



## Making the Sweetwater Valley the best place to live.

P.O. Box 232, Bonita, CA 91908 [www.sweetwatervalleyca.org](http://www.sweetwatervalleyca.org)

### SWEETWATER VALLEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING April 7, 2021

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by President Mike Seiler via Zoom. He welcomed everyone to our meeting. We began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mike asked a moment of silence to honor the men and women of our Armed Forces, Law Enforcement, Fire and Safety Professionals. And an appreciation of those serving to protect us.

**Directors Present:** Mike Seiler, Tony Tieber, Judy Tieber, Steve Stonehouse, Jim Woodford, Sharmane Estolano, Mike Clowers

**Members Present:** Prudence Prince, Greg Ward, Daryl Hern, Mark Kukuchek, Harriet Taylor,

**Guests Present:** Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Chief Michael Sims, Andrew Harvey from Supervisor District 1, Nora Vargas' Office, Wendy Wilson from the Bonita Museum and Cultural Center, Sara Jacobs, 53<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District, Jessica Mier from Sara Jacobs' office, Richelle Farley from Keep It Growing, Alan Zimmer Bonita Optimists.

The first order of business was an introduction and welcome to Sara Jacobs, our House of Representatives 53<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District elected official. Rep. Jacobs told us about her activities and priorities during her first three months in office including her work and support to promote the Rebuilding America Infrastructure Bill, rebuilding our influence around the world, and her work to promote child welfare. She plans to be engaged with us in the process to build America Back Better.

Following her remarks, Rep. Jacobs asked us for feedback and input. Judy Tieber suggested the importance, from a social justice standpoint, to earmark funds specific to retirement of the SR125 toll road loan. Rep. Jacobs response displayed her knowledge of the problem by telling us the funding would go first to the State, then to Counties, and then to CALTRANS/SANDAG who would spend the money as they see fit. Our job is to keep pressure on our local elected officials who will be part of the decision-making process. This includes officials at both County and City of Chula Vista. Mike Clowers brought up the deserted effort to market the 125 toll rd. We would appreciate support on this effort.

Another topic discussed was the need for humane immigration reform. Mark Kukuchek urged the Representative to strongly support her district and work on a humane solution. She has visited both the border and the convention center. She is working on a comprehensive solution to cover as many immigration issues as possible.

Another problem that needs attention is the homeless population. Any help from the federal level would be appreciated.

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

We have no new members in attendance.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Stephen Stonehouse reported the April 2021 Treasurer’s Report.

	<u>April</u>
Checking	\$2,032.82
Certificate of Deposit	\$2,464.09
Ending Balance	\$4,496.89

His report was accepted as presented.

**Law Enforcement Reports:**

**CHP:** Not present. We can contact Officer Castro by phone or email: CHP Office: **1-858-293-6000** or [Salvador.Castro@CHP.CA.gov](mailto:Salvador.Castro@CHP.CA.gov).

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

**Chula Vista Police Officer:** No representation.

**Fire Safety: Bonita Fire Chief Mike Sims** reported they continue to be busy and calls are back to pre-pandemic numbers. Regarding past funding requests, they were turned down; but new opportunities for funding are coming up. He plans to again request funds to clear dead trees out of the open space. He also applied for and successfully secured a \$32,000 Power Safety Resilience Grant which will help fund new power supply equipment. The ambulance service start-up date is April 9<sup>th</sup>. The new ambulance is parked and ready to go, staff are trained, and the Chief is enthusiastic about this service coming on board. AMR will be moving out on the afternoon of the 9<sup>th</sup>.

The lack of sufficient rain is resulting in an early fire season. Due diligence will be of utmost importance to getting us through this year. We had discussion about County needing to step up and help to clear brush and dead trees out of the open space (which County owns). Chief Sims told us County is helping to get some funding from SDG&E. Chief is looking for money where ever he can get it. Unfortunately, Chief Sims did not get appointed to the Water Board seat, but good people did get picked. The Bonita Fire District will be well represented. The Chief suggested we keep pressure on the City of Chula Vista to address the code violations at the **Berdeski** Shopping Center.

