

County of San Diego
Jacumba Hot Springs Community Sponsor Group
FINAL Minutes of Regular Meeting held at 6pm on Oct. 11, 2021
Highland Center, 44681 Old Hwy 80, Jacumba Hot Springs, CA 91934

A. Roll Call: Seat 1. Jacari Cousins—absent; Seat 2. Greg Curran (Vice-Chair); Seat 3. Cherry Diefenbach (Chair); Seat 4. Jeffery Osborne; Seat 5. Katrina Westley (Secretary) **absent**. Note taker: Maureen Phillips. Public: 15

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Motion to approve the draft minutes of the JCSG special meeting held on September 13, 2021. M/S Diefenbach/Curran. Passed: 3-0-0-2(Cousins, Westley).

D. Public Communication: The Chair requested a moment of reflection on the recent loss of Dennis Tatum, Jacari's father, and expressed heartfelt condolences to Jacari and his family during their time of sorrow. There were no public speakers.

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

1. Update the 90MW JVR Energy Park (JV Solar) project status and discuss JVR Community Benefits.

a. JVR project status.

--The JCSG requested that PDS obtain a third-party engineering report to verify the minimum footprint needed to produce 90MW of power. Since the Board of Supervisors (BOS) did not require that report as a condition of project approval, PDS will not be doing so.

--PDS staff has stated that they are continuing to push BayWa to achieve the 1,000-foot project setback requested by the BOS at the Aug 18th hearing. (The current project setback is 400-feet.) Following the hearing, Supvr. Lawson-Remer called the Chair and asked that we inform her if the developer is unable (or unwilling) to provide that larger setback along the western boundary of the project. (It is unclear if the lack of a 1000-foot setback would trigger any action by the BOS.)

--BayWa hopes to start construction on their JVR solar facility as early as January 2022. However, they must satisfy a number of project conditions first, including the deposit of community benefit funds.

--A legal filing has been initiated against the BOS for their approval of a project with an inadequate CEQA review. (A case managers' conference has been scheduled for November 12. There is no hearing date as yet.)

b. Discuss community benefits survey.

--At the Sept.13 JCSG meeting, we discussed the need for a community benefits survey that would be used to get community input on how the JVR community benefit money should be used/invested.

--A preliminary survey is being drafted with language that indicates it may be the first of several surveys.

Motion to present a draft benefits survey at the November 8th JCSG meeting for community review/approval. M/S Osborne/Curran. Passed: 3-0-0-2 (Cousins, Westley).

c. JVR Benefits:

--At the Sept. 13 JCSG meeting, the community requested that previously negotiated JVR benefits agreements with JCSD (\$250K), Imperial Valley Desert Museum (\$75K) and San Ysidro Community Health (\$125K) not come from the \$4 million dollars of community benefit money. County staff has reviewed the BOS hearing video and the minute order for the proceeding, and determined that money for those benefit agreements will come out of the \$4 million. That leaves the community of Jacumba with \$3.55 million dollars to invest. (Mark Slovick email of Sep. 24, 2021 refers.)

d. How will local non-profit organizations/groups request community benefit funds?

--The JCSG chair spoke with County Counsel, Randall Sjoblom, about JCSG's role in community benefits expenditures. He stated that, for the present, the sponsor group can continue to be the community's gatekeeper and

liaison with PDS regarding any other spending requests for benefit money. It is anticipated the developer will pay the museum, service district, and Ysdiro Health Care their benefits money directly. County Counsel provided the following options for the initial placement of the community benefits money: 1) an escrow account with the developer; 2) a nonprofit fiduciary; or 3) held by the County (PDS).

--Brief discussion on the advantages/disadvantages of establishing an interim Ad Hoc community benefits subcommittee to develop a benefits funding checklist, and possible fiduciary options, etc? If two JCSG members and some of the other volunteer members make-up the subcommittee, then it must comply with the Brown Act public noticing requirements.

--Brief discussion about some local residents forming their own group to develop a benefits checklist and options for funds investment. This local group might later transition into a community benefits non-profit organization or foundation. It could develop funding priorities, receive and review benefit funds request and submit their recommendations to JCSG for presentation at community meetings. After funding requests have been approved at a community forum, the group would then forward a request to the agency/fiduciary holding benefits money and track funds expenditures.

e. Who should decide on the fiduciary and the type of fund account? Community benefit funds could be invested/managed by a fiduciary such as the San Diego Foundation which offers different types of long and short-term fund accounts in exchange for fees. (Mark Slovick email of Sep. 24, 2021. Evergreen fund)

Motion to continue further discussion on the possible creation of an Ad hoc subcommittee or local residents' group (Agenda items 1d and 1e) at Nov. 8 JCSG meeting. M/S Osborne, Curran. Passed: 3-0-0-2 (Cousins, Westley).

2. Updates to Regulations for Renewable Energy Projects in the Unincorporated Area Including PDS Recommendations for Streamlining of Battery Storage Projects.

