

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP (BPG)  
\*\*\*MINUTES / SUMMARY FOR IN-PERSON MEETING HELD AUGUST 5, 2021\*\*\*  
AT THE COMMUNITY ROOM BEHIND THE BACKCOUNTRY RESOURCE CENTER  
AT 39919 RIBBONWOOD ROAD, BOULEVARD, CA, 91905**

**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:**

**C. DRAFT MINUTES/ SUMMARY FOR JULY 1ST MEETING:**

- *M/S: KEANE/COYNE: Adopt minutes for July 1, 2021 as written: Passed: 6-0-0*

**D. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:** No public comments on non-agenda items.

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

1. **RENEWABLE ENERGY OPTIONS – BATTERY STORAGE UPDATE: SEPT 1<sup>ST</sup> BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HEARING:**
  - Timothy Vertino, PDS Project Manager and Lynette Tessitore, Chair of Long range Planning presented an update.
  - Project was brought back to Board in February. Board selected NOT to pursue utility scale projects.
  - Exploring distributed projects and community benefits packages.
  - State goal of 100% renewable by 2045: out of state and offshore; pumped hydro storage; geothermal storage; behind the meter permits available over the counter and online @ PDS; large scale Major Use Permit (MUP) required; battery storage close to substations.
  - Batteries store energy for later use and stabilize grid; limited to industrial zones with site plan permit.
  - Boulevard has NO industrial zoning.
  - Option 4 to streamline battery storage in all zones.
  - A decommissioning plan will be added.
  - The County cannot mandate community benefit agreements.
  - Project goes back to Board of Supervisors September 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Comments:**

- Kevin Keane commented on how fire prone and dangerous lithium ion batteries are. Lithium Iron Phosphate (LFP) is less fire prone.
- Michael Coyne commented on need for better setbacks, restrictions, and protection for sensitive uses.
- Jim Whalen said they are looking for safer technology for battery storage for high risk areas. There should be regulatory incentive for safer lower risk options. Environmental Justice and basic requirements for benefits / mitigation.
- Coyne recommended mitigation for removal of open space such as fees for parks. Clean natural gas can be used. Will the previous big push for investment in natural gas now be wasted?
- Keane said hydrogen can be converted back to electricity and that hydrogen can be used to refuel trucks, since most of the long-distance trucking will be converting to hydrogen fuel.
- Vertino said State report did not include some newer options.
- Whalen mentioned home battery storage options.
- Tisdale repeated major concerns with Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) leaving rural communities in the dark while allowing industrial wind, solar, and high voltage transmission equipment to continue operate right next door during Red Flag high wind events.

2. **90 MW JACUMBA VALLEY RANCH ENERGY PARK (JVR SOLAR); AUGUST 18 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HEARING: FINAL EIR AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: PDS2018-GPA-18-010, PDS2018-REZ-18-007, PDS2018-MUP-18-022; PDS2018-ER-18-22-001:**

- Public discussion was held. No one expressed project support.
- Greg Curran of Jacumba asked for support for their Equity for Jacumba Alternative with reduced footprint moved away from town towards I-8.
- ***M/S: Coyne/Good: Authorize Chair to submit JVR Solar opposition letter to the Board of Supervisors for their August 18<sup>th</sup> hearing: Passed: 6-0-0***

3. **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) Draft 2021: *Regional Road User Charge / Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) tax.***

- Lynette Tessitore said the \$163 billion RTP for 2021-2050 is 4,000 pages. She will email copy of presentation.
- It addresses mobility, efficiency, social inequities, reducing Green House Gas emissions, SB 375.
- Staff is digging into the related impacts to the unincorporated areas of the County.
- Transit is a big deal, flexible fleet, mobility hubs that don't really benefit unincorporated areas, and infrastructure investments.
- Staff wants the RTP, including Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) fees, impacts to unincorporated areas addressed.
- Next review will be a programmatic EIR. A website will be available.
- SANDAG has been asked to meet with Staff on land use and proposed resource user fees.
- If unincorporated areas don't have access to RTP investments, we will be paying for majority of fees without benefiting from those investments.
- Chair reported that the SANDAG committee meeting on RTP was on August 5<sup>th</sup>, same as our meeting date.
- Tisdale asked Staff if we will be paying VMT user fees at the county, state, and federal levels. New federal plans call for about 40 cents per mile fee.
- Nancy Good, a school bus driver and trainer, asked what happens to electric school buses when flex alerts and Public Safety Power Shutoffs occur and they can't be charged.
- Jim Whalen said VMT is based on urban transit not rural realities and SB375 needs to be amended.
- Kevin Keane commented that electric cars are not feasible for our rural area due to limited number of miles per charge and extra power need to climb steep grades.
- Michael Coyne raised concerns with high poverty rates and regressive taxes for users.
- No action taken.