A former resident asked him about the “eyesore” and how to get it fixed up. Sharmane Estolano reported that Chula Vista Councilwoman, Jill Galvez, has escalated this on-going problem and is pushing hard with the CV Fire Inspector and Code Compliance Office to address this.

She also reported that CV staff were quick to respond to a request to fix the sidewalk damaged by the large eucalyptus trees along Bonita Rd.

Regarding the District 1 older Fire Station building, (next to Jack-in-the-Box) RCCP and AMI Supervisor are currently there. Our quality assurance program will now be handled by the City of Chula Vista. Possibly this space will be staffed by a second vehicle that will be covering Bonita, Chula Vista etc.

**Elected Representative Reports:**

**Council Member John McCann Representative, Samantha Trickey**, unable to attend.

**Supervisor Nora Vargas Representative, Andrew Harvey** reported the Supervisor's attention continues to focus on long-standing systemic inequities. He updated us on the proposed eviction moratorium to go through June, building a budget equity tool, resolution to denounce hateful action and rhetoric against the Asian and Pacific Islander community. President Seiler expounded on the process of eviction and the effect on small landlords who often depend on rental income to support their retirement. This is a good proposal, but it needs more thoughtful action to do it right. Mike also talked about his request to County re: the need for a public easement for a trail that dead-ends at Wild Oats. Andrew did pass this request on to the appropriate County staff for action. Mike Seiler reminded us that the Bonita Highlands trail system is part of the County Trails System. He also told us that Greg Cox's name has been added to the Bayshore Bikeway name, an important community asset.

**House of Representatives Sara Jacobs' Office Jessica Mier reporting:** A Town Hall is scheduled for tomorrow to focus on questions for Congresswoman, including information about infrastructure bill, **COVID-19** vaccine support, visiting vaccination sites, and getting this pandemic under control, along with other topics.

**Continuing Business:** Tony Tieber led the discussion about our efforts to start up electronic on-line membership payments. He, Steve Stonehouse and Richelle Farley have been working quite diligently with PayPal to get this set up. The process has been laborious because we are setting this up for a non-profit 501 C-3. The amount of scrutiny and documentation needed has been quite challenging.

That said, today, finally PayPal accepted our submitted information and set up the account. For compliance reasons, the account must be attached to a person who is an "owner". This required some obscure information from Steve Stonehouse.

The membership form has been upgraded to allow payments. Richelle told us the completed membership form will be submitted to Steve who will then go out on the PayPal website to find the payment and transfer it to the SVCA checking account. Website security is now in place. PayPal has its own security. At this time, our membership payment options are either check or PayPal.

We will receive an annual renewal fee of \$9. We can now see the "secure padlock" symbol at the top of our website. We can also use PayPal as a guest to pay membership fees either as a one-time or a recurring event. Some refinements are still needed and can be done later when the funding is available.

**New Business:** Daryl Hern introduced Wendy Wilson from the Bonita Museum and Cultural Center. Wendy enthusiastically told us that finally, on Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 a.m. a crane would be lifting the bronze horse statue onto its base. This is Bonita's first venture into public art, and it is an awesome way to acknowledge our long-standing community horse culture. Donations are still being accepted. When a minimum of \$2,500 is donated, the donor will have their name on an engraved plaque and will also receive a miniature replica of this lovely statue.

Wendy also told us the Safety Center water filtration system is now in place for officers to fill up their water mugs. The upcoming museum exhibition is called "Permission to Come Aboard," and will consist of Navy photos. Wendy is looking for suitable photos to be included in this exhibition. In April and May the museum will display Greg Cox memorabilia from his many years in public

service. The Museum will also host a reception for Greg Cox and the horse statue donors on May 15th.

In other new business, Sharmane Estolano expressed concern that the new Planning Commissioner appointed by Nora Vargas is not from District 1 and indeed, does not even live within San Diego County. While no one is happy with this appointment, we were assured that Supervisor Vargas' appointment was legal and it was her prerogative to appoint someone she had confidence would do a good job. The Supervisor is interested in affordable housing, and Ms. Hitzke is an expert in that area. Sharmane suggested we write a letter to the Supervisor advising her that we do not feel her appointment of Ginger Hitzke is in the best interest of our community. An informal show of Board of Director hands did not support this action. President Seiler explained the Planning Commission is more of a vetting service to review and suggest modifications to the Dept of Planning and Development Services. The Planning Commission then votes to recommend approval or disapproval of projects that then go forward to the Board of Supervisors for final say.