A preliminary BOS hearing is scheduled for Oct. 20 to discuss specifically discuss expediting the permitting process for battery storage projects located in two industrial zones, M-50 and M-52. Jacumba has no land zoned M-50 or M-52. The Chair recommends the JCSG send comments which support battery storage permit streamlining in those two industrial areas only and not in other areas zoned for commercial use such as C-44. The JCSG could also request the BOS require non-flammable batteries be used since they are safer and easier to recycle when batteries need to be replaced or decommissioned.

Motion to authorize the Chair to submit JCSG comments on the proposal to streamline Battery Storage projects at the upcoming BOS hearing. M/S Osborne/Curran. Passed: 3-0-0-2 (Cousins, Westley).

3. Regional Decarbonization Framework (RDF) process overview.

This one of several on-going efforts to limit the release of carbon and other GHGs that may accelerate climate change. Ordinances that restrict the use of woodburning stoves/fireplaces, and propane for heating and cooking may follow later if the RDF is approved. These restrictions would severely impact low-income backcountry residents who currently use them in their homes.

Motion to authorize the Chair to submit JCSG comments on the Regional Decarbonization Framework. M/S Osborne/Curran. Passed: 3-0-0-2 (Cousins, Westley).

<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/regional-decarbonization.html>.

4. SD County Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) process.

After participating in one of the virtual IRC workshops, the Chair provided an overview of the redistricting process which happens every 10 years, after new census data is released. Thus far, only about 500 comments have been received by the IRC and most of them came from urban north county residents. (Jacumba and other backcountry communities would be wise to submit some brief comments about their desire to remain rural in District 2.)

Motion to authorize the Chair to submit JCSG comments to the IRC. M/S Osborne, Curran. Passed: 3-0-0-2 (Cousins, Westley).

5. Community Benefits Ordinance. SD County may require that future large-scale residential and renewable

energy projects provide community benefits to mitigate their impacts. PDS will be providing some initial recommendations about whether a community benefits ordinance is needed to the BOS in December 2021. Further discussion by the JCSG was deferred to the November JCSG meeting.

6. SD County Climate Action Plan (CAP) Supplemental EIR Update.

Motion to authorize the Chair to submit JCSG comments as appropriate. M/S Osborne/Curran. Passed: 3-0-0-2 (Cousins, Westley).

<http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sustainability/climateactionplan.html>.

7. In-person or remote JCSG meetings. Under a special teleconferencing rule in AB 361, community groups can still hold meetings remotely. (Jessica Turner email of Oct. 5, 2021.) It was agreed that the JCSG will hold in-person meetings but it was suggested that a later meeting start time would allow for more robust public participation.

Motion to continue in person meetings on the 2st Monday of the month, with a start time of 6 pm rather than 5:30 pm. M/S Osborne, Curran. Passed: 3-0-0-2 (Cousins, Westley).

8. Two new renewable energy projects in/around the Jacumba area have submitted their applications with the California Independent Service Operator (CAISO): Pinscher Energy Storage, a 150MW battery storage project that would connect to the soon-to-be-built Carrizo Gorge Substation via the Blvd transmission line; and **Eolica La Rumarosa**, a 900MW Wind project in Mexico that would connect to the ECO Substation via the 500kV transmission line.

F. Group business: Project updates, Community reports, and correspondence-discussion only:

1. Code enforcement has referred the illegal dumping site at 42748 Old Highway 80 to law enforcement.
2. An overview of the proposed Microenterprise Home Kitchen Operations (MEHKOS) ordinance was provided.
3. 2021 Capital Road Improvements projects list emailed to DPW on Sep. 14, 2021.

4. JCSG comments on the Capital Improvement Needs Assessment (CINA) emailed to Supervisor Anderson on Sept. 27, 2021. Our group has requested that construction of the new fire station in Jacumba be moved up to FY23/24 from FY24/25 due to construction of the JVR solar project. The new fire station will be built on County property near the Jacumba Airport. The County has several approved facility designs. Member Osborne asked if the community can have design input. The JCSG will receive more info as the projected build date nears.

5. JCSG comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) emailed to SANDAG on Oct. 11, 2021.

6. Community interface reports.

a. Highland Center: Community volunteers have cleaned floors, painted walls, and repaired leaks, etc. JCSD and the Jacumba Fire Dept. did a walk-through of the facility. JCSG co-chair Curran praised the current Board of Directors of the Highland Center and thanked all volunteers for their hard work.

b. The JCSD has held several meetings to determine priorities for park improvements. The JCSG has requested that it be kept in the loop to avoid duplication of efforts and future expenditures of community benefits funds.

c. Fire Safe Council: None provided.

d. JBRA (Revitalization): None provided.

G. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 pm. The next regular JCSG meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 8, at 6 pm in the Highland Center.

Approved: Dec. 13, 2021