

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP  
\*\*\*MINUTES/SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 4, 2014\*\*\***

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 7:00 PM, Thursday, December 4, 2014** at Boulevard Community Center located east of the Boulevard Fire Station

**A. ROLL CALL (Determination of quorum):**

- Members present: **2) Earl Goodnight; 3) Vacant; 4) Donna Tisdale; 5) Michele Strand; 6) Paula Byrd**
- Members absent: **1) Robert Maupin – excused; 7) Jeffrey McKernan – excused**

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**C. APPROVE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 2ND AND NOVEMBER 6TH MEETING:**

- **M/S: GOODNIGHT/BYRD: *Approve the October 2, 2014 minutes with typo corrections: Passed 4-0-0.***
- **M/S: BYRD/GOODNIGHT: *Approve the November 6, 2014 minutes with typo corrections: Passed 4-0-0.***

**E. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:**

- Howard Cook thanked those who helped with the Jacumba Water District election, including notary services.
- Cook also thanked Ken & Tammy Daubach for their instrumental help in acquiring 14 concrete picnic tables for the Jacumba area.
- Michele Strand announced that she had been informed that the Urgent Care facility at Kaiser – Vandever is being closed within the next month. Primary Care services during regular business hours will still be available, but if “urgent care” is needed on a weekend or holiday, you now must either go to the ER on Zion Avenue, which is currently averaging 7 hours, or drive all the way to Otay Mesa or San Marcos.
- Jim Whalen did some checking during meeting to verify the Kaiser Facility information, as it is not well known, even to other Kaiser staff.
- Cook said the closure information is a reminder on how critical local EMT services are.
- There was an article in the paper about BLM rejecting Iberdrola’s 200MW Silurian Valley solar application for 1,600 acres or so, north of Barstow. This was one of the first projects rejected due to many of the same issues local projects are being opposed, including impacts to resources, recreational and scenic values.
- Training for BPG members has started. Everyone should RSVP for the date that works best for them. This is mandatory in person training for those who have not yet done so.

**F. ACTION ITEMS:**

**1. VOTE ON ALL APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> TO FILL SEAT #3:**

- It was announced that since there only three candidates applied for the three open seats on the BPG, the supervisors simply appointed all three. Appointments are effective January 7, 2015 through January 7, 2019.
- Chair reported sending Kevin Keane’s application to the Registrar of Voters (ROV); she displayed the ROV certification that confirms Kevin is properly registered to vote Boulevard Planning Area and to be appointed to a seat on the Planning Group.
- Keane made a brief statement on why he wanted to serve stating his qualifications and that he and his partner have lived in Boulevard about a year and have attended many meetings. He has learned what the community wants and needs and commented that the Planning Group is doing a great job.
- Michele Strand and Earl Goodnight both commented positively on Kevin’s expertise as an electrical engineer, his knowledge, concerns expressed for the community, his public participation, and that he would be an asset to the board. Others agreed.

- M/S: TISDALE/BYRD: *Appoint Kevin Keane to fill Seat #3 of the Boulevard Planning Group. Approved 4-0-0*
- 2. VOTE TO MOVE REGULAR JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> MEETING DATE TO JANUARY 8<sup>TH</sup> TO AVOID NEW YEAR'S DAY.
  - M/S: STRAND/BYRD: *Reschedule the regular meeting from January 1<sup>st</sup> to January 8<sup>th</sup> to avoid New Year's Day. Approved 4-0-0*

