

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP (BPG)**

***** MINUTES/ SUMMARY FOR IN-PERSON MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY MAY 5, 2022***
AT COMMUNITY ROOM IN BACK AT 39919 RIBBONWOOD ROAD, BOULEVARD, CA, 91905**

A. MEMBERS PRESENT: 1) May 10th appointment pending for Manuel Casanova; 2) Earl Goodnight 3) Kevin Keane; 4) Donna Tisdale; 5) Michele Strand. **MEMBERS ABSENT:** 6) Michael Coyne (EXCUSED); 7) Nancy Good (EXCUSED)

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (optional):

C. ACT ON DRAFT MINUTES/ SUMMARY FOR APRIL 7TH MEETING:

- *M/S: Strand/Goodnight: Approve April 7, 2022 minutes as written: PASSED: 4-0-0*

D. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:

- Pamela Forrest introduced herself as a property owner on Tierra Del Sol Road. She provided a copy of AG grading Violation Notice AD22-008 for vacant 54 acre parcel that she received. They plan to grow alfalfa there.
- The site is not conducive to alfalfa growing that takes lots of water and basically level land.
- Over-clearing and removing brush that slows down rain water and holds the soil, can cause flooding on adjacent down gradient properties.
- She wants help to get County to extend comment period by 30-days.
- Chair Tisdale reported meeting Pamela at the Post Office saw the notice and contacted the Planner.
- The planner provided several documents that Tisdale handed over to Pamela.
- The Planner promised to send a copy of the Scoping Letter to the BPG when it is available. At that time it can be added to a future agenda for review and comment.
- Tisdale announced message from Anthony Windle, the owner of Live Oak Springs. He is moving in several mobile homes that will be parked in the RV Park area temporarily while the lots are being prepped, after eviction goes forward. He wanted to calm fears that the trailers would be in the RV Park permanently.

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

1. 74 MW RUGGED SOLAR: PDS2017-MUP-12-007W1 MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION; ADDENDUM TO REVISED PROGRAMMATIC EIR; NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT PURSUANT TO SECTIONS OF 15162 & 15164 OF CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA):

- Jim Whalen introduced himself as Rugged Solar LLC / Clean Focus's consultant.
- Rugged Solar was previously approved in 2015 but never built.
- Reviewed comparison table between approved project and proposed project.
- CEQA does not require a re-circulated EIR unless there are significant new project impacts.
- Less water will be used. All construction water will come from Jacumba.
- Grading is increased but reportedly less net impact.
- Less glare with matt black panels than Soitec Solar CPV's glass lenses.
- Rugged Solar will NOT be bifacial. Bifacial may be used for Starlight Solar.
- Panels will likely come from Taiwan. Panels are not selected until last minute.
- Question on union workers receiving Per Diem pay.
- The developer's Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC) company works with unions and manufacturing.

- Adjacent neighbors expressed concerns over water use / well interference and visual pollution for property located immediately adjacent along Tule Jim Road. Main project access from McCain Valley.
- Chair Tisdale noted that Table 6 App H Groundwater says the Project includes 229,264 PV modules. Each module measures approximately 3.5 x 7 ft = 24.5 ft per module x 225,264 modules = 5,616,968 sq ft of surface area that will disrupt the current views and open space habitat that exists where the project is proposed.
- 5,616,968 sq ft equals the same footprint as the average 30.9 Walmart Supercenters at 182,000 sq ft which covers a lot of currently open space.
- Viewshed Analysis Figure 3 (in agenda package) left out views of project area from Tierra Heights.
- Ironically, the long-term project views from local residents /taxpayers are considered N/A in CEQA documents. They just look at the limited /few seconds of view from passing vehicles on I-8.
- According to Alisa Lembke, the Board Clerk for Valley Clean Energy, who Tisdale contacted directly, the Rugged Solar PPA item was on their agenda. It was tabled twice, and then approved at their Board's June 11, 2020 special meeting.
- A month later, on July 14, 2020, the PPA was terminated over Rugged Solar's breach of contract, failure to pay. VCE no longer has an agreement with Rugged Solar.
- Clean Focus seems to be making the same mistake that Soitec did. The groundwater analysis does not appear to include the cement needed for the chain link fence that will be topped with 3 strand barbed wire and concertina wire.
- Tisdale requested that concertina wire, shown on plot plans, be removed from project.
- During the Soitec Solar hearings it was discovered that water use for fencing was not accounted for.
- Does Rugged Solar have a PPA? No, but working with San Diego Clean Power.
- There were questions over recyclability of panels. Some are recyclable and some are not and may require special handling and disposal.
- **Motion by Kevin Keane to approve the project failed for lack of a second.**
- Tisdale stated she could not in good conscience vote for a project that would impact neighbors so significantly, when she would not want a similar project where she lived.
- Michele Strand agreed that a vote for the project would be disloyal to locals.
- **Motion by Tisdale to deny the project failed for lack of a second.**
- **Earl Goodnight and Kevin Keane both stated that solar is better than wind.**
- **M/S: Keane/Goodnight: Remain neutral on Rugged Solar project: MOTION FAILED: 3 YES; 1 NO (Tisdale); 0 abstained. 4 VOTES /QUORUM NEEDED TO PASS.**

