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SWEETWATER VALLEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING May 3, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: President Judy Tieber called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm at the Library Community room. She welcomed everyone to the meeting. We began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Judy asked for a moment of silence to honor the people of our Armed Forces, Law Enforcement, Fire and Safety Professionals; and an appreciation of those currently serving to protect us, including Health Care workers and Teaching Professionals.

Directors Present: Judy Tieber, Sharmane Estolano, Tony Tieber, Stephen Stonehouse, Mike Clowers, Sharon Coleman.

Members Present: Bill Coleman, Jim Woodford, Harriet Taylor, Mike Sampsel, and Mike Parnell.

Guests Present: Amanda Angulo of Mayor John McCann's office and Sheriff Dept. Crime Prevention Specialist, Julio Garcia. Other guests present were Carlos Quintera and Josie Calderon Scott from the Sweetwater Authority, and Mike Garrod.

Introduction: Judy introduced the members of the Sweetwater Authority who were there to make a presentation and provide technical support.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Judy asked for a motion to approve the minutes; Jim Woodford moved to approve; Steve Stonehouse provided the second. Minutes approved .

TREASURER'S REPORT: Stephen Stonehouse reported the May 2022 Treasurer's Report.

	<u>May 2023</u>
Checking	\$ 1,533.76
Grant Received	\$ 529.16
Ending Balance	\$ 1,882.92

The previous Balance was \$2,698.97.

There was a charge to KIG of \$180.00 for Web Service

The report was accepted as written.

Fire Safety: Bonita Fire Chief Mike Sims: Chief Sims was not in attendance but requested that Tony report on the Wildland's Fire Drill that they both attended. Tony's report follows.

The twentieth annual Wildlands Fire Drill was held on May 1, 2 and 3. I attended on May 1, 2023. This is held in San Diego County and this year department personnel from Mexico and other organizations were also in attendance. The Drill was held at the Barona Indian Reservation. In attendance were Fire Fighters, Dispatchers, Sheriff personnel, and others. I estimate that there were three hundred participants and 50-100 fire engineers at Barona.

I viewed the Introduction and two training Modules. The introduction was just a meet and greet and identifying those who set up the training session and to insure everyone knew what the plan of the day was.

The first training module involved the simulation of a fire burning down one side of a canyon. The objective was to prevent the fire from burning up the other side of the canyon. I learned that a fire burns down the side of a canyon slower than it burns up the other side. Hence the job was to stop the fire coming down the hill. Although there was no fire, everything else was realistic. At the assembly point, a team of firefighters started the trek to the fire site which was about 200-300 yards away. At the assembly point was a pumper truck and a water truck. The water truck fed the pumper truck. My understanding was that the water truck held about three thousand gallons and the pumper five hundred gallons. The goal was to ensure the pumper did not run out of water.

AS the strike team left the assembly point, a hose was connected to the pumper truck. Each of the firefighters had a backpack with additional hose in it. As they went to the fire site they kept connecting more hose, so when they arrived at the site they had water. My understanding was that this hose technique is a relatively new innovation. The strike team also had small tools.

At the site, the strike team deployed the hoses and used the water. They then called in a water drop from a helicopter. There were two separate water drops. As the helicopter approached the drop site where the firefighters were, the chopper set off a siren to notify the strike team of the drop. Since the drop is near the team and atop the team, the firefighters had to take a defensive position to not get injured from the drop. Hence the siren warning. Once the Strike team had the fire "under control," a second team with different sets of equipment, including chain saws, set off to the site to clear a ten-foot section of the canyon.

The second training module involved defense of houses in the path of a wildfire. This was different from the first module in that there were significant hazards, such as propane tanks and residents living in the houses. One truck with a crew was assigned to each house and hoses were deployed around the houses. The team was accompanied by rescue personnel and a line medic. My understanding was that there was a simulation of a person who had been burned and treated, but I did not observe this. One interesting item to me was the possibility of barbed wire around the houses. As Chief Sims explained, the wire is dangerous but could be extremely dangerous if an electric line had fallen across the barbed wire and thereby inject an electrical charge in the barbed wire.

According to the training Schedule Tuesday (May 2) was media day and Wednesday contained additional training modules.

Next year, even more fire units will attend and the units from El Centro are expected to be participants.

A little history to conclude. The first drill, going back twenty years had two trucks and twenty participants. Chief Sims was one of the participants. The firefighters thought that the initial drill went so well, that decided to continue it and it has grown to where it is today. This year there will be a celebration to honor all the planners of the event over these twenty years. Each of the people who have been involved will get a keepsake commemorative coin.

