

County of San Diego
Jacumba Hot Springs Community Sponsor Group
FINAL Minutes of Regular Meeting at 5pm on September 13, 2021
Highland Center, 44681 Old Hwy 80, Jacumba Hot Springs, CA 91934

A. Roll Call: Seat 1. Jacari Cousins--**absent**; Seat 2. Greg Curran; Seat 3. Cherry Diefenbach; Seat 4. Jeffery Osborne; Seat 5. Katrina Westley. PDS Staff present: Kathleen Flannery, Mark Slovick, Nick Koutoufidis. Public: 50

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Motion to approve the draft minutes of the JCSG special meeting held on August 3, 2021. M/S Curran/Westley. Passed 4-0-0-1(Cousins).

D. Public Communication: There were no public speakers.

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

1. Presentation by San Diego Planning and Development Services (PDS) regarding how the \$4 million in community benefit funds associated with the JVR Solar project's approval will be dispersed, how the funds will be managed by PDS or through a trust fund account, how the community (non-profit groups) can request funds, and the appointment of the JCSG or a trust fund board of directors as the arbiter for future benefits requests.

Kathleen Flannery (PDS) provided the following information. PDS cannot accept JVR community benefit funds on behalf of Jacumba. PDS recommends benefit funds be held by a fiduciary firm such as the San Diego Foundation. This agency could invest funds and perform other management functions. PDS further suggested a survey of Jacumba residents be conducted to determine how they think benefit funds should be spent and/or invested. The JCSG will initiate the development of a local benefits needs survey, hold a community forum to discuss community survey results, and gather further feedback from residents. Community members indicated that Sunday afternoons will provide the best opportunity for the majority of residents to attend. No firm community forum date was established. The forum will be scheduled after the survey has been collected and after PDS provides additional information about how benefit funds could be held by the fiduciary. Initially, the CSG with the help of a subcommittee made up of community members and a JCSG representative, could begin to develop the guidelines for local organizations requesting funding requests. The subcommittee would provide updates at future JCSG meetings to ensure the community benefits process is transparent to residents.

According to PDS (Kathleen Flannery), the community benefits agreements previously executed between BayWa r.e and Jacumba Community Service District (JCS D) (\$250K), Imperial Valley Desert Museum (IVDM) (\$75K) and San Ysidro Community Health (\$125K) will come out of the \$4 million in community benefits required by the Board of Supervisors as a condition of JVR project approval. At the meeting, community members and the JCSG stated to PDS that those are separate negotiated benefit agreements that were unknown to Jacumba residents until the actual BOS hearing. Residents were especially concerned about the \$75K benefit that will be going to IVDM, an organization which is not even located in San Diego County.

The Chair read the following statement from pg. 21 in the August 18, 2021 PDS report on the Decision of the BOS hearing:

“COMMUNITY BENEFITS PACKAGE. INTENT: In order to provide community benefits to the community of Jacumba Hot Springs, the BOS required the applicant to provide benefits in the amount of at least \$4,000,000. The applicant and the County will hold meetings with the community to decide how it will be spent...”

Residents stated that the money for the stand-alone benefit agreements should not be taken out of the \$4,000,000. **Motion for PDS to request the entire \$4,000,000 to be held in an account for the community exclusive of any previously negotiated benefits agreements between the developer and separate entities. M/S Diefenbach/Curran. Passed: 4-0-0-1(Cousins).**

Jeff Osborne asked PDS representatives about the status of the request by BOS and the community to have the 400-

foot buffer (setback) along the eastern side of residential properties increased to 1,000 feet. Osborne has an engineering report which shows the JVR solar project could be accomplished on a much smaller footprint. Mark Slovick (PDS) stated that PDS is still trying to negotiate the larger 1,000-foot setback with the project developer, but that PDS will not be getting a third-party engineering report. **Motion to have PDS enforce the 1,000-foot setback that was requested by the BOS and community. M/S Osborne/Westley. Passed 4-0-0-1(Cousins).**

Many community members expressed their frustrations to PDS reps regarding the conduct of the BOS hearing. In particular, they were extremely disappointed the BOS did not appear to try to mitigate the real CEQA/FEIR issues that were raised about the JVR project. All believe the JVR project would never have been approved adjacent to a more affluent community. Residents' dissatisfaction with the BOS hearing process will be specifically addressed in action item #4.

2. Discuss needed capital road improvements within our sponsor group area. (Capital improvement requests could include: paving of currently unpaved county roads, improvements to drainage ditches, bridges/guardrails, sidewalks, crosswalks.) Our previously submitted 2014 capital improvements list contained one item: the paving of Carrizo Gorge Rd. New suggested road improvement projects are sidewalks along both sides of Old Hwy 80 at the eastern end of Jacumba; a crosswalk at Carrizo St. and Old Hwy 80; the repair/replacement of guardrails on Old Hwy 80 near the 1931 railroad bridges at the western approach to Jacumba. The request to pave Carrizo Gorge Road near the I-8 interchange will be included on the new 2021 capital road improvements list. **Motion to authorize Chair to submit updated JSCG 2021 prioritized capital road improvements list to DPW. M/S Westley/Osborne. Passed: 4-0-0-1(Cousins).**

3. Discuss 2021 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) which has been released for public comment. The public comment period ends on Oct. 11, 2021. JCSG members are encouraged to send their DEIR comments to the Chair NLT Oct. 6. (Note: The JCSG previously submitted comments to PDS regarding SANDAG's draft RTP on August 6, 2021—the Chair will update JCSG's earlier comments and resubmit.) **Motion to authorize the Chair to submit JCSG comments on the DEIR to SANDAG by Oct. 11, 2021. M/S Curran/Osborne. Passed: 4-0-0-1(Cousins).**

4. Discuss providing written feedback to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and PDS on the Jacumba Valley Ranch (JVR) Energy Park solar project (PDS2018-MUP-18-022, PDS2018-ER-22-001) hearing held on August 18, 2021. Many residents were disgusted with the BOS hearing on the JVR Project. The Chair provided a draft letter for the group's consideration and review. **Motion to authorize Chair to submit written correspondence to the BOS and PDS regarding the August 18, 2021 JVR hearing. M/S Curran/Osborne. Passed: 4-0-0-1(Cousins).**

F. Group business/project updates, to include correspondence-discussion only:

1. No dumping signs have been posted at 42748 Old Highway 80, but trash remains.
2. Chair provided info on how the Highland Center can get reimbursed for sponsor group meetings held at the facility. The Highland Center treasurer will bill PDS \$50 per hour for JCSG's rental of the facility.
3. Community interface reports: Mark Ostrander provided updates on the Real East County Fire Safe Council (FSC) and JBRA Revitalization. The FSC has held five chipping events this year. The next Community clean up dates are: Sep. 18 in Campo (at Homemakers Thrift Store, Sheridan Rd.); Oct. 16 in Jacumba (at community park); and Nov. 20 in Potrero (at 24800 Potrero Park Rd.). JBRA: After receiving a donation of \$8,000 for materials, volunteers were able to make \$40,000 of repairs on the Resource Center buildings. JBRA will host a Haunted House drive-thru on Oct 30, from 5-7pm at the Resource Center in Boulevard. *More community volunteers are needed for both organizations.*

G. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m. The next Jacumba Sponsor Group meeting will be held on Monday, October 11, at 5:00 pm in the Highland Center.

Approved: October 11, 2021