

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP (BPG)**

***** MINUTES / SUMMARY FOR IN-PERSON MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 4TH, 2022*****

A. MEMBERS PRESENT: 1) Manuel Casanova; 2) Earl Goodnight 3) Kevin Keane; 4) Donna Tisdale; 5) Michele Strand; 6) Michael Coyne; 7) Nancy Good

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (optional):

C. MINUTES/ SUMMARY FOR JUNE 2ND MEETING:

- *M/S: Good/Goodnight: Accept minutes as written: Passed: 4 YES; 0 NO; 3 ABSTAINED*

D. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: Opportunity for public comment on any subject matter within the Group's jurisdiction that is not on the posted agenda. No action can be taken on non-agenda items. Items can be added to future agendas.

- Local 14-year resident, John Dolan, reported that his 3 wells (200 ft deep) have gone dry. He associated his dry wells to the fact that Shreddy Ranch drilled a new well and increased the size of original seasonal pond to almost 2 acre "lake" that is being filled with well water for a water park for how many? Another neighbor's 500 ft deep well has slowed recovery. Dolan said he can't afford to drill a new well so he has to truck water in to fill his storage tank at cost. He is a retired disabled Vietnam vet living on limited income.
- Chair Tisdale reported that concerns were raised last month with aerial photos and videos showing a much expanded pond being filled from a new well (according to the video narrator) at the 160 acre property on Tierra Real Rd. Several project neighbors also complained to her about loss of groundwater recharge in their wells.
- Someone must have called Codes Compliance. Last week, a Cease and Desist notice was posted on the gate of the property in question. She called the number of the officer on the notice. He said the owner is supposed to cease all grading and further work on OHV track and shooting range until they comply and get a permit.
- The Shreddy Ranch sign was removed from their gate after the Cease and Desist notice went up.
- Another County meeting was supposed to be held this week. No word on whether or not the owner will be allowed to continue pumping scarce groundwater into the significantly enlarged pond that was basically a seasonal mud pit when they bought the property in 2020. The owner denied pumping water into the pond but the video and other evidence directly contradicted his claim.
- Chair reported that her own family's well has mostly recovered since last month after they found a broken pipe leaking under their 10,000 gallon water storage tank.
- Manny Casanova offered to check with the State Water Board and report back.

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

1. **100 MW STARLIGHT SOLAR PLUS BATTERIES ON 570 ACRES JEWEL VALLEY AREA; MAJOR USE PERMIT (MUP) APPLICATION SCOPING LETTER: PDS2022-MPA-22-006:**
 - Jim Whalen reported that the MUP won't be out until next year, not in the coming weeks.
 - The grading is only for roads.
 - Whalen offered to bring maps out for next meeting.
 - He also raised option of holding a field trip for BPG members to the actual project sites.
 - There was a brief discussion on the scoping letter and whether or not to submit comments at this time.
 - *M/S: Casanova/Good: No action at this time: Passed 7 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAINED.*
2. **RUGGED SOLAR COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT (CBA):**
 - The Rugged Solar Working Draft CBA was endorsed in concept. Now that the Planning Commission has recommended project approval, final discussion and recommendations should be made prior to the Board of Supervisors upcoming hearing.
 - Chair Tisdale reported that she submitted another comment letter on 7/ 18 but did not make the July 22nd Planning Commission meeting. Her son was in town that one day and she had not seen him a year so she visited with him instead.