2. RUGGED SOLAR COMMUNITY BENEFITS:

- Jim Whalen provided list and basic plans from Mark Ostrander for community center renovations.
- Whalen said the idea came to him to meet an unmet need for a community center with services for seniors and kids. The property is beautiful with numerous oaks and available space.
- Partnering with Mr. Haagen (Empire Ranch/Starlight Solar) Haagen's COO, Chris Fahey, and Clean Focus.
- Whalen originally thought the plan was to tear down current buildings but Mark Ostrander has done so much work and locals desire to retain the historic nature of the old courthouse, that full renovation is better.
- The Working Draft of the Rugged Solar Project Community Benefit Fund proposed \$800,000 plus project contingency funds for a total of \$887,000.
- They used a reportedly common national benchmark of \$10,000 /MW DC.

- Funds to be dispersed over a 12 month period with a focus on remodeling / updating the Backcountry Resource Center in Boulevard that is expected to provide a variety of benefits for the resident population.
- The San Diego Foundation is proposed to administer the funds that entail management and program administration fees. Funds are expected to be released for disbursement after the “utility –defined Commercial Operations date”.
- Tisdale expressed concerns that other communities don’t have to host ugly and destructive industrial wind and solar projects in order to have viable community centers. On the other hand, Rugged Solar is likely to be approved by the current Board of Supervisors, without question, so the community needs to receive some kind of benefit.
- Focusing funding on the Backcountry Resource Center will benefit the community as a whole with services for locals, including meeting rooms, potential for medical / dental clinics, child / adult activities /services, playground / picnic areas, recycling and more.
- ***M/S: Tisdale/Strand: Support the concept of the Rugged Solar Community Benefit (Working Draft) for the Backcountry Resource Center: PASSED: 4 YES; 0 NO***

3. **COUNTY STAFF UPDATE ON LIVE OAK SPRINGS WATER SYSTEM:**

- Peejay Tubongbanua, P.E., DPW Project manager, and Tony Potter provided updated information including meter data access and June 15 Board of Supervisors hearing that includes Live Oak Springs water fees via property tax roll. CIP team is still working to provide update on Phase 1 water system improvements: Contact: Peejay.Tubongbanua@sdcounty.ca.gov; 619.417.5625
- The County allotted \$8.3 million from General fund for acquisition, governance, and system wide capital improvements: 2-60 gallon wells; 2-100k gallon steel bolted tanks; chemical feed system; emergency power generator; fire flow pumps; booster pumps; electrical and instrument control; pipeline distribution; hydrants and isolation valves.
- Collection of Charges on FY 2022-23 tax roll; authorized by State Health and Safety Code and County Ordinance; cost savings for customers; reports available for public review; hearings for public comment.
- 3-year rate schedule was approved in November 2020 works out to approximately \$100 per month.
- They reported they have already experienced theft of some new copper wiring.
- Working on security and alarm systems and site access improvements.
- Live Oak Springs Water System: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/dpw/h2o1.html>
- Citizen Access (water meter data): <http://publicservices.sandiegocounty.ca.gov/CitizenAccess/Default.aspx>
- Live Oak Springs Water System contact: 858-514-4990; CSA137@sdcounty.ca.gov

F. GROUP BUSINESS, ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. **APPOINTMENT OF MANUEL CASANOVA TO SEAT # 1 IS ON MAY 10, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS’ AGENDA.**
2. **REVITALIZATION & FIRE SAFE COUNCIL REPORTS:** No report provided.

