

## Valley Center Community Planning Group

**Approved Minutes** for a regular meeting held on **February 13, 2023** at 7:00 p.m. in the Valley Center Community Hall, 28246 Lilac Road, Valley Center, California 92082.  
Delores Chavez Harmes, **Chair**; Dori Rattray, **Vice-Chair**; James Garritson, **Secretary**

**A**=Absent; **Ab**=Abstention; **DRB**=Valley Center Design Review Board; **N**=Nay; **P**=Present; **R**=Recused; **VCCPG**=Valley Center Community Planning Group; **VCPRD**=Valley Center Parks & Recreation District; **Y**=Yea

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### A. Roll Call

- The Meeting was called to order at **7:00 p.m.** and a Quorum was established with **11 members present.**
- ~~Lisa Adams~~ - A
- ~~Michelle Bothof~~ - A
- Delores ChavezHarmes-**P**
- Vlad Ciupitu - **P**
- Susan Fajardo - **P**
- Julia Feliciano - **P**
- James Garritson - **P**
- Steve Hutchison - **P**
- Matt Matthews - **P**
- LaVonne Norwood - **P**
- Dori Rattray - **P**
- Roya Sabeti - **P**
- Larry Schmidt - **P**
- ~~Kevin Smith~~ - **A**
- ~~Vacant Seat~~ - **A**

### B. Pledge of Allegiance - Chair Harmes

### C. Approval of January 9, 2023 and November 14, 2023 Minutes

- **Motion: To approve the January 9, 2023 Minutes.**
- **Maker/Second:** Rattray/Ciupitu
- **Motion Carries 11-0-0 (Y-N-Ab).**
  
- **Approval of November 14, 2023 Minutes**
- **Motion: To approve the November 14, 2023 Minutes.**
- **Maker/Second:** Garritson/Schmidt
- **Motion Carries 11-0-0 (Y-N-Ab).**

### D. Public Comments: Members of the public may address the Planning Group on any topic not on the agenda.

- The Representative for the office of Supervisor Jim Desmond shared that there is a new representative for the Homeless County position.

### 1. Valley Center Art Gallery: Barbara Schnarau

- The Valley Center Art Gallery [www.valleycenterartgallery.org](http://www.valleycenterartgallery.org) shared background about the local organization. This Art Gallery association shared information about this growing organization and how they would like to establish a permanent space for community arts. They have made the proposal to the County and Valley Center Library Association to build a room near the Valley Center Museum. The Gallery would build the 2500 sq. ft. Multicultural Complex in the same style as the present library architecture. They are in the process of fundraising for the VCAG.

- Tracy Ellis, a community member, shared concerns that the California Center for the Arts became a huge burden for the City of Escondido. She asked how the VCAG would build the facility and continue to fund it.
- Ms. Rattray made the suggestion for the VCAG to work with the County about the possibility of incorporating a Gallery at the proposed Intergenerational Center at Star Valley Park. Chair Harmes shared that the County will not begin construction for an intergenerational center until 2025.
- There was a question about how much money is necessary to build the Multicultural Complex. It would cost around 2.5 million dollars to build the complex and then cost around 80 thousand dollars a year.

## **2. SDG&E Update – Keys Creek & Lilac Road Pipeline: Larry Schmidt**

- Mr. Schmidt shared an update about the SDG&E Keys Creek installation and other major projects. They are working on replacing the natural gas pipeline and all five miles should be complete sometime in September 2023. SDG&E will continue to handle any underground water by releasing it back directly into the surrounding area it was taken from.
- Dr. Matthews made the recommendation that SDG&E should continue to have flashing lights and signs to notify drivers near Lilac Elementary School.

## **E. Action items (VCCPG advisory vote may be taken on the following items)**

### **1. Clarke Dental & Vet Clinics – PDS2020-STP-20-0008: Roya Sabeti - (Update).**

- Roya has taken over the Clarke Dental & Vet project from Kathleen McCabe, who is no longer on the board. The project is located near Valley Center Road and Woods Valley Road.