- The Planning Commission recommended approval of Rugged Solar on July 22.
- The meeting video is now posted. The video audio was bad. The Commissioners asked that the concertina wire be removed, the interior collector lines be buried underground, and for not less than \$25,000 annual fund in addition to \$887,000 community benefit for Boulevard.
- No one from Boulevard was at that meeting. Only one caller opposed the project.
- The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers rep was there in support of 500 (?) direct jobs.
- There were about 15 e-comments in opposition.
- Support comments submitted by Jim Whalen and Kevin Keane.
- Chair Tisdale stated that she was disappointed that Jim Whalen informed the Planning Commission that the Rugged Community Benefit Agreement was final, already signed, and that the Boulevard Planning Group and she had endorsed it.
- However, the BPG had voted only to support the CONCEPT of the draft agreement (5-5-22 minutes), but that draft needs improvements.
- The Rugged Solar agreement is between the San Diego Foundation (SDF) and Rugged Solar NOT the local non-profit that will be managing the Backcountry Community Resource Center as was previously discussed.
- Who are the local SDF advisors? Where is the local guidance and oversight on where the funds will actually go?
- It was previously discussed, and agreed, that all funds are to go to the Backcountry Resource Center for major improvements and for programs and access that will benefit our community overall.
- The SDF agreement appears to make it possible that other non-profits could benefit from our loss.
- Could funds go to the Rough Acres Foundation that claims to be a charitable trust that is already benefitting from leasing the Rugged Solar site to the developers?
- The SDF fees are too high and agreement too vague to meet our requests.
- It includes a yearly grant cycle fee \$60,000 for funds that should go directly to the Backcountry Resource Center. How expensive is it to write a check once a year???
- Mark Ostrander agreed with Tisdale that it would likely be beneficial to try to secure an independent legal review of the Rugged Solar agreement on behalf of the local non-profit that will be managing the Backcountry Resource Center.
- We are already getting run over by the projects and don't need to get kicked while we are down.
- We do need a formal response from our Group, on what we want and don't want, before the Board of Supervisors hearing that is supposed to be set for October.
- Jim Whalen said agreement needs to be vague to avoid triggering CEQA.
- Just the money agreement has been made not the details. Clean Focus wanted the Foundation involved.
- Whalen is also working on endowment from Starlight Solar.
- Parks & Recreation needs a push from the BPG to step-up.
- The next Revitalization meeting is the 3rd Monday.
- Project PPA potentially \$27 / MWh
- It was obvious that more time was needed for consideration and decision on how to proceed.
- *M/S: Coyne/Keane: Table Rugged Solar CBA to September meeting: Passed: 7 YES; 0 NO; 0 ABSTAINED.*

F. GROUP BUSINESS, ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. **EVEN NUMBERED SEATS (2-Goodnight; 4-Tisdale; 6-Coyne) ARE UP FOR ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 8th BALLOT:**
 - Candidate filing period for the November ballot will be July 18th through August 12th. See details at this link: <https://www.sdvote.com/content/rov/en/candidates-campaigns/filing.html>
 - Chair Tisdale reported that she and Earl had both filed to run for re-election. Michael confirmed, too.
2. **REVITALIZATION & FIRE SAFE COUNCIL REPORTS:**
 - Mark Ostrander reported that the Registrar of Voters will use the Back-Country Resource Center starting October 29 – Nov 8th for voting. They might use it as a permanent site.
 - August 20th community cleanup event, chipping, no batteries and no hazmat.

- Additional clean up events September 17th in Campo, October 15 in Jacumba and November 19th in Potrero.
- Donations needed for Halloween and Christmas events for kids.

3. **INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022:**

- Chair Tisdale reported that the renewable energy industry marked slowest quarter since 2019 with installations down 55%. That will change with passage of the federal Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 that includes \$369 billion for so-called energy security and climate change. It also modifies and extends tax credits for wind, solar, geothermal, energy storage, fuel cells and microgrid controllers. It increases the tax incentives for wind and solar projects built in low-income communities.

4. **AB 205 SIGNED BY GOVERNOR NEWSOM:**

- Chair Tisdale reported that AB 205 shifts siting authority for solar, wind, and certain battery backup projects, from local governments to the California Energy Commission (CEC). They also delegate blanket authority to bypass local permitting to the Department of Water Resources (DWR), under the auspices of a Strategic Energy Reserve. <https://www.californiaenvironmentallawblog.com/energy/effective-immediately-california-energy-commission-jurisdiction-expands-to-include-non-thermal-projects-greater-than-50-mw/>

