

JACUMBA HOT SPRINGS (JHS) SPONSOR GROUP FINAL MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2014

- Meeting was called to order at 6:02PM. The Chair asked that cell phones and pagers be silenced.
- Everyone pledged allegiance to the flag
- The Roll Call was taken and there was a quorum
 - Shirley Fisher -present Howard Cook-present Pat Fauble-present
 - Ralph Davis in the hospital and gave Chair letter of resignation earlier in week Helen Landman had an excused absence as she was out of town
- **Old Business**
 - Because the Secretary was in the hospital, there were no minutes to read and accept.
- **New Business (no voting items)**
- **Community Service Updates**
 - County Guest Brian was present with information on Meals on Wheels, Eldercare and other social services programs available from the County
 - Border Patrol, Jason Bush- There is a reduction in number of unaccompanied children crossing the border from 1,000-2,000/day to about 300. Chris Staples will be Jason's replacement. Telephone will be the same as Jason's until he gets his cards.
 - Sheriff-did not attend
 - Fire Safety Council. Jacumba fire now Jacumba Cal Fire. Next meeting is Saturday at Cottonwood Station at 5:30 PM
- **Correspondence, County interface and Special Green Energy Reports**
 - Chairman report given on "Jacumba Solar", schedule of events and Sponsor Group decisions. Chair stated could E-Mail to any one: the "Jacumba Solar" map, the 50 page Preliminary Application letter to Nextera or the NOP document to be discussed later in the evening by Ashley. Citizens should submit comments/change of scope requests to the County.
- **Presentation by Ashley Gungle, County Project Manager Jacumba Solar**
 - "Notice Of Preparation" – "Jacumba Solar" by County Project Manager Ashley Gungle Accompanying Ashley were: Jim Bennet (County Hydrologist) Mandy Fogg
 - Ashley went over the NOP process. A Public Scoping meeting is required
 - The Nextera Project proposal for 20 mg photoic cells
 - Oct 13th is due date for comments on environmental issues (comment sheets were passed around) and Ashley said she can be contacted at any time to answer any questions
 - Process is as follows: Major Use Permit submitted late Aug> NOP due Oct 13 >all documents submitted to County > 45 day comment period for EIR> finalization of documents (appealable with 10 days to Supervisors?) >project typically initiated ½-2years later (2016?)

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- **Nextera Presentation (Part of Fla Power & Light and a 15 billion\$ company-Fortune 200)**
 - Chris Brown and Jesse Marshall (Nextera) presented a map with the scope of the project
 - The site is 300 acres with the project taking up about 100 . The remaining land will be dedicated to county in perpetuity for biological open space. This will be deeded to SD County. They are trying to minimize disturbing land. They will share access road with Eco
 - A question was raised on whether this project would impact Bighorn Mt Sheep corridor and presenter said this was taken in consideration
 - Said would bring jobs to the area but audience pointed out that none-of the other local projects near Jacumba (maybe one person) and that all the jobs went to union workers from Yuma and Riverside due to sub-contractors that are typically used. The residents would like to see a hiring office in Jacumba
 - The panels will be fixed tilt and point towards Mexico on the border (next to Eco substation area)
 - The approximately 80,000 panels will be 6-8 ft tall and approximately 2 ½ foot long and 3 ft wide. These are thin film technology and made by First Solar (Tempe AZ)
 - There will be a battery storage component of lithium ion batteries stored in 10 shipping container sized units with a fire suppression component kept within an anti-climb fence. These will be scattered throughout the project site
 - Minimal grading will occur
 - Predicted water usage is 59 acre ft (includes construction and panel cleaning)
 - When queried where they would get the water, one source they said they would use is Jacumba Community Services District. When someone in the audience said “what happens when the well runs dry” they were assured by a member of the Community Services District that if there is a drop of 10 ft in the well, the project would be shut off from Jacumba water. A citizen says that by that time there will have already been damage to the fractured rock aquifer per Dr. Ponce (hydrologist of SDSU).
 - When asked about culturally sensitive areas, they said that there were a few, so underground lines were not an option. There will be 2-3 poles between the project and Eco Substation
 - Construction expected to start May/June 2016
 - They do not have a power purchase Agreement in place but are working on it.
 - An audience member asked if soil binders could be used. These mitigate some of the bad dust clouds. Ocotillo project was supposed to have these but didn’t and the dust storms are horrendous to residents. No construction firm has been picked but this will be a topic for discussion
 - Old 80 potholes were brought up as the current Eco substation construction has ruined the roads around Jacumba (heavy water trucks constantly down Old Highway 80, potholes, damage to shoulders etc). Ashley said this should be presented to Dept of Public Works

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- **Community Concerns as collected and Presented by Chair**
 - The initial “Preliminary Application” for the project neglected to mention the endangered Bighorn Sheep who use an area (open section of the border fence) as a corridor to travel back and forth to Mexico. There is a big concern that this will hurt the population
 - Community members disagree with the statement in the initial write up that there will be “no impact” and want this changed to “significant impact” as there will be significant impact to the chaparral, immediate wildlife, possibly the ancient juniper groves located there, the recreational value of the hiking which will be stopped, the scenic value of the views, the aesthetic/visual degradation in property values for those who own property on Table Top MT (and who will look down on this)
 - There is a concern for our native birds and bats who migrate and nest here.
 - There is a grave concern on the impact these types of projects are having on our ability to build a Tourism industry in the area. Tourism declines in areas of industrialization and increased air pollution. Jacumba Hot Springs is totally dependent upon the Tourism Industry to survive.
 - The 2013 excavations of an 9000 year old Agave Roasting pit just adjacent to the site indicates that there may be more archeologically significant sites that could be disturbed.
 - The community is also concerned about the cumulative effect that all of these projects are having on our water supply in a time of drought and would like a groundwater/aquifer study survey by a non-biased hydrologist (separate from the developers) as even the County states that there has never been an adequate groundwater survey done in Jacumba. This would include monitoring of wells inside and outside of the immediate water district boundaries.
- **In the interest of time, balance of green energy report on agenda is deferred to the next meeting.**
- **Revitalization Updates and Reports**
 - D Cook – Centennial festival preparations are on target and we expect 300-400 attendees. There are 15 vendors signed up and four music groups. The Board is working on all the different projects (County \$17,000 award). Requests for bids are currently out. The deadline for the bids is the end of October
 - Other – The community cleanup was a great success. We filled 6 dumpsters and rid the community of lots of junk. Thanks to Ken Daubach, we may be getting 10 large cement picnic tables with benches for our park and about town (donated by the Prison). We are in the process of seeing how we can transport them.
- **Presentations from the floor (Non agenda items)**
 - Manzanita Diner is now closed

Meeting adjourned 7:45 PM. Next Meeting – October 28, 2014, 6PM Jacumba Library