### **2. Temporary Fire Station No. 3 - APN 129-422-02-00: Dori Rattray - Site Plan B waiver request for a temporary fire station for Valley Center Fire Protection District (Vote).**

- **Motion: To approve Temporary Fire Station No. 3 - APN 129-422-02-00 for the Valley Center Fire Protection District.**
- **Maker/Second:** Norwood/Schmidt
- **Motion Carries 11-0-0 (Y-N-Ab)**
- Ms. Rattray provided information about this Site Plan B waiver request. Mr. Hutchison shared that this Temporary Fire Station will provide a lot of benefits to Valley Center and the area of the station.
- Chief Napier shared background about this Fire Station No. 3 Temporary Request. The fire district purchased two modular buildings for this important community project. Our present rating for the fire district is a Class 2, which is one of the top ratings in the country for a rural fire district. Additional fire stations will improve response times in the community. The fire district will work with the County and federal grants to build additional fire stations. An average fire station will cost between 8-10 million dollars. The lithium battery plant provided the fire district with \$250,000. Supervisor Desmond was also able to secure additional infrastructure funds.

### 3. Verizon Cell Site APN 188-260-67: Vlad Ciupitu – Cell site modification for a Site Plan B waiver. (Vote).

- **Motion: To approve the Verizon Cell Site APN 188-260-67.**
- **Maker/Second:** Garritson/Feliciano
- **Motion Carries 11-0-0 (Y-N-Ab)**
- Mr. Ciupitu shared plans for the Verizon Cell Site Modification. The tower will not have any ornamental additions to it and will not have 5G capabilities. It will have on-site battery backup. The project might begin sometime in May or June.

### F. Subcommittee Reports: Confirmation of Chairs

- **Motion: To approve the slate of Subcommittee Chairs proposed by Chair Harmes.**
- **Maker/Second:** Harmes/Schmidt
- **Motion Fails 7-3-1 (Y-N-Ab)**
- There was discussion between Chair Harmes and Mr. Hutchison if the County needs to reconfirm Subcommittee Chairs. Mr. Hutchison would like to remain as the subcommittee chair for the Community Plan. Chair Harmes shared that Mr. Hutchison did not share information from the Fire Board about their concerns about roundabouts.

#### 1) Emergency Evacuation (Harmes):

- Chair Harmes discussed the evacuation processes with CAL Fire personnel & VCFPD. One thing that VCFPD has been working on for some time is tying Paradise Mountain to the Guejito Ranch field break. Grant money issued to the Tribal communities of Rincon and San Pasqual will aid in improvements to evacuation routes. Skyline Ranch will be impacted with this improvement.
- San Diego Co. Regional Fire Foundation is creating a program to address the migrant population (non-English speakers who do not have direct access to Ready SD, etc) and VCFPD is creating videos in Spanish that will be given to kids in schools with a QR code for families to have better access to this information. The program is called Prepara te (Gilbert Anquiano)
- Woods Valley Campground reported that their sign was stolen south of the light at VC Rd and Woods Valley Rd.

#### 2) Cannabis Subcommittee (Matthews):

- There is a 2% County sales tax on cannabis added to the State sales tax. Ms. Rattray asked a question about social equity and Dr. Matthews explained how the County wanted to consider how anyone suffered in the past due to cannabis laws. President Biden made an executive order to pardon anyone with a simple possession of marijuana in October 2022, within the District of Columbia.
- Ms. Norwood read a letter about her concerns that the subcommittee is currently an Ad Hoc committee.
- Ms. Norwood shared her opinion that there is not balanced representation in the subcommittee.

- Mr. Schmidt asked Dr. Matthews a question related to studies made regarding cannabis. He believes that a number of people do receive medical benefits from cannabis. There was discussion between Mr. Schmidt and Dr. Matthews about the use of this drug. Dr. Matthews provided information about how animals are sometimes harmed by cannabis in the veterinary world. The County has not asked for any advice from the Cannabis Subcommittee.
- Ms. Rattray shared her concerns about the impact cannabis might have in the Valley Center community.
- Ms. Norwood asked questions related to why this subcommittee exists. The County has as of this date not requested any input from Planning Groups other than the initial approval of existing dispensaries. A subcommittee was initiated to keep a pulse on the cannabis issue and provide updates. When action is needed, a full subcommittee will be voted on. Ms. Bothof, Ms. Rattray, Becky Rapp, and another community member have asked to serve on this subcommittee.
- There was discussion between Dr. Matthews and Mr. Schmit about some type of oversight at the federal level.

### **3) Parks & Rec/Trails (Norwood):**

- Bill Troc was voted as the chair of the Park and Rec. Karen was made the Vice Chair of this committee. Ms. Norwood inquired about having a large monitor available for the Planning Group.
- Ms. Norwood shared additional information about upcoming events.
- Star Valley Park will not receive any funding for the 2023-2024 fiscal years.

### **4) Mobility (Adams): Traffic Advisory Meeting 01/27/2023**

- No update.