Thanks to Chief Sims for this fantastic opportunity. I really appreciated the opportunity to observe and to be educated. Thanks, thanks, thanks!

Law Enforcement Reports:

Sheriff Dept. Crime Prevention Specialist, Julio Garcia: Crime Prevention Specialist Julio reported that there were only two crimes in our area last month. Julio recommends a Neighborhood Watch Program for all neighborhoods. Recently, he helped organize a program in the Pepper Tree area of Chula Vista/County. This was the first one in four years. Julio discussed the Sheriff's website which contains good crime prevention information. Another site is Crimemapping.com for specific information about your neighborhood. You should be able to find information about Chula Vista, National City, and the County. You can get information within radius of a half mile from your house.

The attendees provided comments and asked questions. Judy thought that the low crime rate was a direct result of the Sheriff's presence in the area, including traffic enforcement. Josie Caldron Scott reported confusion on who to call when there is an accident and who the responding agency should be. A specific example was Sweetwater Road. That is a California State Road so the responding agency is the CHP. Both Mike Parnell and Mike Clowers spoke about homelessness in specific areas such as the Bonita Highlands and others. Both people agreed that the Sheriff took care of the problem.

Crime Specialist Julio Garcia reported that there have been transfers and new leadership within the Sheriff's department that covers our neighborhood. This involved the lead lieutenant and the traffic Sargent.

Julio addressed the shortage of Law enforcement officers for the Sheriff's Department. Due to the shortage, officers are working overtime. Recently they had approximately three hundred applications to join the force. Of that amount, approximately two hundred were deemed qualified to process further. Of that amount, approximately 120 candidates made it beyond the first "interview". Then there were background checks and other tests. This resulted in approximately forty remaining candidates. After additional processing, there were only 12-15 remaining candidates. The sheriff is trying hard, but recruitment is an arduous process.

A crime map, supplied by Crime Specialist Julio Garcia accompanies these minutes.

Elected Representative Reports:

Andrew Harvey, Supervisor Nora Vargas Representative: Andrew Harvey was not in attendance.

Council Member John McCann's Office representative Amanda Angulo. Amanda reported the following:

On Thursday, May 4th from 11:30am to 1:30pm, the Chula Vista Police Department and Foundation will be hosting their 31st Annual Awards and Recognition Ceremony at the Chula Vista Police Department.

On Saturday, May 13th, there will be a free concert to celebrate Mother's Day at the Civic Center Library.

On Monday, May 15th, the City of Chula Vista will finally open the doors to the Homeless Bridge Shelter and will have their first occupants. This shelter is the first to open in the South Bay, will

have sixty-five bungalows, onsite wraparound services, and pets are welcomed. The shelter is called “Chula Vista Village at Otay.” Judy asked about who would live in the shelter. Amanda indicated some will be families, but most are individuals.

Through the collaboration of the Urban Corp, County of San Diego, City of Chula Vista, City of San Diego, Republic Services, the San Diego Rescue Mission and more, they created the Otay Valley Regional Park Revitalization Project.

With a grant of \$250,000 from Republic Services, there will be a collective effort to beautify, clean, and revitalize the park.

Judy brought to my attention a suggestion about Otay Lakes Road and Bonita Road, so I was able to escalate that to our City Traffic Engineer.

Judy reported and Amanda agreed that the Chula Vista “project in Rohr Park” has been cancelled.

U. S. House of Representatives (52nd District) Juan Vargas Office Representative Michael Rivas. Michael Rivas was not in attendance.

California State Assembly Representative David Alvarez: David Alvarez represents California’s district 80.His representative, Lisa Schmidt was not in attendance.

State Senator (18th District) Stephen Padilla office representative Thomas Lawton. Thomas Lawton was not in attendance.

U. S. Senator Alex Padilla Office Representative Angel Marquez. Angel Marquez was not in attendance.

New Business.

Presentation by Sweetwater Authority: Carlos Quintero, SWA General Manager presenting.

Secretary’s Note: I had expected to get a digital copy of the presentation but so far I have not received it. I will continue to try to obtain the presentation and when I do, I will forward it to you and post it on the web site. I did the record the following:

Slide 1—Statistics

Slide 2—Board of Directors

Slide 3—Mission

Slide 4—Water Supply

Slide 5—Reservoir Levels

Slide 6—Enhancing Water Efficiently by using Smart meters

Slide 7—Water Saving Equipment

Slide 8—Insulation against Further Droughts

Slide 9—Water Affordability

Slide10—Partnering

Slide 11—Helping Businesses

Slide 12—Capital Investment

Slide 13—Financial Transparency

Slide 14—Rate Study

Slide 15—Community Open House

Slide 16—Connect with us.