**G. GROUP BUSINESS:** Announcements; correspondence; discussion items; project updates

1. **REVITALIZATION REPORT:**

- Mt. Empire Health's Annual Country Christmas Party including Santa's Gift Shop will be held on December 6<sup>th</sup> from 9-11am. Campo will be having an identical event from 5-7pm.
- Clover Flat will be having their Soitec sponsored Christmas Party on December 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Jacumba's Feliz Navidad Centennial Year End celebration will be from 2-5pm at the Highland Center on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Kid gift give away from 9-11am.
- The Backcountry Revitalization meeting with Supervisor Dianne Jacob will be held at the Mt. Empire Community Center on December 11<sup>th</sup> from 2:30-4:30pm.
- Jacumba's Tumbleweed art contest's deadline has been extended to Wednesday.
- The Community Meeting about the Boulevard Resource Center was attended by 29 people including residents, service providers, and developers.
- Judith Chaplin of Mt. Health explained the ups and downs of getting a center started and sustaining it. The entire room was in favor of a community building and not necessarily a new one, just securing a location.
- A day later, Tammy Daubach was contacted by Michael Duffek, Project manager from the Dept of General Services of the County of San Diego. He wanted to know how much money was needed, and stated he could not find the location of the Fire Department. He stated that all the qualifications were met for his department's approval. On November 16<sup>th</sup> he called back and asked who would be maintaining the building and grounds. Tammy told him McCain Valley Conservation Campo and Mt. Health are potential candidates to help with maintenance issues.
- Jim Whalen suggested that we look into tearing down the existing fire station building and replace it with a new community building (in the same footprint) due to asbestos issues.; seek a waiver for oak setbacks; seek a "special build".
- Nothing is happening so far with the tumbleweed abatement at Ketchum Ranch—private property.
- It was reported that during a recent wind storm, an enormous mound of tumbleweeds had piled all the way to the top of one of SDG&E's utility poles, creating a real fire hazard.
- Tammy reported that months ago pictures were shared at a Greater San Diego meeting and everyone gasped at how severe the problem is, but still nothing has been done.

2. **FIRE SAFE COUNCIL REPORT:**

- Next meeting is January 31<sup>st</sup> at 5:30pm at the Jacumba Fire Department.
- The Fire Safe Council (FSC) has fought to move the foam truck that was mandated by the CPUC as part of SDG&E's mitigation for their ECO /Boulevard substation project will now be moved from Lake Morena to Jacumba, as soon as the barrier posts can be removed that block access at station entrance.
- Comments were made expressing the appreciation for the FSC efforts to keep the fire fighting assets where they belong, and were intended to help mitigate actual project impacts.
- Sand bags are available by contacting White Star.
- The Sheriff's Dept will be closed on Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.



- Keep in mind that the Holiday Watch and Senior Patrol are available when you are away. You can schedule a “drive by” with the Sheriff’s Department.
  - Sempra confirmed that the massive wind turbine blades that have been impacting traffic during transport on I-8, and escorted by multiple CHP and other pilot cars, are in route for Sempra’s Sierra Juarez project now under construction east of Jacque just south of the US/ Mexico. Sempra is paying for all transportation costs including the CHP escort, which is required by law. The turbine blades are manufactured by Vestas in Colorado. They are transported by train to the US Gypsum factory near Ocotillo in Imperial County and then by truck to the Olay Mesa port of entry. The mountain roads in Mexico are not wide enough to accommodate transport between Mexicali and La Rumorosa.
  - It was noted that mud washed onto Old Hwy 80 at the Boulevard substation site project during storm.
3. **NOTICE OF VACANCY FOR SEAT #3:**
- This item was voted on earlier.
4. **SOITEC SOLAR PROJECTS (PDS2012-3910-120005): DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT (DPEIR) REPORT FOR FOUR BOULEVARD PROJECTS WITH 7,409-8,415 CPV SOLAR TRACKERS @ 1,200 SQ FT EACH:**
- December 12<sup>th</sup> is the expected release date for the Final PEIR and public review.
  - January 8<sup>th</sup> is the County Staff presentation at the Boulevard Planning Group Meeting.
  - January 16<sup>th</sup> is the County Planning Commission Hearing
  - February 4<sup>th</sup> is the Board of Supervisors Hearing
  - The FEIR comment deadline is in-person at February 4<sup>th</sup> at the Board hearing.
  - The revised groundwater report is supposed to come out with the Final EIR.
  - The Chair reported that she had not seen it yet because County Counsel had not finished reviewing it.
  - Howard Cook surmised that this was almost an admission that they are rushing things, between the staff and Director. He stated Ashley Gungle’s email read, “We’ve been working our plan moving forward, includes the January 16<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission date and a February 4<sup>th</sup> Supervisor Hearing. With this plan we feel we will be able to achieve the applicants goal of a February 4<sup>th</sup> BOS Hearing while ensuring we don’t rush to a PC Hearing before we’re ready or before giving the public ample time to review the documents.”
  - The Chair reported that Soitec had presented at the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce and incorrectly announced that the Planning Commission meeting hearing was on December 12<sup>th</sup>; and by the time she got home from the meeting downtown, she had a call from County staff saying that Soitec had incorrectly stated the meeting date; Soitec had been pushing for the December 12<sup>th</sup> date but staff had informed them that date was not realistic.
  - Howard Cook thought that the community and/or board should meet again before the January 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, since there is so little time. In his opinion, the water issue changed from being “less than significant” to “highly significant”.
  - The Chair said she understood Soitec is now proposing to bring water in from Padre Dam and elsewhere, if necessary, but we haven’t seen the revised report yet. It was mentioned in the 15 pages of comments about Tule Wind, water, and the overlap between Rugged Solar and Tierra Del Sol and Rough Acres. It either needs to be addressed, or pointed out that it is not adequately addressed.
  - There will be a presentation by staff and Soitec at the Planning Group’s meeting on January 8<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Chair said there was not enough time for another Planning Group meeting, but perhaps a community meeting could be arranged between January 8<sup>th</sup> and January 16<sup>th</sup>.
  - Jim Whalen said public comments are not required on a Final EIR; he thinks there is a 10-day period for public comment, as a courtesy.

