

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP (BPG)  
\*\*\* MINUTES /SUMMARY FOR VIRTUAL MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 10, 2020 \*\*\***

Join Zoom Meeting: 7PM Tuesday, November 10, 2020:

**A. MEMBERS PRESENT:** 2) Earl Goodnight 3) Kevin Keane; 4) Donna Tisdale; 5) Michele Strand; 6) Michael Coyne; 7) Nancy Good. **SEAT 1: VACANT**

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** (WAIVED FOR VIRTUAL MEETING)

**C. MINUTES/SUMMARY MARCH 5<sup>TH</sup> MEETING:**

- *M/S: Strand/Goodnight: Approve March 5<sup>th</sup> minutes as written: Passed: 6 YES 0 NO Seat 1 vacant.*

**D. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:** no non-agenda public comments were made

**E. ACTION ITEMS (Agenda items may be taken out of order upon request):**

1. **BOULDER BRUSH FACILITIES SUBSTATION & GEN-TIE LINES FOR 60-CAMPO WIND AND 30-TORREY WIND TURBINES; PDS2018 - MUP-19-002; NOVEMBER 13 - PLANNING COMMISSION VIRUTAL PUBLIC HEARING:**
  - a. Chair Donna Tisdale recused herself from the vote, stating that her family's property shares a ½ mile common border to the Campo Wind Project that is far too close for comfort or safety. General Council advised her that she could speak on the matter as a member of the general public.
  - b. Board Member Michael Coyne stepped in to handle this Item.
  - c. Board member Nancy Good also recused herself from the vote as her property also adjoins a portion of the proposed project.
  - d. Tisdale and Good stated their concerns with adverse impacts related to Campo Wind turbines that require Boulder Brush Substation Facilities to connect to Sunrise Powerlink near homes at north end of Ribbonwood Road.
  - e. County staff recommends project approvals despite all evidence presented against project.
  - f. Brief discussion of repeated concerns / issues. Main points:
    - Adverse health and safety impacts, increased fire risk, loss of resources, quality of life, and property values; impacts to wildlife and livestock, and more.
    - Disbelief that staff would recommend turbines taller than tallest San Diego high rise.
    - Mexican President reported as saying turbines have been a mistake, ugly, with too many impacts.
    - Some in Mexico are calling for removal of Energia Sierra Juarez turbines at La Rumorosa.
    - Germany has faced many turbine lawsuits resulting in net zero new turbines there.
    - Urban-rural divide. City voters just dump things in rural areas without regard, further exacerbating divide. Urban planners keep approving turbines when evidence contradicts their recommendations. Even HHS whitepaper used vague language and had a lack of citations.
    - Main police power is to protect public health and safety and they are not doing that.
    - No project support was expressed. All comments in opposition.
  - g. *M/S: Coyne/Keane: Vote to continue previous opposition and authorize Chair to submit opposition comments on Boulder Brush Facilities Substation & Gen-Tie Lines (for the Planning Commission hearing on November 13<sup>th</sup>): Passed: 4 YES, 0 No, 2 abstained (Seat 1 Vacant; Seat 4 Tisdale & Seat 7 Good Abstained).*

2. **90 MW JACUMBA VALLEY RANCH ENERGY PARK (JVR SOLAR) DRAFT EIR OUT FOR PUBLIC COMMENT THROUGH NOVEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup>. PDS2018-GPA-18-010, PDS2018-REZ-18-007, PDS2018-MUP-18-022; PDS2018-ER-18-22-001:** Group will vote on whether or not to continue previous opposition to this project (4-4-19) and to submit comments by the 4PM Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> deadline.