### **5) Tribal Liaison (Chair)**

- VCCPG has asked to be on the February agenda of the Southern California Council of Tribes. The February agenda was full and VCCPG was asked to come back in March.

### **6) Design Review Board (Smith/Adams)**

- Chair Harmes shared news that the Lilac Hills group has proposed a grading permit.

### **7) Community Plan (Ciupitu):**

- There was discussion about the chair of the Community Plan Subcommittee. Mr. Hutchison is not willing to step down for the new appointment nor would he be willing to mentor any new chair or participate on the subcommittee, citing the existing chair must rescind his position before a new chair can be appointed. Chair Harmes stated this was not accurate.

### **8) Revitalization Subcommittee (Rattray):**

- Ms. Rattray shared that the County is looking into hiring a company that would make it much more efficient and less costly to remove graffiti. Mr. Schmidt shared that most of the taggings appear to be from just a few individuals. Kerry Garza shared that Park Circle has a number of cameras that are capturing criminal activity that is inappropriate to share with the community.
- Dr. Matthews asked about the removal of signage around the community.

## 9) CAN/411 (Fajardo)

- Ms. Fajardo shared that Marion Walters with the VC Chamber of Commerce stated that there is a lack of community interest in the CAN meetings and that they are on hold until further notice. Ms Fajardo reviewed the agenda at the VCBA meeting which took place on Jan 11, where several community businesses spoke, including Ginger Rd Wellness and Spa, a new dental practice, Jaquar Dental. Ms Fajardo also reviewed the VCBA meeting which took place on 2/8/23, which covered a talk on Networking for Business Growth. The meeting finished with Jim Davidson from the VC Fire Dept speaking about defensible space.

## 10) Board (Harmes/Fajardo): 2023 CPSG training.

### a. New Applicant Interviews

- **Motion\*: To nominate Chris Barber to serve out the remainder of the term for Seat 11.**

- **Maker/Second: Garritson/Ratray**

- **Motion Carries 6-5-0 (Y-N-Ab)**

- |                          |                        |                          |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| ● Lisa Adams             | ● Julia Feliciano - N  | ● Dori Ratray - Y        |
| ● Michelle Bothof        | ● James Garritson - Y  | ● Roya Sabeti - Y        |
| ● Delores ChavezHarmes-Y | ● Steve Hutchison - N* | ● Larry Schmidt - N      |
| ● Vlad Ciupitu - N       | ● Matt Matthews - N    | ● <del>Kevin Smith</del> |
| ● Susan Fajardo - Y      | ● LaVonne Norwood - Y  | ● <del>Vacant Sea</del>  |

- **\*Mr. Hutchison challenged the vote as not being sufficient to recommend the appointment of Chris Barber to this seat. According to BOS policy I-1, 8 votes are required for such a recommendation.**

- **Mr. Newly** shared that he would like to rescind his interview, as he was impressed with the qualifications of the other two candidates.
- **Evangelina Sunday** introduced herself to the Planning Group. She lives on 11 acres near Lilac. Ecotopia Ranch is an 11.2 acre EcoCommunity Permaculture Research Center located in Valley Center. She is a realtor and has three children. Ms. Norwood asked a question about reasons she would like to join the Group. Mr. Hutchison asked a question about if Evangelina had reviewed the Community Plan. She did review the plan and found it extensive. Mr. Schmidt asked a question about permaculture and how Evangelina can introduce this type of agriculture in Valley Center. Chair Harmes asked a question about Ecotopia Ranch and what this organization does.
- **Chris Barber** introduced himself to the Planning Group. He first attended a meeting back in September 2022. He has read the Community Plan and shared that he has a background in mobility. He was a Chief Warrant Officer in the Army Reserves and has a lot of experience in law enforcement. He is a problem solver and tries to implement ideas. He likes to implement ideas whenever possible. Chris shared that as a former sheriff deputy he experienced issues dealing with traffic circles, especially in an emergency situation. He shared a lot of observations about traffic circles that concern him. Mr. Hutchison asked if

Chris has had any experience dealing with code enforcement. Chris is retired and does have a lot of available time. He does intend to live in the Valley Center community for the remainder of his life.

- The applicants were asked to leave the meeting so that the Planning Group could discuss the two applicants. There was a lot of discussion about the backgrounds of both applicants. Ultimately, Mr. Barber received the majority of votes.

#### **I. Adjournment**

- Next regular meeting of VCCPG: **March 13, 2023 at 7 p.m.**
- **The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.**
- **Minutes were approved on April 10, 2023.**

**James Garritson, Secretary**