

**County of San Diego**  
**Jacumba Community Sponsor Group (JCSG)**  
**Minutes for the JCSG Meeting at 6:00pm on Monday, February 12, 2024**  
**Highland Senior Center, 44681 Old Hwy 80, Jacumba Hot Springs, CA 91934**

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**A. Call to order/Roll call.**

The JCSG meeting was called to order at 6:00pm with the following JCSG members present: Seat 2. Greg Curran (Vice-Chair); Seat 3. Cherry Diefenbach (Chair); Seat 4. Jeffery Osborne; Seat 5. Katrina Westley (Secretary). Seat 1 is currently vacant. Public present: 11.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance.**

**C. Approval of the draft minutes for the JCSG meeting held on November 13, 2023.**

*M/S to approve minutes of the JCSG meeting held on November 13, 2024: Curran/Osborne. Passed: 3-0-1(Westley)*

**D. Public Communication:** The public may comment on any subject within the JCSG's jurisdiction that is not on the posted agenda. (Speakers are limited to 2 minutes and no action can be taken on non-agenda items.)

Maureen: Provided information on the County efforts to streamline the construction of Senior housing facilities, small lot subdivisions, and affordable housing projects.

Chair: The Jacumba Community Service District (JCSD) has two vacant board positions that will be filled by the November 2024 election. Please contact the JCSD if you are interested in applying.

Chair: After getting pushback from SDG&E customers, CA Assembly Bill 1999 has been drafted to remove the onerous \$34 to \$128 fee that would be added to your electric bill based on your income. Please voice your support for Assembly Bill 1999, so that all electric and solar customers will get some relief.

Chair: Everyone registered to vote in CA should have already gotten a ballot in the mail. Please vote by March 5, 2024.

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

**1. The JCSG was recently invited to become an associate member of the Association of Planning Groups-San Diego County (APG).** (APG-San Diego's letter of January 21, 2024 refers.) The mission of the APG is to provide SANDAG with information about the potential impacts that SANDAG's policies, projects, and funding decisions could have on residents in the unincorporated communities in San Diego County. Under the current APG's By-laws, the sponsor group's chair or a designee can participate in the APG's monthly meetings as a non-voting member. Discuss/vote on whether the JCSG should become an associate member, and, if approved, designate the Chair or Vice-Chair to act as the JCSG representative.

*M/S to join the APG-San Diego as an associate member and designate the Chair as the primary JCSG representative and JCSG member, Jeff Osborne, as an alternate representative: Westley/Curran. Passed 4-0-0.*

**2. Annual Election of Officers for 2024.** Group members to nominate/vote to elect a JCSG Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary who will serve in 2024.

*M/S to nominate Cherry Diefenbach to serve as the Chair, Greg Curran to serve as the Vice Chair, and Katrina Westley to serve as Secretary: Diefenbach/Osborne. Passed: 4-0-0.*

**3. Announcement of the vacancy of JCSG Seat #1.** (The term for Seat #1 expires on 1/6/2025.) Bonnie Haddell has submitted her JCSG resignation effective February 12, 2024. A vacancy notice for JCSG Seat 1 has been posted at the Jacumba County Library, the Highland Senior Center, and online at [https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/Groups/Chair\\_Resources/Application.pdf](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/Groups/Chair_Resources/Application.pdf). Completed applications for Seat #1 should be submitted to the JCSG Chair, Cherry Diefenbach, at [csdiefenbach@sbcglobal.net](mailto:csdiefenbach@sbcglobal.net) by March 1, 2024 so that they may be considered at the March 11th JCSG meeting.

**4. AT&T California has applied to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to be relieved of its Carrier**

**of Last Resort Obligations (COLR A.23-03-003) to provide landline telephone service to areas where it is currently required to offer Basic telephone service.**

Maureen: AT&T has benefited financially for many years as COLR and rural residents will be impacted if AT&T is allowed to back out of maintaining their existing landline telephone service. Before AT&T should be allowed to discontinue their landline responsibility, fiberoptic infrastructure must be in place to provide services to all, as many rural areas currently do not have access to it. Also, if landlines go away, there is a safety concern because fiberoptic and VoiP phones do not automatically provide locations in 911 calls. The following minimum standards should be in place before AT&T is allowed to opt out: 1) at least one other provider should be available within a given area. 2) cost of service rates must be identified 3) AT&T must agree to share in the costs of providing fiberoptic infrastructure to areas without it. 4) a plan for a 911 interface must be included.

Sam: I operate a business at the Desert View Tower, and my Visa machine does not work on my cell phone, so having no landline would impact me.

Chair: Some rural communities such as Descanso and Guatay, currently have extremely limited or no cell phone access. During periods of emergency such as wildfires, cell phone towers may be negatively impacted thereby restricting emergency communications. Anyone with a concern about the potential negative impacts posed by the loss of landlines is strongly encouraged to submit their comments/concerns directly to the CPUC. Tonight's meeting agenda contains the information on how to do so either at the CPUC website or at one of the two remote public participation hearings scheduled for March 19, 2024.

