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P.O. Box 232, Bonita, CA 91908 www.sweetwatervalleyca.org

**SWEETWATER VALLEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
March 3, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Vice President Tony Tieber via Zoom. He welcomed everyone to our third Zoom meeting. We began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Tony asked a moment of silence to honor the men and women of our Armed Forces, Law Enforcement, Fire and Safety Professionals, as well as our front-line essential workers to include those in food service, farming, law enforcement, and teaching.

Directors Present: Tony Tieber, Judy Tieber, Steve Stonehouse, Jim Woodford, Sharon Coleman, Sharmane Estolano, Mike Clowers

Members Present: Harriet Taylor, Lisa M. Goodsell, Prudence Prince, Greg Ward,

Guests Present: Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Chief Michael Sims, Chula Vista Council Member Representative Samantha Trickey, CHP Officer Salvador Castro, Andrew Harvey from Supervisor District 1, Nora Vargas' Office, Rosy Vasquez from Community Through Hope, Officer Ernie Pinedo, Chula Vista Homeless Outreach Team (HOT), Sarah Hutmacher, San Diego River Park Foundation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Tony asked for a motion to approve minutes. Steve Stonehouse so moved, Judy Tieber second. Minutes approved.

Tony welcomed our guests: Rosy Vasquez Community Through Hope, Sarah Hutmacher SDRPF, Chula Vista Police Officer Ernie Pinedo HOT).

TREASURER'S REPORT: Stephen Stonehouse reported the March 2021 Treasurer's Report.

	<u>March</u>
Checking	\$2,240.68
Certificate of Deposit	\$2,464.06
Ending Balance	\$4,704.74

Stephen told us he has deposited \$105 in new memberships. His report was accepted as presented.

Law Enforcement Reports:

CHP: We were pleased to welcome back Officer Salvador Castro, who told us he has been spending time in Bonita (2 days/week). His report hit several of our problem areas (Frisbee, Winnetka, Corral Canyon and the Bonita Rd/Central intersection. A Coffee with a Cop event was planned for Friday morning (March 5th) at Donny's Café in Bonita from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. We can contact Officer Castro by phone or email: CHP Office: **1-858-293-6000** or Salvador.Castro@CHP.CA.gov.

Sheriff Dept. Crime Prevention Specialist, Julio Garcia not available to attend.

Chula Vista Police Officer: Officer Ernie Pinedo, a member of the CV Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) joined us to talk about his challenging job assignment. He acknowledged the homeless populations living off Plaza Bonita Road and Linwood area. HOT organizes clean-ups along with outreach services to the homeless population. Every once-in-a-while, their help is accepted; and the HOT can hook the person up with Community Through Hope. The Officer also discussed the challenges presented by various car clubs meeting almost every weekend in large parking lots like Plaza Bonita where they are racing, doing donuts, and putting onlookers at grave risk. The locations and schedules for these meetups are on social media.

Fire Safety: Bonita Fire Chief Mike Sims reported they continue to be busy with 158 calls last month. He was happy to report the Station is at full staffing while other parts of the County are really struggling to fill openings with qualified candidates. He feels much of this is due to our community and the great amount of support given to our Fire Dept. Chula Vista is starting its own ambulance service. We will be switching to the CV Ambulance Service on April 9th. The Chief feels we will get better service. Currently, CV employees are being trained so ready to go on the appointed start date. The plan is to house the ambulance service at the main Bonita Fire Station and not at the old Fire Station near Jack-in-the-box. Chief Sims told us he has applied to fill an open seat on the San Diego Integrated Regional Water Advisory Board. This would get him a seat at the table to apply for water shed mitigation grants. Hoping that might help with clearing dead trees and brush out of our riverbeds. The Chief also offered to help in any way possible to address the unsafe and derelict condition of the Burdeski shopping center. Sharmane Estolano plans to address this issue with the Chula Vista City Council at an upcoming meeting.

Elected Representative Reports:

Council Member John McCann Representative, Samantha Trickey, reported that CM John McCann is working on an idea with Parks and Rec to open up a café in Rohr Park near the old ranger station that would service beverages and some food items. It would be a nice place to gather in the park. As this idea moves along, Samantha will be sure to bring it back to us for updates and discussion.

Supervisor Nora Vargas Representatives, Andrew Harvey updated us on the County Covid mitigation efforts. There are currently seven vaccination sites in County. The County is also working to increase the capacity of “211” callers who are looking for vaccine information. Also, we now have two walk-up sites where appointments are not needed. With all the weather - related delays, they are aiming to get everyone their second shot within 40 days of their first. Judy Tieber suggested the County identify which sites are giving which vaccine. This would help residents direct their efforts to schedule a second shot if they received their first shot without an appointment. The number to call for appointment at the old Sears vaccination site in CV: 619-476-2397. Just keep hitting redial until someone answers.