- a. Public discussion: Main points:
- b. Cherry Diefenbach, Jacumba Sponsor Group and resident. Only 3 group members at their meeting with no consensus. One reportedly served on water board for JCSD that has water agreement with project and one used to work for JCSD but moved to Arizona.
- c. 25 people participated in the County's virtual JVR hearing on October 28<sup>th</sup>. New owner of spa opposes project that will drive away business.
- d. Sets bad precedent; lose ability to grow town; gliders say glare study is bad; visual study omits close up views and from Old Hwy 80; setbacks 40 ft from senior center, 75 ft from residents and 75 ft from Wagon Wheel trailer park; failed to address historic farm buildings; property farmed since 1928.
- e. Up to 90 MW solar with 3.2 acre substation; not sure if ECO Substation has capacity; 35-38 year project—3 options: One increase setback to 300 ft on NE side of project; increased setback and reduced acreage are way up by I-8 and don't help community; Bad project overall.
- f. Lots of inconsistencies, errors and omissions including water quantity and source, number of employees.
- g. Cumulative impacts, including groundwater, and visual impacts. Some panels will be elevated on hill at old farm HQ location;
- h. Landscaping and fencing is proposed but won't reduce or adequately mitigate visual impacts.
- i. Cumulative impacts including fire risk.
- j. Reminder that McCain Conservation (Fire) Camp will be closing January 1<sup>st</sup>.
- k. Concerns expressed about battery storage that represents major fire hazards.
- l. Concerns expressed that we should not oppose every area project. Focus on Boulevard.
- m. *M/S: Keane/Strand: Continue previous opposition and authorize Chair to submit opposition comments on JVR Solar: Passed: 5 YES, 1 NO (Coyne), 0 Abstentions (Seat 1 Vacant).*

3. **REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT:** Vote on Donna Tisdale's request for reimbursement from San Diego County for \$92 paid to the US Postal Service (11-4-20; personal ck #14694) for the annual fee for PO Box 1272 for the Boulevard Planning Group:

- a. *M/S: Keane/ Coyne: Approve Donna Tisdale's request for reimbursement for \$92 for US Post Office (rental fee for Box 1272): Passed: 6 YES, 0 NO, 0 Abstained (Seat 1 vacant)*

**F. GROUP BUSINESS, ANNOUNCEMENTS & PROJECT UPDATES- NO ACTION CAN BE TAKEN ON THESE ITEMS:**

1. Chair Tisdale repeated fact that applications for vacant Seat #1 are still being accepted.
2. **Renewable Energy Overlay Options:**
  - a. Planner Donald Chase showed his November 6<sup>th</sup> slide presentation
  - b. The County is working on **Renewable Energy Overlay options**. They are considering Implementation Options sorted into two categories. The Renewable Energy Overlay zone options include areas of the unincorporated areas of the County most feasible for the following :
    - Large Solar PV
    - Large Wind Energy
    - Large Concentrated Solar Power

- Combination of all three
  - Renewable Energy Overlay zone options with environmental streamlining, and
  - Regulation and process options designed to simplify and enhance project development requirements and permit streamlining opportunities.

**Major points of discussion:**

- c. The draft option maps all include most if not all of Boulevard Planning Area and Jacumba. This will come back to the Board of Supervisors on Dec 9<sup>th</sup> (later moved to 2/10/21).
- d. Responding to direction from Board of Supervisors. Provide Board with better streamlining options.
- e. Board asked for options but not for favored options.
- f. Analysis driven by lots of layers of overlay focused on PV, Concentrated Solar and wind.
- g. Recognize disproportionate impacts to Boulevard area but grid infrastructure is there.
- h. Came up with 70-75 square miles in East and North County with ideal locations for up to 13 gigawatt hours of solar.
- i. Most good wind sites have already been built out.
- j. Will follow up on comments regarding health related wind pushback in Germany and wind opposition in Mexico.
- k. Can also pursue solar on rooftops, brown fields, and parking lot structure; community choice alternatives, incentives, net-metering, feed in tariffs.
- l. County still needs more energy from local and out of state sources.
- m. Most recent analysis for community choice alternative indicated enough power from all projects that have already been approved.
- n. Request made for names of the projects that were deemed approved. Does it include approved projects?
- o. SDG&E provides 41% renewable; Community Choice looking at 80-85% to 100%.
- p. Questions were raised about reducing demand.
- q. County key goal is to reduce demand and increase efficiency as part of transition to alternatives and away from fossil fuels.
- r. Concerns with Public Safety Power Shutoffs were raised; we get shut off while big wind and solar projects are allowed to operate during RED FLAG weather events, thereby increasing fire risk in high risk area.
- s. As Community Choice comes online and SDG&E moves to grid operator, distributed generation is key and not relying on pivotal infrastructure like out-of-state transmission.
- t. Streamlining reduces required review like North County Multiple Species Conservation Plan.
- u. Still need site specific review.
- v. Wind turbines and battery storage represent new and increased fire risk.
- w. Projects are basically forced to include batteries to help manage load. Should be placed near substations. Need to share the pain. Not just focus on poor rural areas like Boulevard / Jacumba.
- x. Project-ignited fires were not part of analysis.
- y. Are there any 20 MW or larger existing projects located other than in our area?
- z. Options do focus on Mt Empire, Borrego, and I-15 corridor.
- aa. Energy should be generated where it is consumed: mini solar in big box parking lots, parking shade structures. That should come first before uglying up the beauty of backcountry. Winners and losers.
- bb. Community Choice entities are struggling. Can form neighborhood solar and microgrids. Currently in tech and supply transition.
- cc. Information only item. No action taken.

