

County of San Diego
Jacumba Hot Springs Community Sponsor Group
FINAL Minutes of the Zoom meeting held on April 20, 2021
Jacumba Hot Springs, CA 91934

The April 20, 2021 Jacumba Community Sponsor Group (JCSG) regular meeting (via Zoom) was called to order at 5:30 pm.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89254658551?pwd=VWtFM3VUQWpPWEO2UUY3S2ZkQnpTUT09>

Meeting ID: 892 5465 8551; Passcode: 090930. Dial-in: (669) 900-6833

A. Members Present: Seat 1. Jacari Cousins; Seat 2. Greg Curran; Seat 3. Cherry Diefenbach; Seat 4. Jeffery Osborne; Seat 5. VACANT. Public present: 9.

B. Pledge of Allegiance. (waived-due to virtual meeting format)

C. Motion to approve minutes of the regular JCSG meeting held on March 16, 2021. M/S: Curran/Cousins. Passed: 4-0-0.

D. Public Communication: The public may comment on any subject within the JSG'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.)

We had two speakers who expressed their concerns about the scope of San Diego's proposed Cannabis and Social Equity Ordinance. These speakers explained that there is still time to provide feedback on the ordinance which will streamline the opening of legal marijuana storefronts in our rural communities. Some concerns regarding the proliferation of legal pot shops in the backcountry is their proximity to schools, parks, county libraries, and churches (places where children congregate), whether law enforcement has the necessary resources to ensure pot shops do not sell their wares to underage buyers, and the inherent dangers of putting more impaired drivers onto our rural roads.

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

1. Motion to approve Katrina Westley's ROV certified application for Seat #5 (currently vacant). M/S Diefenbach/Curran. Passed 4-0-0.

2. Sponsor group has been asked to review/update our annual road resurfacing prioritization list for the County Department of Public Works (DPW). Our existing road resurfacing list includes: Railroad St. to Seeley Ave, (.11 miles) and Old Highway 80, MKR 33 to In-Ko-Pah Road, (7.05 miles). Tobey Halstead, a Jacumba business owner, requested the feasibility of the County paving an unpaved section of Carriso Gorge Road west of the Subway by I-8 exit 73. Since his request did not fall under the road resurfacing program, he was referred to the DPW for more information. Our group has identified Carriso Gorge Road from Old Highway 80 to the westbound I-8 exchange (1.0 miles) as a road in need of resurfacing; it will be added to our resurfacing list. **Motion to have the Chair submit our updated road resurfacing list to the DPW: M/S Cousins/Curran. Passed 4-0-0.**

The sponsor group also discussed the need for an additional crosswalk or radar sign that would slow down traffic on Old Highway 80 at the eastern end of Jacumba near Heber Street and the county library/community park area. This item will be carried over for further discussion/action at our next sponsor group meeting.

3. Discuss status of proposed Jacumba Valley Ranch Energy Park project and a tentative timeline for the solar project. At our last sponsor group meeting on March 16, 2021, our group voted to support a much smaller solar facility (200 acres), without a switchyard that would be located well north of the town with 1,500 feet setbacks from residences, and all public roads. This smaller solar facility could send its generated power via an underground transmission line to SDG&E's ECO substation.

On April 12, 2021, Planning & Development Services (PDS) project manager Nicholas Koutoufidis (nicholas.koutoufidis@sdcounty.ca.gov or 858-495-5329) provided our sponsor group with an electronic copy of the 20-page revised JVR project plan and a summary of the very minor changes it makes to the original 643 acre solar project previously described in the DEIR. Those changes include a footprint reduction of 20 acres and a water main re-alignment. According to Nick Koutoufidis, setbacks from the project fence line along the north side of Old Highway 80 will be 110 feet from the edge of the roadway; setbacks from the edge of the roadway on the south side of Old Highway 80 will 175-180 feet; and the fence line setback from the Jacumba Community Park/Highland Center property boundary has been increased to 300 feet. The revised project plan does not widen setbacks next to Jacumba residences on the east side of town, or eliminate the placement of solar arrays on the knoll where the abandoned farm buildings are currently located. Nor does it eliminate the 3.2-acre switchyard. The revised JVR solar project plan can be viewed at: [https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/JVR/DEIR/AdditionalDocs/JVR0Plot%20Plans%20\(Optimized\).pdf](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/ceqa/JVR/DEIR/AdditionalDocs/JVR0Plot%20Plans%20(Optimized).pdf). (Although the Chair requested PDS provide a hard copy of the revised plans for our group to review on April 12th, eight days before our sponsor group meeting, they were not received until after our meeting.)