G. PROJECT UPDATES:

1. **BOULEVARD MICROGRID & STRATEGIC UNDERGROUNDING:** CPUC conditionally approved the project on December 2nd. SDG&E is reportedly still working through the final process with the CPUC. Completion / online date expected to be August 2023.
2. **20 MW STARLIGHT SOLAR + 80 MW EXPANSION:**
 - Jim Whalen reported that AES is apparently out of the project.
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. APPEAL OF FEDERAL APPROVALS OF CAMPO WIND FILED IN 9TH CIRCUIT COURT APPEAL ON 2-22-22:** Approved for Campo Reservation land by Dept of Interior April

2020. Federal lawsuit filed 7-8-20. On August 6, 2021, the federal judge granted the Campo Band's Motion to Dismiss the case. FAA approved project for second time despite SO CAL TRACON objections over significant aviation impacts. An appeal of FAA approval has been filed in the 9th Circuit.

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. CEQA CHALLENGE FILED. CAMPO BAND FILED MOTION TO INTERVENE. FAA APPROVED TRANSMISSION TOWERS IN FEB-MARCH 2022:** Boulder Brush Facilities include 3.5 miles of overhead 230 kilovolt generation transmission (gen-tie) line on private land, approximately 32 steel poles at a maximum height of 150 feet, a high voltage substation, a switchyard, in/out connection to the existing Sunrise Powerlink. These facilities will connect Terra-Gen's 60-4.2 MW Campo Wind turbines on the Campo Reservation to Sunrise Powerlink via the substation and switchyard on private land. See more project details at this link: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/ceqa/BoulderBrush.html>
5. **90 MW JACUMBA VALLEY RANCH ENERGY PARK (JVR SOLAR); APPROVED BY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON 8-18-21. CEQA LAWSUIT CHALLENGING APPROVAL WAS FILED ON 9-20-21:** 90 megawatt (MW) solar energy facility and a battery energy storage system of up to 90 MW (360 MWh). The development footprint of the proposed solar facility is approximately 623 acres. Project documents are posted at: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/ceqa/MUP-18-022.html>.
6. **ENERGIA SIERRA JUAREZ (ESJ) WIND II-EXPANSION COMMENCES OPERATIONS:** FEB 8, 2022: Sempra announced commencement of operations for 108MW (26-Vestas V150-4.2MW) expansion of existing 155 MW ESJ Wind I project (47-3.3 MW turbines) on 13,000 acres south of the border just east of Jacumba and Ejido Jacume. Energy is exported cross border to ECO Substation per Power Purchase Agreement with SDG&E: <https://www.sempira.com/energia-sierra-juarez-phase-ii-wind-farm-commences-operations>
7. **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. Torrey Wind will rely on Campo Wind's approved but not yet built Boulder Brush Substation. On March 14th, PDS granted Terra-Gens March 14th request for project time extension through September 24, 2022. <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/ceqa/TorreyWindNOP.html> The CAISO Grid Queue report (#2177) shows a Boulder Brush Hybrid with 105.8 MW wind and 314 MW battery storage with an online date of 6/1/25: <http://www.caiso.com/PublishedDocuments/PublicQueueReport.xlsx>
8. **TULE WIND PHASE II-69MW:** Currently permitted to erect up to 24 new turbines on State land and the Ewiiapayaap Reservation, with a capacity of 69 megawatts, as expansion to existing 131.1 MW Tule Wind I with 57 -2.3 MW turbines. No progress since approximately 2016: <https://www.eastcountymagazine.org/state-approves-tule-wind-phase-ii-opponents-voice-concern-eagles-wildlife-residents>
9. **BOULEVARD ENERGY STORAGE PDS2017-ZAP-17-006:** 100 MW battery storage project proposed to connect to Boulevard Substation is on the County's idle project list. County was supposed to send letter to applicant to withdraw, reactivate, or moved forward for denial after April 30, 2022. No response on that happening.
10. **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. Invenergy withdrew from project in 2018. Absentee owner still promoting it. Permit reportedly expires in July 2022.

H. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:45: NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2022.

Minutes approved by Group, as corrected, on June 2, 2022

Donna Tisdale, Chair: 

For More information contact Donna Tisdale, Chair at 619-766-4170 or 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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