**Community Forum:**

**Bonita Alliance**—Lisa Martin Goodsell not available.

**Traffic/Roads** –Tony discussed the current and upcoming road resurfacing plans as presented to the Sweetwater Community Planning Group (SCPG) last evening. The discussion centered around the planned resurfacing for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. The SCPG will report back to County at the May 4 meeting. Judy will send the detailed list out to members for review and feedback on this important project.

It was noted the County is running behind schedule but working to get caught up. Mike Clowers told us the stretch of San Miguel Road between Conduit and Proctor Valley Road is 10-11 months behind schedule. The County had planned on gasoline taxes of \$56 million for road resurfacing. Instead, with the pandemic-related decrease in driving, newer vehicles getting better gas mileage, and an increased number of electric and hybrid vehicles, only \$40 million will be available.

It was noted with interest that the 2021-2022 year includes resurfacing Proctor Valley Rd all the way to the Chula Vista City limits. Judy hopes this includes the currently unpaved road where all the illegal dumping continues.

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

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

**Planning Group** - Steve Stonehouse told us the Planning Group has a 45-day window to get back to County about the road resurfacing plan. Also, the SCPG had a County presentation on the Climate Action Plan. This is the third try to address carbon credit offsets. The offsets have to be in the same County and must result in a neutral impact. The County staff also discussed a plan under development to increase on-site organic composting to keep it out of the landfills. It was noted that the byproduct of organic waste is methane gas, a serious threat to global warming. Regarding an encroachment at Timrick Lane residence, that action was put on hold.

Other items noted:

- The Dave's Warehouse property is now for sale.
- The illegal dumping on property at the north end of Central at Sweetwater Rd seems to be resolved with installation of new fencing.
- Harriet and John Taylor reported they did meet with Supervisor Vargas to impress upon her the importance to represent Bonita. The Supervisor was invited to come visit us and get to know us. There is also an open invitation to Ginger Hitzke to visit our area as well. At the SCPG meeting, Ms. Hitzke pledged to be open and honest about her appointment as a planning commissioner. She would do her best to represent the citizens of District 1.

**Membership** - In Sharon Coleman's absence, Judy gave the membership update: 12 Individuals, 23 Family, 1 individual silver, 2 Family Silver, 17 Gold, 6 organizations (and one new business membership). Eleven members did not renew even after multiple reminders. A reminder sent specific to Bonita Alliance members did not result in any renewals. The current membership year expires 6/30/21.

**Sr. Volunteer Patrol** - Jim Woodford reported his group will start up patrols again next week. They will not be doing vacation checks and will not staff the Safety Center. That said, they are happy to get back to work.

**Trails** – Mark Kukuchek reported that he is waiting for County updates on 3-4 trails that need work. He is now on the Community Garden Managing Group. They did two cleanups. Currently they are dealing with water leaks, and hoping a contractor will be hired soon to fix that problem. In regard to above-mentioned Wild Oats Trail that dead-ends, that trail was never put in properly to begin with. It is too dangerous, needs a bridge over a brow ditch, and will need a significant retaining wall to keep the trail safe. The new proposed easement would be a real benefit.

As a follow-up to a discussion last month regarding how to promote SVCA membership, Sharmane Estolano was able to order very nice SVCA logo stickers for our use. The price was reasonable, so she bought 50 stickers for \$49.66. Sharmane asked if, rather than reimbursing her this cost, we instead would authorize a one-year business membership for her. A motion was made by Steve Stonehouse, Judy Tieber seconded, and motion passed.

Sharmane will let us know when they go on sale again in case we want to buy enough for all members. Our plan is to distribute these stickers to the Board of Directors and the Neighborhood Directors.

Tony Tieber reminded us that he will not run again for Vice President at our upcoming election. He is suggesting that anyone interested in this position needs to be brought on-board to start working with him and Richelle Farley to get up to speed on the website maintenance and action items. This would include being able to evaluate the current six-month trial of using "Keep It Growing" for 5 hours/month.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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.

Addendum to 4/7/2021 Minutes attached only to Executive Directors copy of minutes.