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

1. On November 6, 2023, the Chair submitted a FY 2024-2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) resident application for the construction of sidewalks along both sides of Old Hwy 80 near the library/senior center and a crosswalk at Carriso St. and Old Hwy 80. She also submitted a similar request to DPW for the funding of these road improvements on November 6, 2023. Our CDBG request was one of 71 submitted applications and, unfortunately, our project was not one of the 19 that were selected for funding. It is hoped that DPW may be able to find another funding source for our sidewalks and crosswalk project.

Katrina: If the County decides to do the sidewalk project, they will make them ADA compliant.

Chair: Our project appears to be a straight forward project that should not cost the County lots of money.

2. Update on the 90MW Jacumba Valley Ranch Energy Park (JVR Solar) Project legal appeal.

Jeff: On January 9, 2024, a three-judge court of appeals panel was convened in Riverside County to review the legal challenge to the JVR Solar project that had previously been overruled by a San Diego court. Regrettably, the judges upheld the lower court's findings. Part of the legal challenge was a question as to how many solar panels were actually required to produce 90MW of solar power. (The current project size is 523 fenced acres.) The lawyer representing the challenge has filed for additional project corrections. Jeff expects to get an answer on those corrections on February 22. Unfortunately, he expects the judges will likely find in favor of the developer and the project will move forward. However, financing and the availability of getting solar panels may slow down the actual start date of project construction.

Chair: The only plus side for this project is that Jacumba will eventually be receiving \$3.55 million in community benefit money.

Maureen: JBRA has been designated as the recipient of community benefit money for a green energy project in Boulevard and we should consider asking JBRA to help us manage the JVR Solar community benefit money.

Jeff: The County is currently talking to the JVR Solar Park developer (BAYWA.re) about placing the new Jacumba fire station within the JVR project buffer zone on the north side of Old Hwy 80.

3. All seated JCSG members are reminded to complete their annual training and ethics training (every two years) and submit their annual Form 700. (San Diego County Counsel will not defend sponsor group members against any ligation if training was not completed.)

4. Community interface reports.

a. Highland Senior Center.

Jeff: Announced that he was recently elected as the President on the Highland Senior Center's Board of Directors. He reports that the Senior Center has been able to resolve issues regarding taxes and non-profit status. (However, there are still legal issues to resolve with the Water District.)

The Sunday breakfasts are quite successful, and due to the hard work of our volunteer, the Center is actually making money. Jeff is working on getting internet at the Senior Center. He is also hoping to expand activities/programs for the community so the Center is currently looking for people who would be willing to teach a skill or hobby.

Chair: The Senior Center Board should install a workable audio-visual system for use at community meetings.

Jeff: Getting an audio-visual system is a top priority for the Center.

b. Real East County Fire Safe Council.

Maureen: Due to a lack of participation at the last two chipping days held in Jacumba, there will be no future chipping days here. Jacumba residents can still participate in chipping days held at Boulevard and elsewhere. A tire drop-off event is scheduled at the Back Country Resource Center (BCRC) in Boulevard in June.

Scheduled cleanup dates are set for the 3rd Saturday of the months as follows: Boulevard-August, Campo-September, Jacumba-October, Potrero-November, from 8-11 am. Electronic materials will be accepted. No hazmat, tires, or batteries. You unload. Volunteers are needed to help with cleanup events, contact Mark Ostrander at 201-890-3344 if you can lend a hand. The next fire safe council meeting is Monday, April 15th at 6:30 pm at the BCRC.

c. JBRA (Revitalization).

A solar system with battery backup has been installed at the BCRC using funding from SDG&E. Recycling programs for mattresses/box springs and household recycle materials continues. A Food Pantry is in operation on Mondays, from 9-11 am. The BCRC will be used as a voting place from Feb 23 to March 5. Next JBRA meeting is Monday, April 15 at 7:30pm. Monetary donations and volunteers are very much needed. Call 201-890-3344 for more info.

d. JCSD Community Park Grant Update.

Katrina: The Jacumba Community Service District (JCSD) requested an extension on the expenditure of their \$100K Community Development grant money for playground improvements including shade structures, a new piece of playground equipment and an adult fitness circuit at the Jacumba Community Park. The JCSD is currently procuring bids from contractors who would purchase and install the new park equipment. The new grant deadline is November 2024.

Jeff: Proposed that the Jacumba Community Park be designated and operated as a San Diego County Park. After talking to Greg Kazmer on Supervisor Anderson's staff, he would like the Sponsor Group to formally request that a Jacumba County Park be added to the County's Capital Improvement Needs Assessment (CINA) list.

Chair: The conversion of our community park to a county park should be approved by the community-at-large in consultation with the property owner (JCSD).

Maureen: We can recommend that the community park becomes a County park.

Chair: I am going to stop further discussion of this proposal until it is placed on the agenda of a subsequent sponsor group meeting. I would also hope the discussion of converting our community park to a County park will be an agenda item at an upcoming JCSD meeting.

**G. Adjournment:**

The JCSG meeting was adjourned at 7:12 pm. The next JCSG meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 11, 2024 at 6 pm.

For more information, contact the JCSG Chair at [csdiefenbach@sbcglobal.net](mailto:csdiefenbach@sbcglobal.net) or 619-743-5224.

***Approved: March 11, 2024***