Sharmane Estolano brought up a concern about the difficulty of turning left from Bonita Road onto Allen School Rd. A left turn traffic signal would be a really good idea to keep vehicles out of the intersection once the light has turned. While this intersection is within Chula Vista City limits, Andrew will check it out and perhaps work with Chula Vista to make this happen.

House of Representatives Sara Jacobs' Office Jessica Mier not present.

Continuing Business: Dilapidated Shopping Center—more complaints are being made. Neighbors have “had it” with the continuing non-response to code violations. Something must get done. Chula Vista must take charge of this dangerous situation. Chief Sims confirmed his concerns about the wooden structures including the wood shake shingles. This place is a serious fire hazard, but his hands are tied because this is within Chula Vista city limits. His suggestion is to take it before the City Council and demand action. We were told that an arson fire did take place behind the Sushi restaurant and Bonita Fire did respond. John Taylor said the best way to move forward is to go to a Chula Vista City Council Meeting, Tuesdays 5-7 p.m. and to e-comment on the CV website.

New Business:

At this time, Tony welcomed Ms. Sarah Hutmacher, Chief Associate Director of the San Diego River Park Foundation. Ms. Hutmacher gave us an interesting review of their efforts to address homeless issues including all the trash left to pollute the San Diego Riverbed. This Foundation is an environmental non-profit dedicated to education, clean-up, and support of the river that travels through five cities, and land owned by 30 private entities. They organize various groups (girl scouts to marines) to help clean up 500,000 to a million pounds of trash and debris every year. The motivation to secure grant funding for their partner in this endeavor, People Assisting the Homeless (PATH-San Diego) was to increase the number of homeless outreach encounters aimed to get this population into permanent housing and help them get their lives back. Many of these homeless have been living in the riverbed for up to 20 years, and many suffer from addictions of various kind. PATH-San Diego builds long-term relationships with this population and provides all the case management support these people need. They work hard to gain trust and go back time and time again to meet with the homeless. For their part, the Foundation members map the encampments and lead PATH workers to them. So far, for outcomes, several people have entered housing programs and others are in regular contact with PATH. Sarah hopes to see measurable reductions in trash as this program continues. The Foundation’s work is also supported by the Kaiser Foundation and several private donors. Tony thanked Sarah for her presentation and wished her well as they continue their efforts.

Community Forum:

Bonita Alliance—Lisa Martin Goodsell followed up on the above conversation telling us that our local CV HOT is familiar with a County homeless database (CLARITY) and that one member of the CV team has access to it. Rosy Vasquez told us her organization, Community Through Hope (CTH) and PATH work in tandem to reach out with offers to help this population. CTH provides on-going case management that lasts as long as it is needed for each individual. This includes getting their IDs back, social security numbers re-established, offering portable showers, getting them fed and finding shelter. She told us CV would be opening a new shelter in June. CTH efforts to go into the riverbeds is supported by Sharp Healthcare. Our discussion ended on the note that the SVCA is too small an organization to, by itself, make any impact on the homeless situation. Best way forward is to support our local outreach teams (HOT and CTH).

Continuing Business:

(taken out of order to facilitate discussion about homeless)

Tony reminded us that the Association approved upgrades to our SVCA website before the Covid-19 pandemic. These included the ability to do on-line membership payments, increased ability to post more documents, increased security, and the opportunity for us to market to and recognize community sponsors. All these improvements and more can be accomplished by increasing our current contract with Keep-it-Growing to 5 hours/month. The enhanced security will allow search engines like Google to pick us up faster than at present. This additional time will also allow us to