G. PROJECT UPDATES:

1. **SDG&E's BOULEVARD MICROGRID & STRATEGIC UNDERGROUNDING:** CPUC approved the project on 6/23/22. It will serve selected Boulevard and Campo Reservation facilities.
2. **74 MW RUGGED SOLAR PDS2017-MUP-12-007W1 MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION APPROVED BY PLANNING COMMISSION 7/22:** Current PDS Project Manager: Regina.Ochoa@sdcounty.ca.gov ; (619) 323-8090. Planning Commission recommended approval on 7/22/22. Project documents posted at: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/ceqa/MUP-12-007W1.html>
 - Commissioner Hitzke motioned, and Commissioner Barnhart, seconded the motion to approve staff recommendations with the following conditions: 1. Changing the security wire on top of the fence. 2. Undergrounding onsite. 3. Annual endowment of \$25,000 to the Community. Motion Passed: 5-2-0 (Edwards & DP voting no)
3. **TERRA-GEN'S 252 MW-60 TURBINE CAMPO WIND PROJECT. APPEAL OF FEDERAL APPROVALS OF CAMPO WIND FILED IN 9TH CIRCUIT COURT APPEAL ON 2-22-22:**
 - Approved for Campo Reservation land by Dept of Interior April 2020. Federal lawsuit filed 7-8-20. On August 6, 2021, the federal judge granted the Campo Band's Motion to Dismiss the case. In 2021, the FAA approved project for second time despite SO CAL TRACON objections over significant aviation impacts. An appeal of FAA approval is in process at the 9th Circuit.
4. **TERRA-GEN'S BOULDER BRUSH SUBSTATION FACILITIES PDS2019-MUP-19-002; PDS2019-ER-19-16-001; APPROVED BY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS 3-17-21. CEQA CHALLENGE FILED. DEC 15 MERITS HEARING SET WITH JUDGE FRAZIER. FAA APPROVED TRANSMISSION TOWERS IN FEB-MARCH 2022:**
 - Boulder Brush Facilities include 3.5 miles of overhead 230 kilovolt generation transmission (gen-tie) line on private land, approximately 32 steel poles at a maximum height of 150 feet, a high voltage substation, a switchyard, in/out connection to the existing Sunrise Powerlink. These facilities will connect Terra-Gen's 60-4.2 MW Campo Wind turbines on the Campo Reservation to Sunrise Powerlink via new substation and switchyard: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/ceqa/BoulderBrush.html>
5. **90 MW JACUMBA VALLEY RANCH ENERGY PARK (JVR SOLAR); APPROVED BY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON 8-18-21. CEQA LAWSUIT CHALLENGING APPROVAL WAS FILED ON 9-20-21- JUDGE'S RULING PENDING:**
 - 90 megawatt (MW) solar energy facility and a battery energy storage system of up to 90 MW (360 MWh) on 613 acres. Project documents are posted at: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/ceqa/MUP-18-022.html>.
6. **TERRA-GEN'S 126 MW TORREY WIND PROJECT WITH 30-4.2 MW TURBINES: PDS2018-MUP-18-014:**
 - No project progress reported since approximately 2018. Torrey Wind will rely on Campo Wind's approved but not yet built Boulder Brush Substation. Terra-Gen was granted another project time extension through September 24, 2022.

- The CAISO Grid Queue report (#2177) shows a Boulder Brush Hybrid with 105.8 MW wind and 314 MW battery storage with an online date of 6/1/25:
7. **TULE WIND PHASE II-69MW:**
 - Currently permitted to erect up to 24 new turbines on State land and the Ewiiapayaap Reservation, with a capacity of 69 megawatts, as expansion to existing 131.1 MW Tule Wind I with 57 -2.3 MW turbines. No progress since approximately 2016: <https://www.eastcountymagazine.org/state-approves-tule-wind-phase-ii-opponents-voice-concern-eagles-wildlife-residents>
 8. **BOULEVARD ENERGY STORAGE PDS2017-ZAP-17-006:**
 - 100 MW battery storage project proposed to connect to Boulevard Substation has been withdrawn.
 - Starlight Solar proposes to use some of the same parcels and has purchased the property for that purpose.
 9. **60 MW 420 ACRE BOULEVARD SOLAR MUP12-010TE PDS2012-3300-12-00 @ 796 Tierra Del Sol Road;**
 - No project progress reported. Approved in 2014 and terminated by Soitec Solar in March 2015. Invenergy withdrew from project in 2018. The absentee owner is still promoting it. Permit was to expire in late July 2022 but could potentially be extended yet again.
 10. **ENERGIA SIERRA JUAREZ (ESJ) WIND II-EXPANSION COMMENCES OPERATIONS:**
 - FEB 8, 2022: Sempra commenced operations of their 108 MW (26-Vestas V150-4.2MW) expansion of existing 155 MW ESJ Wind I project (47-3.3 MW turbines) on 13,000 acres south of the border just east of Jacumba and Ejido Jacume. Energy is exported cross border to SDG&E's ECO Substation.
 - Full capacity at build out is 1,000-1,200 MW to connect to ECO Substation east of Jacumba.

H. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:15 PM: NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST, 2022.

Minutes approved by Group on 9-1-22

Michele Strand, Secretary: _____

For More information contact Donna Tisdale, Chair at 619-766-4170 or tisdale.donna@gmail.com ; Current and past meeting agendas and approved minutes are posted on the County website @ <http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/gpupdate/comm/blvd.html>

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