4. **SOCIALLY EQUITABLE CANNIBAS - PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING AUGUS 8<sup>TH</sup>:**

- Jacumba Community Sponsor Group's extensive comments were circulated for review.
- County staff circulated a comment that the current issue was focused solely on ordinance amendments that affect the five existing cannabis dispensaries that currently operate in the unincorporated region.
- None of the existing dispensaries are located in Mountain Empire Sub region or Boulevard Planning Area.
- ***No action was taken on this item.***

**G. GROUP BUSINESS, ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

1. Applications for vacant Seat #1 are being accepted.
2. Chair reported on a non-agenda item that she had forgotten to place on the agenda. It will be placed on the September 2<sup>nd</sup> agenda so members were requested to be prepared to discuss and take action then.



- a. **DPW- Capital Improvements.** The San Diego County Department of Public Works (DPW) requests our participation in identifying a prioritized list of transportation improvement projects on the county-maintained road network in your community. **Project types include the following:**
- **Road Reconstruction/Reconfiguration/New Roads:** Improvements include adding and/or modifying street lighting, lanes, turning lanes, roundabouts, or bike lanes to improve safety and/or increase roadway capacity.
  - **Bridges Repair/Reconstruction:** Improvements include adding and/or modifying street lighting, lanes, or bike lanes to improve safety and/or increase bridge capacity.
  - **Sidewalk/Pathways/Pedestrian Access Ramps:** Improvements include sidewalks, pathways, and ramps that promote safety and walking in the community.
  - **Drainage:** Improvements include corrections to storm drain problems on roadways or dip sections.
  - **Traffic Signals:** Installation of traffic signals to improve safety and traffic operation.
  - **Intersections:** Improvements could include new signals and turn lanes to improve safety and traffic operation.
3. **REVITALIZATION & FIRE SAFE COUNCIL REPORTS:** No report provided.

#### **H. PROJECT UPDATES:**

1. **STARLIGHT SOLAR:** Report on two separate member meetings (2 members each) on July 28<sup>th</sup> with Empire Ranch owners / project developers. The application is pending for this 20 MW project planned on Empire Ranch, Jewel Valley, with intent to connect to grid via the Boulevard Substation.
- Two separate meetings were held to avoid violation of the Brown Act.
  - Chair reported that she and Nancy Good met first and had lunch with Mr. Alex Haagen Sr, Alex Haagen Jr., Chris Fahey, the Haagen's President and COO, along with Jim Whalen, their consultant, and his employee.
  - Michele and Earl attended the second meeting and took a helicopter ride over the area. Michele reported that ride gave her a better perspective.
  - The preferred project site is in NE corner of ranch between Jewel Valley Road and Tule Jim Road near Boulevard Substation.
  - This is the first utility scale solar project for the Haagens who live on the coast in LA area. Alex Sr. said they looked into putting solar shade parking structures at shopping centers in Indio but it was too expensive and they would have to raise rent for struggling tenants to pay for it.
  - Tisdale reported requesting protection and setback from neighbors, underground lines, and community benefits package.
  - Neighbors moved here for rural atmosphere, views, dark skies and the quiet—not to live next to industrial energy projects.
  - No promises were made to support or oppose project.
  - Jim Whalen said that Mr. Haagen enjoyed the two meetings and told him to continue working with the community.
  - The previous Soitec Los Robles site on the Empire Ranch was included in the Soitec Solar PEIR.
  - Tisdale commented that there was very limited information on the Los Robles site in that PEIR.
  - Steve Wragg is involved. A design engineer will be hired.

- Jim will provide a large aerial photo for review.

2. **74 MW RUGGED SOLAR: PDS2017-MUP-12-007W1 MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION-NEW PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

- Jim Whalen reported that County staff is reviewing all technical reports.
- CEQA documents to follow.

3. **TERRA-GEN'S 252 MW-60 TURBINE CAMPO WIND PROJECT APPROVED BY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON 3-17-21 WITH VOTE TO APPROVE BOULDER BRUSH FACILITIES:**

- Chair Tisdale reported that Plaintiffs, including herself, had filed Motions opposing the Motion to Strike and motions to strike false and misleading information included in Campo Chairman's declaration. Judge could take action by or before August 19<sup>th</sup>
- Chair also reported that the FAA had informed her that they do not have an estimated date for final determination of HAZARD OR NO HAZARD for Campo Wind.

4. **TERRA-GEN'S BOULDER BRUSH SUBSTATION FACILITIES PDS2019-MUP-19-002; PDS2019-ER-19-16-001; UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS 3-17-21:**

- No news

5. **ENERGIA SIERRA JUAREZ (ESJ) WIND II-EXPANSION:**

- Current ground clearing on 13,000 acres near Ejido Jacume / La Rumorosa for 26 new Vestas V150-4.2 MW turbines is evident from Tierra Del Sol Road and other locations. SDG&E has Power Purchase Agreement.

6. **TERRA-GEN'S 126 MW TORREY WIND PROJECT WITH 30-4.2 MW TURBINES: PDS2018-MUP-18-014:**

- No news.

7. **TULE WIND PHASE II-69MW:**

- No project progress or news since approximately 2016:

**I. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:51PM: NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2ND, 2021.**

MINUTES APPROVED BY GROUP ON: 9-2-21

Donna Tisdale, Chair: Donna Tisdale DATE: 9-3-21