonsall’s agricultural stakeholders are encouraged to read the report for insights into local farming trends. (Information item; no action taken.)

### **3. Cannabis Program Update – EIR, Ordinances & Timeline**

County staff are continuing work on the comprehensive Cannabis Program update, including an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and new ordinances for cannabis facilities in unincorporated areas. It was noted that this item is anticipated to go to the County Planning Commission for consideration in Fall 2025 . A brief informational video summary (approx. 20 minutes) of the draft EIR comments is available on the County’s engagement portal – the recap of public comments starts at about 9:05 in the video. The Sponsor Group did not need to take any action; this update was provided for general awareness. Members briefly discussed potential implications for Bonsall (such as zoning for cannabis businesses), but no specific local issues are determined until the County finalizes the program.

### **4.**

#### **Ethereal Gardens**

##### **Wedding Venue (Nearby Project)**

An informational notice was shared about the Ethereal Gardens wedding venue project. Location: 8561 West Lilac Road, Escondido, CA 92026 (adjacent to the Bonsall area) . This project involves a modification to an existing Major Use Permit (Case PDS2024-MUP-94-025W1) and is currently in the environmental scoping phase (scoping period through September 2025) . Although the project is outside Bonsall’s planning area, the proximity means Bonsall residents may be interested (e.g., potential traffic on West Lilac Road). The group



received this as an informational update; no action was taken. It was noted that comments or questions can be directed to County staff during the scoping period.

## **5. Roadway Considerations**

The Sponsor Group discussed several road and traffic concerns in the community. One topic was the connectivity between the River Village shopping center and the Bonsall Post Office area across the San Luis Rey River. Attendees noted the challenges of this route, including an old narrow bridge. The need for improved pedestrian and vehicular access in that area was mentioned as a future consideration. Additionally, members referenced the County's Bonsall community planning webpage, where local roadway improvement plans and updates are posted . (The link to the Bonsall planning page was provided for reference.) This discussion was informational, intended to flag community concerns for future follow-up. No formal action was taken on this item.

## **Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)**

H. The Chair opened the floor for public comments on matters not listed on the agenda. One community member came forward:

- Rick Porter – Mr. Porter spoke during general public comment. (His comments addressed a local concern not on the agenda; specifics were not noted in the meeting record.) The Sponsor Group listened and thanked him for his input.

No other public comments were offered on non-agenda items.

## **Future Planning**

- The next regular meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at 7:00 PM . Due to anticipated scheduling conflicts around the Labor Day holiday, the group discussed rescheduling. An official notice will be posted to inform the community of this change.
- Future agenda items may include continued discussion on any pending projects and community plan updates. Members were encouraged to submit any new agenda item requests ahead of the next meeting.

## **Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Larissa Anderson. Adjournment time: 8:50 PM (approximate). The Chair thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting.