

**County of San Diego**  
**Jacumba Hot Springs Community Sponsor Group**  
**Minutes for the JCSG Meeting at 6 pm on February 13, 2023**  
**Highland Senior Center, 44681 Old Hwy 80, Jacumba Hot Springs, CA 91934**

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**A. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm. Roll call:** Seat 1. Hafdell; Seat 2. Greg Curran (Vice-Chair); Seat 3. Cherry Diefenbach (Chair); Seat 4. Jeffery Osborne-*absent*; Seat 5. Katrina Westley (Secretary). Public 13.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance.**

**C. Approval of the draft minutes for the JCSG meeting held on January 9, 2023.**

*M/S to approve the draft minutes of the JCSG meeting on January 9, 2023: Curran/Westley. Passed: 3-0-0-1(Hafdell)*

**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.)

The Chair has requested a Jacumba water history analysis briefing from the County hydrologist, Jim Bennett and a briefing from the San Diego County Fire Authority, about the new Jacumba Fire Station. Currently, there are no firm dates for those briefings.

The Chair announced that a new fire hazard severity zone map has been released by the state for public comment.

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

**1. San Diego Community Power (SDCP), a “community choice aggregator,” will become the default energy generation provider for all residents and businesses in the unincorporated County beginning on April 1, 2023.**

The Chair provided an overview about the upcoming power generation shift from SDG&E to the SDCP.

--Community choice aggregators were brought on line to offer Californians competitive electrical generation rates. In 2021, the BOS voted to have the SDCP become the electrical generation provider for the unincorporated areas of the County. Previously, this organization entered into a power purchase agreement (PPA) with BayWa r.e. to buy solar generated power from the JVR Energy Park over the objections of Jacumba residents.

--The SCDP will purchase electricity from power providers with a goal of buying renewable energy. Unless backcountry residents elect to opt out, you will be paying them for energy generation on your SDG&E bill. You will also still be paying SDG&E for those other things like the cost of transmission, distribution, public purpose programs, etc.

--The Chair has already opted out of SDCP stating their lack of concern for the quality of life for Jacumba residents after the JVR Solar facility is built. However, she stressed that everyone should visit the [SDCommunitypower.org](http://SDCommunitypower.org) website to review electrical generation rates before making their own choice.

Maureen: The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regulates any increase in SDGE rates. They are allowed by law to raise rates every two years. She recently contacted the SDCP to ask them how often they will be raising their rates and was not able to get that information. It is also not clear if the SDCP will be required to get CPUC’s approval before raising their rates.

Bonnie: Does the SDCP offer the same net metering program as SDG&E for residents with solar systems?

Maureen: I think they have similar programs. The SDCP website also has a cost comparison tool but it does not appear to be working.

Katrina: After mid-April 2023, the buy-back rates for the excess solar energy produced for individuals with new solar systems will decrease. The current energy buy-back rates for those already enrolled in the NEM program will be grandfathered for 20 more years.

Greg: The energy sources that the SDCP are using are not that green and they seem to be on a par with SDG&E.

Chair: The SDCP currently offers two enrollment programs: Poweron and Power100. Customers who select the

Power100 option will be charged more per kilowatt hour because they want to be supplied by 100 percent renewable power which is actually not available.

Ben: I don't understand why you are against having a choice in energy providers. I pay one third of what SDG&E is charging because I get my electrical power from Imperial County. You should be thankful that SDCP offers you a choice.

Chair: It does not appear that SDCP rates are much cheaper than SDG&E rates. Residents of Eastern San Diego County do not have the option of getting electrical power from Imperial County.

Katrina: My problem with SDCP is that they are getting their renewable energy from projects like the JVR which are destroying our rural backcountry. I did not move to rural Jacumba to have a giant solar facility with lithium batteries built nearby that will ruin my quality of life.

Chair: SDG&E is requesting a rate increase for next year. You still have an opportunity to voice your objections at two up-coming virtual public hearings on March 6 and March 15, 2023. Information about those public forums was included with your last utility bill. It can also be found on the SDG&E website.

Bonnie: If we opt out of SDG&E, will we lose the opportunity to get SDG&E mitigation grants?

Chair: I believe that you will still be able to apply for those SDG&E grants.

The Chair requested that Katrina to post information on social media informing residents that they have automatically been switched over to SDCP.

**2. The Department of Parks and Recreation and Department of Libraries will host a roundtable discussion on parks and library facilities improvements and expanded programming at the Pine Valley Library, on February 14, from 1:30-3:00pm.** Residents unable to attend are encouraged to complete a survey using the links below.

English: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VRLT3HT>

Spanish: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NG3L26K>

Maureen: The Parks and Recreation Dept. want the libraries to create and support more programs that benefit park users.

The Chair will be attending the roundtable discussion.

**3. The County is hosting two virtual listening sessions on February 15 and 21 about the new enhanced care management and community supports offered through the California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative.** Medi-Cal beneficiaries with complex health or social needs are encouraged to participate and voice any healthcare access challenges. Visit <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/mcsd/sdaim/>.

Bonnie: I have found that San Ysidro Health is very informative about a variety of medical, EBT, transportation, social programs, etc. for folks in the backcountry.

#### **4. Update on JVR Energy Park Project.**

A legal appeal against the JVR project was recently filed. That appeal is expected to be heard by an appellate court outside of San Diego County later on this year.

It is not known if SDCP has entered into a new PPA with BayWa r.e. for the JVR solar facility.

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

1. A JCSG letter of support for adding a new Unincorporated Communities Advisory Board Member and Alternate to SANDAG's Board of Directors was emailed to SANDAG and the San Diego County Supervisors on January 12, 2023.

2. JCSG comments on the January 30, 2023 Regional Decarbonization Framework (RDF) District 2 Workshop were emailed to the County on January 31, 2023. JCSG comments on the RDF Playbook were also emailed on February 1, 2023. The public comment period on the RDF playbook will end on March 31, 2023. The Chair encouraged everyone to make individual comments before we are forced to live with new regulations imposed by the County.

3. A JCSG letter was sent to San Diego Community Power (SDCP) on January 19, 2023 regarding Jacumba's continued rejection of the JVR solar project. The letter included a request that SDCP reconsider entering into a new power purchase agreement (PPA) with BayWa r.e. due to the JVR project's negative impact on Jacumba residents.

4. On February 9, 2023, the JCSG requested that County PDS (Ashley Smith/Mark Slovick) ensure that a complete flood and drainage analysis of the JVR project area is conducted before a grading permit is issued to BayWa r.e. Photographs of recent valley flooding events were included in that request.

5. Community interface reports.

a. Highland Senior Center.

Greg: The Senior Center is still operating under bankruptcy protection. The 90-day court stay will expire in early March 2023 at which time our legal counsel and the water district's legal counsel will be meeting to decide a course of action. The center continues to be used for yoga classes, memorial services, etc.

b. Real East County Fire Safe Council and JBRA (Revitalization).

Lorrie Ostrander provided an FSC and JBRA update: The FSC is seeking a grant to buy an air curtain burner or incinerator to use instead of a wood chipper. Dates for community chipping events will be announced soon. JBRA is hosting a food pantry at the Resource Center on Mondays from 10am to 2pm. The food will be provided by San Ysidro Health. The big EDCO recycle bin is also open during that time period. JBRA will sponsor a medical outreach if they can get medical professionals and sufficient volunteers.

The Chair thanked Lorrie for her dedicated community service and asked residents to volunteer to help with those local programs.

**G. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 pm.

The next JCSG meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 13, 2023 at 6 pm.

***Approved: March 13, 2023***