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

SWEETWATER VALLEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING March 6, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: President Judy Tieber called the meeting to order at 6:31 at the Bonita-Museum and Cultural Center. 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, and Sharon Clayton..

Members Present: Mike Clowers, Sharon Coleman, Mike Sampsel, Josie Calderon and Richard Scott, William Estrella, Susan Heavilin, Daryl Hern, Karen Henry, Mike Parnell, Sharon and Bill Coleman, Harriet, and John Taylor, Shlomit Haim, and Prudence Prince.

Guests Present: Andrew Harvey of Supervisor Nora Vargas' office, Genevive Fong of Congressman Juan Vargas' Office, and Jose Ortiz, Crime Prevention Specialist of the Sheriff's Department.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Judy asked for a motion to approve the minutes; Stephen Stonehouse moved to approve; Mike Parnell provided the second. Minutes approved .

Special Welcome. Judy welcomed the members, guests, and representatives of elected officials, and all those who might contemplate joining SVCA.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Stephen Stonehouse provided the February 2024 Treasurer's Report.

	<u>March 2024</u>
Checking	\$ 4,374.82
PayPal to Mailchimp	\$ (45.00)
Live Steamers (donation)	\$ (100.00)
Mission Fed CD	\$ 10,000.00
Interest on CD for February	\$ 85.05
Grant Status –Original Grant	
\$12,118.00	
Deductions to Date	
(3,874.67)	
Ending Balance	\$ 14,459.87
Previous Balance was	\$15,670.72.

The report was accepted as written.

After Stephen's Presentation, he mentioned that the SVCA taxes had been filed.

Fire Safety--Bonita Fire Chief Mike Sims: Chief Sims was not in attendance but did send a report that Tony read. The submitted report follows.

Bonita Firefighters Pancake Breakfast is set for April 21st 8a-11a.

Boot Drive to benefit the San Diego Burn Institute is tomorrow all day. You will see firefighters from all over the County out "filling the boot" for this great cause. Your Bonita Firefighters will be at the intersection of Bonita Road / Central in the morning. Swing by and help them fill the boot!

Emergency responses for February = 154

Wildland fire equipment grant from the San Diego River Conservancy was approved. We will be using these grant funds to purchase a variety of wildland centric items such as hoses, nozzles, packs, fire shelters, filter masks, gloves, Nomex pants and jackets....etc.

We will be re-filling the time capsule and would like for each Bonita Community group to offer one item to be included in the capsule. The plan is to plant it on September 11th, 2024. So please produce an item from the SVCA. (must be small enough to fit into a large ammo can – 14x8x10 inches approx.)

Follow and check out social media on Facebook: Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Dept / Instagram: Bonita fire for other updates and goings on.

Law Enforcement Reports:

Sheriff's Department: Jose Ortiz, Crime Prevention Specialist of the Sheriff's Department. Crime Specialist Ortiz noted that Bonita is a low crime area and provided a crime map which is included with these minutes. See the crime map for incidents report in the Bonita area.

Jose Ortiz talked about theft from a car on Bonita Road and reminded everyone to lock their cars, take their keys with them, and always protect your property.

There was a discussion on the responsibilities of The Sheriff's Department as related to traffic enforcement. The sheriff can enforce traffic violations when they have available personnel. The SVCA consensus was that the Sheriff needed to make more traffic stops.

The crime specialist talked about brochures that are available including which are available on the table before/after SVCA meetings:

- The Neighborhood Watch Program
- Volunteer Programs
- Protecting your Vehicle
- Fraud and Identity Theft

There were discussions with the Crime specialist regarding:

- Amazon vehicles parked for extended periods of time in residential neighborhoods.
- Community power, I. e. documenting and reporting crime events.
- Catalytic converter theft
- The seriousness of crimes is based on the dollar amount of damages.
- The sheriff provides security checks on homes.

Elected Representative Reports:

Andrew Harvey, Supervisor Nora Vargas Representative: Andrew was not available for the meeting.

Council Member John McCann's Office representative Amanda Angulo. Amanda Angulo was not in attendance. However, she did provide a report to Sharmane which was read by Sharmane. Amanda's Report provided the following:

Unfortunately, I will not be able to make it today as my mom has finally returned to work today (she had a broken wrist and was getting a new job during this time), but due to working night shifts, I'll be taking care of my younger siblings while she's at work, for the time being.

Due to this, I wanted to be sure to email in my report on behalf of Mayor McCann:

The City Council officially declared a vacancy in Council District 4 and will appoint an interim Councilmember to serve out the remainder of this term, which expires in December. The person who is appointed is not eligible to run for election to this seat.

Applications are available on the City's website, under the City Clerk's page, and the link to the application will be there. If you or someone you know is a District 4 resident and interested in serving the City of Chula Vista, we encourage you to consider applying for the appointment.

The deadline to apply is on March 15th:

- **Online:** 11:29pm
- **In-person:** 5:00 PM
- **Via Mail:** must be postmarked by Friday, March 15th, and received by the Clerk's office by 5:00 PM on Wednesday, March 20th.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out the City Clerk's Office at cityclerk@chulavistaca.gov or 619-691-5041.