- County Counsel and staff are supposed to try and ensure that the document and recommendations are legally supported so that it could survive a legal challenge.
- The Chair highly recommends that the public submit comments for legal standing in the future.
- The Chair asked about battery storage for Soitec, asking how many Cargo containers would be involved and noting that battery storage was not addressed in the draft.
- Whalen said he did not know.
- The Chair asked about the potential of expanding the Rugged Solar project, almost all the way down to the freeway; information on expansion was buried in the Draft EIR.
- Jim Whalen said they had no land or control in that area.
- Whalen confirmed that Lansing is back in control of Empire Ranch, saying he has been for a while.
- Whalen also confirmed that the Los Robles site is still proposed as an alternative.
- The Chair asked Whalen when Soitec / Invenergy would be flipping the on switch at their new CPV project in Borrego Springs.
- Whalen confirmed it would be soon but did not provide specific date.

5. **DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN (DRECP) DRAFT DEIR/EIS COMMENT PERIOD EXTENDED BY 45 DAYS TO FEBRUARY 23, 2015:**

- Public comment period has been extended to February 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The Chair said she does not understand why the County was not involved as a stakeholder in the DRECP since Borrego and Boulevard areas are included in it.
- Whalen said that the County said, "No thanks". They have their own program and they think it's not worth being a signatory. He urged them to be involved, but they don't always do what he asks.
- The Chair stated that for every DRECP alternative, the maps show one to two new 500kV power lines running through Boulevard and Jacumba along the Sunrise Powerlink route. Do they have easements? No. Can they get them? Apparently so, because they did it before, even through protected lands. However, the DRECP documents don't appear to include any acreage for those right-of-ways.
- A comment was made that Boulevard will look like a spider web of lines; we've got Golden Eagles; and the increased fire risk with all of these proposed projects, is too much.
- A superior alternative should be rooftop solar, fuel cells, solar on parking lot shades, etc. It's less expensive, less destructive, reduces risk in the backcountry and it's a viable alternative. Do the power companies make as much money on this type? No.
- It was reported that there is an online petition opposing the DRECP.

6. **UPDATE ON STATUS OF \$100 MILLION LASWUIT FILED AGAINST THE COUNTY, SUPERVISOR JACOB, DONNA TISDALE, BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP, AND OTHERS BY VARIOUS ENTITIES RELATED TO DEVELOPER GREGORY LANSING:**

- A case management hearing is set for December 12<sup>th</sup>, via phone.
- The plaintiff's motion to strike was not acted on. There is a currently hearing set for March 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Lansing's attorney is trying to get approval for discovery.
- The statutes of limitations have expired; he didn't follow through on administrative procedures, and didn't exhaust his administrative remedies, such as not filing appeals, not filing timely challenges.

7. **NEXTERA'S 20MW JACUMBA SOLAR PROJECT UPDATE:**

- Howard Cook reported sending information to Ashley Gungle.
- Cook said his son has worked for the BLM for 29 years; NextEra found out and told his superiors that they do not want him working on their projects.

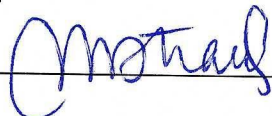


- Cook takes it as a compliment, that we must be irritating them.
  - The Chair said she had read that NextEra is reportedly taking over Hawaii's utility.
8. **SDG&E's ECO SUBSTATION:**
- The Chair reported that SDG&E is still hauling water and spraying on erosion control; glue, fertilizer, and seed. Spec sheet says it becomes flammable when it's dry.
  - Project was supposed to be completed by end of November, according to project websites.
  - Cook reported that the presence of bats under the bridge stopped the project for sometime this fall.
  - NextEra may have to do a study on the two species of bats under the bridge for their solar project.
9. **TULE WIND'S LEASE APPLICATION HEARING WITH STATE LANDS COMMISSION (SLC) TO ALLOW WIND TURBINES, ROADS, INFRASTRUCTURE MAY NOT BE HEARD UNTIL FEBRUARY 2015:**
- According to SLC staff, Tule Wind's lease application was not ready for a December hearing.
  - A lease hearing is planned for February, unless it gets delayed again. The agenda will be posted 10 days prior to the hearing: <http://www.slc.ca.gov/>
10. **NOTICE OF PREPARATION, INITIAL STUDY & REQUEST FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) FOR ROUGH ACRES RANCH CAMPGROUND/CONFERENCE CENTER MUP: PDS2012-3300-12-021 (MUP): Public comment closed on May 19<sup>th</sup>:**
- Draft EIR not issued yet.
11. **ROUGH ACRES RANCH ROAD MAJOR GRADING PERMIT: PDS2011-2700-15622: APPLICANT GREGG HAMANN:**
- As of last week, the County told the Chair that there was nothing on the EIR for the Rough Acres campground and road. The permit has not yet been issued.
12. **IBERDROLA'S 200 MW TULE WIND: OPENING BRIEF WAS FILED OCTOBER 1<sup>ST</sup> IN NON-PROFIT GROUP'S 9<sup>TH</sup> CIRCUIT APPEAL OF DISTRICT COURT RULING THAT SUPPORTED BLM APPROVALS FOR THE TULE WIND PROJECT:**
- Nothing new to report.
13. **TULE WIND PHASE II:**
- Nothing new to report
14. **NOTICE OF APPEAL FILED FOR WIND ENERGY ORDINANCE AND PLAN AMENDMENT:**
- Appeal due in December.
15. **SEMPRA'S CROSS-BORDER HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE, WITH IMPORT CAPACITY OF 1,250 MW, WILL CONNECT THEIR \$300 MILLION ENERGIA SIERRA JAUREZ WIND (ESJ) IN BAJA CALIFORNIA WITH SDG&E'S NEW \$435 MILLION ECO SUBSTATION:**
- Nothing new to report other than blade transport on i-8 and construction ongoing.

**H. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:00 PM/NEXT REGULAR MEETING SET FOR JANUARY 8TH, 2015:**

Minutes approved by Group on 1-8-15

Michele Strand, Secretary:



For More information contact Donna Tisdale, Chair at 619-766-4170 or [tisdale.donna@gmail.com](mailto:tisdale.donna@gmail.com)