Additionally, the PDS Planner provided the following tentative timeline for the JVR solar project:

Week of June 22, 2021---Final EIR is released

July 9th, 2021---Planning Commission Hearing (vote on whether to recommend the project)

August 18th, 2021---Board of Supervisors Hearing (vote on whether to approve the project)

Given the County's COVID meeting restrictions in place throughout the JVR DEIR review process and which are still firmly in place, the Jacumba Sponsor Group believes that our residents are being kept in the dark about this massive green energy facility that is six times the physical size of our existing community. **There is NO SOCIAL EQUITY in jamming through 600 acres of solar arrays that will consume the best vacant farm or residential land immediately adjacent to our tiny village/Colonia.** Given the social-economic disadvantages experienced by many of our residents, an in-person meeting is absolutely critical to answer residents' questions and concerns about this "interim" 35-37 year project that has very real impacts to the future existence of Jacumba. **Zoom meetings simply do not work in a community where many residents do not own computers and/or smart phones. With the County's continued reliance on remote meetings, Jacumbians will effectively be shut out of any meaningful participation in the project review process.**

Before our Sponsor Group can make an informed decision on whether to approve, conditionally approve, or deny the revised JVR project plan, our residents must be made aware of the scope of the project and its significantly negative effects on Jacumba's community character, scenic vistas, biological resources, property values, tourism, and other quality of life issues. To that end, a socially-distanced community gathering to discuss this project is currently being organized by some residents for May 7, 2021 at 6 pm. It is only after receiving feedback on the project, from our neighbors and local business owners, that the Sponsor Group can faithfully represent the community's views regarding this project plan.

Motion to invite the project planner and project applicant to attend our next JCSG meeting on May 18, 2021 at 5:30 pm where we will vote on the revised JVR project plan. M/S: Diefenbach/Osborne. Passed: 4-0-0.

F. Group business and Announcements-discussion only.

1. Announcements:

a. On April 1, 2021, the Chair submitted a code compliance complaint for the continued presence of derelict appliances and mattresses dumped at the former Miller recycling place on Old Hwy 80. According to county code enforcement, the property has received multiple complaints and it is currently under investigation.

2. Community Interface Reports:

a. Fire Safe Council Revitalization. Mark Ostrander identified that the Fire Safe Council will be holding chipping events from 10m to 2pm on May 15, June 19, and July 17, 2021. Chipping sites for all the dates are the Resource Center (the former Boulevard Fire Station) and the Jacumba Community Park.

b. The Jacumba Boulevard Revitalization Association (JBRA), a CA non-profit 501c3 organization, will host a variety of community clean-up events as follows: Boulevard—Aug. 21; Campo—Sep. 18; Jacumba—Oct. 16; and Potrero—Nov. 20. Over the past year, the Resource Center operated by JBRA volunteers, has essentially been shut down for community activities due to COVID restrictions. The former fire station

apparatus bay was recently converted into a theater that can also be used as a large community meeting place.

Lorrie Ostrander announced that there will be a yard sale from 8am to 2pm on Friday, April 30; Saturday, May 1; and Sunday, May 2, 2021 at the Resource Center in Boulevard. The proceeds from the yard sale will benefit the JBRA and the Fire Safe Council.

G. Meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm. The next regular JCSG meeting is Tuesday, May 18, 5:30pm. (Place to be determined.)

Approved May 18, 2021