have changes to the website to make it uniquely our own. We were reminded that the original concept as approved and funded by Greg Cox through a neighborhood reinvestment program grant, was to be a community resource for everything/every organization operating within our area. While we tried over several months/even years to get other organization to update their information like meeting dates and times, they never bought into the idea. That means we have website space that can be reconfigured for our use. Lisa Martin Goodsell suggested we could build a resource library specific to our areas of concern that could be easily pulled up by site users. Tony proposed we conduct a 6-month trial to see if the on-line payment/website enhancements will help us attract new members and some community sponsors. Judy so moved and Lisa provided the second. During the discussion someone questioned who would keep the blog up. We would need a separate tab for the "topic" library. Sharmane suggested we should go out for separate competitive bids to do our upgrades. Tony responded that we already did that along with developing selection criteria and other forms of evaluation. He is not willing to do that again. He will resign from his position as Vice Chair at our next election. If the new vice chair wants to go through this comprehensive process, that would be his/her decision, but he is not going to do it. KIG has always done everything we asked them to do. He feels a six-month trial is a good idea. He reminded us that KIG will give us the tools but it is up to us to find new members and sponsors to ensure survival of our association. Steve Stonehouse expressed concern about raising membership fees to pay for this and for the increased cost of using Paypal for on-line payments. In the past when rates were raised, membership numbers dropped off. Judy suggested the drop in membership is more often due to our lack of exposure in the community. We should promote the value of our organization. Right now, we have no "wins" to promote. Prudence suggested we make up some stickers for our car windows that others can see when we are out and about town. Sharon Coleman felt our importance is more about being a community resource when help is needed. She cited her efforts to address speeding on Winnetka before joining SVCA. Her pleas for help went nowhere. But after joining SVCA, she had a direct contact to law enforcement/CHP to start patrolling her street. The vote was called for and motion passed.

Traffic/Roads –Tony turned this part of the meeting over to Mike Clowers to update us on San Miguel Rd issues. Installation of the HAWK school crossing light is still scheduled for installation before Sunnyside School is back in session. To follow-up on continuing and worsening safety issues on Proctor Valley Road, Judy Tieber sent Andrew Harvey a copy of the Planning Group letter to Supervisor Cox et al and asked for an update on County plans to respond to this important letter. Andrew will bring this issue back to us next month with an update on County plans. Tony reported on some minimal road resurfacing on Corral Canyon. Prudence Prince brought up the poor condition of Acacia due to construction of new water and gas lines. That in 30 years of living there, the road has never been resurfaced. Tony agreed to find out more about scheduling Acacia for resurfacing and adding new reflectors.

Judy reported on her efforts to get illegal trash and manure dumps cleaned up on Proctor Valley Rd in the area between the 125 toll road overpass and Corte Bahama. This dark and deserted area has suffered from illegal dumping forever it seems. SDG&E erected a chain link fence which kept dumping off their property. Now dumping continues along side the road in the right-of-way. Some of this area is within the County and some is within Chula Vista city limits. Judy met with David Flores, Sr. Policy Advisor-Land Use and Environmental Justice to do an on-site review so he could see how Proctor Valley drains and how this illegal dumping is so bad for our environment. She also talked with Gerardo Vargas, Code Enforcement and Code Compliance Officer. He has referred the need to clean up area within County limits to Dept of Public Works (DPW). He has contacted Chula Vista DPW to alert them of the problem so this dept. can be responsible to clean up trash within CV City limits. He also told Judy (in writing) that his department is continuing to work with DPW to find other measures to address the illegal dumping. One last interesting point is that any roadway under a highway/freeway overpass

belongs to CALTRANS and that they are responsible to clean and maintain that section of road—even though this is under the 125 owned by SANDAG. Judy will be contacting them and sending pictures of graffiti and trash that needs to be cleaned up.

Tony reminded us to please call for pothole repairs, graffiti, and burned out street lights.

Pothole repairs, graffiti removal,	County:	Chula Vista:
Burned-out streetlights:	(877) 684-8000	(619) 397-6000
Illegal dumping:	(858) 694-2212	(619) 397-6000

Planning Group - Steve Stonehouse told us the Planning Group had a general discussion about the Cannabis letter authored by Nathan Fletcher and Nora Varas.

Membership—Sharon Coleman reported our current membership: Individual—9, Family-22, Family Silver-2, Individual Silver-1, Organizations-7, Gold 17. Membership fees: Gold-\$250 one time, Silver-\$100 yearly, Family-\$25, Individual-\$15, Community profit/non-profit-\$50. Sharon again expressed the need for on-line membership services. The current process is much too time consuming.

Sr. Volunteer Patrol - Jim Woodford reported his group is still on hold since March 2020 because of Covid-19. He is not sure if/when they will start up again, but at least the car is taken out and driven once a week to keep the battery in good shape.

Trails –no report.

Harriet Taylor urged us to put more thought into building a resource library and that we should “get out there” more to attract new members.

At 8:32 pm Tony moved to adjourn, Lisa Martin-Goodsell provided the second. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Judith Tieber
Secretary, SVCA

Mission Statement: The Sweetwater Valley Civic Association is the direct conduit to local County elected and appointed officials, law enforcement and emergency first responders to discuss and resolve issues related directly to our quality of life within the Sweetwater Valley communities.