Harriet Taylor asked about the SWA scheduled meetings. The GM responded that for each schedule date, there are two sessions: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The GM indicated that the schedule dates are listed on the SWA web site.

Mike Garrod talked about the cost of local versus imported water. He indicated that Imported water is ten times more expensive than local water.

Tony asked about water taken from the aquifer and when that water might be depleted. The GM indicated that the water will never be depleted.

A meeting guest talked about exploring conservation with the SWA. The guest thought smart meters are the future of water conservation. This discussion included smart irrigation systems.

Mike Garrod commented that the SWA public relations is local and does a particularly excellent job.

There was a discussion on water rates with comments from Mike Garrod, Josie Caldron Scott, Mike Parnell, and others. Apparently, a large 14% increase is taking place at the San Diego County Water Authority. Josie emphasized that this was not from SWA but did not comment on the SWA increase if any. Josie also said that the SWA is in a good place for their water supply for the next two years (1.5-3 years) and thus price increases should be at a minimum. Mike Parnell of the BHHA commented that low water user rates are exceptionally low, but high-water user rates are extremely high. Josie Caldron Scott commented that water meter size is a cost accelerator, and that Bonita is in a unique part of the county for various water meter sizes.

Mike Clowers commented that there is a new pump installation by the County campground and that has improved the water pressure to houses along San Miguel Road.

Lastly, the GM indicated that fishing is allowed at the Sweetwater Reservoir but that a fishing license is required.

Discussions Regarding Traffic Fines: Judy Tieber tabled that discussion.

SVCA 2022 Grant: Tony indicated that he is in receipt of a letter from the County regarding this grant and that the final report is due by May 31, 2023. However, the letter did not indicate that the money was also extended to that date. Tony is trying to resolve the issue and Ryan Trabuco of the county has agreed to collaborate with him. Tony believes that he has documented emails that indicate the money has also been extended.

Community Forum:

Traffic and Roads Mile Clowers: Mike reported that he has noticed an increase in traffic enforcement in the area and that many tickets have been written. He has observed officers on motorcycles giving tickets. Unfortunately, local people are getting the tickets.

Sweetwater Community Planning Group Stephen Stonehouse & Harriet Taylor: Harriet talked about the problem she observed with water run-off on San Miguel Road during the winter rains. The run-off affects property owners along that road.

Harriet reported on a discussion about Cannabis. This was on the May agenda of the SCPG. The discussion involved the location of facilities and the distances public facilities like schools (and places of worship) had to be away from those facilities. Her opinion was there was no available space for a Cannabis location in Bonita. She also addressed driving after visiting a Cannabis lounge-type facility and thought that the people of East County would have an issue because of greater driving distances than in the rest of the County. Mike Clowers and Amanda discussed the number of facilities in Chula Vista which currently is 4-5. Sharmane commented that each of the four districts in Chula Vista is permitted to have two cannabis facilities. Sharmane also mentioned these stores generate considerable amounts of traffic in the area.

It was noted that the SCPG did not send a letter supporting the addition of one County Planning Group member to SANDAG.

Senior Volunteer Patrol Jim Woodford: Jim provided the following report:

Hours of Patrol	69
Number of Patrols	6
Number of Miles Driven	409
Vacation Checks	6
YANA Visits	1
Yana Calls	55
Citizen Assists	4
Traffic Control	3
Number of Volunteers	7

Membership Sharon Coleman: Sharon reported on the current membership levels and provided the following membership report.

New: 1 Family, 1 individual

Individual- 15
Family-18
Family/silver-1
Gold- 21
Non profit- 5
For Profit/bus- 4

Trails Report Mark Kukuchek: Mark was not in attendance.

Other Announcements: Daryl Hern reported the following dates for upcoming Museum Events: May 6-June 10 Wednesdays through Saturdays; The California Art Club presents "Cultural Celebrations". The opening reception is Saturday May 6 from 4:30 -7:00.

June 3 from 10:00-2:00 Art Materials Swap and Meet and SECAN (South and East County Artists Network)

July 8, "Art of the West" gala reception and auction from 5:00-9:00 pm. The exhibit runs through August 19, 2023.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Anthony P. 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.