**3. San Diego County Water Authority is studying option of a major new water pipeline to move Colorado River Water from Imperial Irrigation District to San Diego.** One of three options is planned to run through Jacumba, Boulevard, Campo, and other backcountry communities.

- a. We need to keep an eye on this project and any plans that would impact our area.

## 1. REVITALIZATION REPORT

- a. Mark Ostrander reported that 90% of the community resource center bay had been converted to LED.
- b. COVID has hurt income. Need help with \$4-5,000 to cover insurance.
- c. Revitalization has some recycling facilities available. Call first to have someone open up for you.
- d. Internet has been added. More to come.

## FIRE SAFE COUNCIL REPORT:

- a. Ken Daubach reported that Fire Safe Council split. But Boulevard and Jacumba are still together.
- b. Held 7 free chipping events with 254 loads of brush; 350 loads of trash at 3 events; 13,000 pounds of hazardous materials at Campo event; 700 tires collected at Jacumba event; 155 mattresses collected; 78 kids participated in drive through pumpkin patch event. Thank you to everyone who participated.

## 2. PROJECT UPDATES:

- a. **TERRA-GEN'S 252 MW-60 TURBINE CAMPO WIND PROJECT:** Approved by Dept of Interior in April 2020. Resolution of litigation filed 7-8-20; petition filed with FAA challenging approval, and additional project approvals are still pending. The case was reportedly transferred to San Diego court on Nov 6. No local judge assigned, yet.
- b. **TERRA-GEN'S 126 MW TORREY WIND PROJECT WITH 30-4.2 MW TURBINES: PDS2018-MUP-18-014:** No project progress reported since approximately 2018. Probably waiting for approval of Boulder Brush
- c. **TULE WIND PHASE II:** Tule II is currently permitted to erect up to 24 new turbines on State land and the Ewiiapayaap Reservation, with a capacity of 69 megawatts. No project progress reported since approximately 2016.
- d. **74 MW RUGGED SOLAR: PDS2017-MUP-12-007W1 MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION-NEW PROJECT DESCRIPTON:** Project originally approved in 2014.
  - Jim Whalen reported that Clean Focus is still involved. Slow but going back to County for final submittal and approval in 3-6 months. Project footprint reduced by 20%.
- e. **60 MW 420 ACRE BOULEVARD SOLAR MUP12-010TE PDS2012-3300-12-00 @ 796 Tierra Del Sol Road:** No project progress reported. Approved in 2014 and terminated by Soitec Solar in March 2015.
- f. **100MW BOULEVARD ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY; PDS 2017-ZAP-17-006:** No action or progress since approximately 2017.

## G. ADJOURNMENT: NEXT MEETING SET FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3RD, 2020 @ BACKCOUNTRY RESOURCE CENTER.

Minutes approved as corrected by Group at meeting on 2-4-21:

Michele Strand, Secretary: 

**For More information** contact Donna Tisdale, Chair at 619-766-4170 or [tisdale.donna@gmail.com](mailto:tisdale.donna@gmail.com) ; Current and past meeting agendas and approved minutes are posted on the County website @

<http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/gpupdate/comm/blvd.html>

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