Additionally, Mayor McCann recently held a Public Safety Town Hall Meeting at the South Chula Vista Library. We were fortunate to have a good turnout at this event and were extremely happy to be able to hear from community members. The conversations mostly revolved around homelessness, so we are grateful and appreciative of our Chula Vista Police Department for having Lt. Ernie Pinedo and Captain Dan Peak there to answer questions. We do plan to hold more Public Safety Town Hall meetings throughout the City, so please stay tuned.

If anyone would like to contact me, please do so at aangulo@chulavistaca.gov.

California State Assembly Representative David Alvarez: David Alvarez represents California's district 80. His representative, Lisa Schmidt, was not available.

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

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

U. S. House of Representatives (52nd District) Juan Vargas Office Representative Genevieve Fong: Genevieve Fong was not available and provided the following written report:

As of last week Friday, March 1st, FEMA (or the Federal Emergency Management Agency) opened 2 Disaster Assistance Centers, one in Spring Valley and the other in Southeastern San Diego. Residents affected by the severe storms and flooding between January 21st through January 23rd can apply for FEMA assistance in the form of grants.

In addition, SBA (Small Business Administration) opened a Business Recovery Center in National City to help impacted businesses. Various Disaster Loans are available, and these include help with damaged fixed assets, loss of sales, and assistance with personal property, including automobiles.

Our office is very thankful that federal assistance has kicked in. This of course followed the State of California's request for a Major Disaster Declaration, when after that, Congressman Juan Vargas spearheaded a letter to President Biden, rallying up the signatures of more than 2 dozen Members, to request the federal support and aid. The deadline to apply for assistance is April 19th, and for economic injury apply by November 19th.

Today, March 6th, Congressman Juan Vargas, who co-chairs the Congressional Sustainable Investment Caucus, spoke at a press conference to acknowledge the SEC for finalizing rulemaking to require companies to disclose climate-related financial risks. As climate change-driven disasters have caused substantial damage in the U.S., investors have the right to information about private businesses' climate-related risks. This is part of Rep. Vargas' Corporate Governance Improvement and Investor Protection Act, which with SEC's new rulemaking, develops a strong and durable climate disclosure rule.

Congressman Vargas is also working on a bipartisan bill to decrease the cost of housing across the country, a bill that will provide overseas servicemembers deposit insurance, and working with Credit Unions to offer more affordable lending credit products. Called the *Expanding Access to Lending Options Act*, this bill would expand credit options for Americans by giving credit unions the flexibility to offer longer loan terms and lower monthly payments, thus creating greater competition for lending products including small business, student, and agricultural loans.

Please reach out to our office with any questions or inquiries about federal-related matters at 619.422.5963.

New Business.

Susan Heavilin, Bonita Garden Club. Susan provided the following report:

The Bonita Valley Garden Club meets the second Wednesday of every month from September through June. December, February, and June are special events requiring reservations. The meetings are held at St. John's Episcopal Church located at 760 First Avenue in Chula Vista. Social time starts at 9:30 followed by the meeting at 10:00. Guests are welcome!

The flyer for the upcoming Spring Bazaar & Plant Sale on Saturday, April 20 is included with the minutes. The bazaar will be from 9AM to 3PM in the Bonita Museum Patio and courtyard. Proceeds from the event will be used for college scholarships.

Mike Sampsel, SWA Water rate Increases. Mike Sampsel presented his findings regarding the recently approved water rates by the SWA Board. The surface water reservoirs are 75-80% full. Those full reservoirs equate to about 4 years of water supply for the agency. However, the SWA continues to charge for un-needed water from the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA). Mike calculated a surplus amount (or overpayment) of \$10.6 million would be collected from our water bills over the next 3 years. The tier four single family residential customers will not receive a rebate. The excess funds collected from ratepayers "rolls over" to the next fiscal year.

Mike posed a rhetorical question, "should the SWA rate structure be analyzed again?" During the rate structure conducted in 2023 rain fall was unknown and was estimated as the same as the prior year. The unexpected and unanticipated heavy rains of this past winter have made purchases of expensive SDCWA unnecessary. Therefore, SWA should acknowledge this fact and not continue to collect money that is now known to be an overcharge. Mike said that options might be preparing a presentation on rate structures, going to the San Diego County Taxpayers association, and provide articles to the Voice of San Diego newspaper. Mike believes that the only way to have fair water rates is to file a lawsuit. Mike referred to the 28-page judge ruling against the City of San Diego on the City's tiered rates. Mike volunteered to prepare a short presentation for the SVCA on how rates are prepared if desired.

Community Forum:

Traffic and Roads Mike Clowers: Mike Clowers reported the steel plates on Bonita Road are still there, but work was done with the plates. He reported that a request had been submitted to the County to trim/work on a tree located on Robinhood.

The County's Traffic Advisory Committee now has six meetings (Feb, April, June, August, October, Dec.) per year instead of nine. Mike cannot attend all the meetings. Harriet also receives the meeting agendas. She will attend when Mike cannot, and there is District 1 item on the agenda.

County Stormwater staff were out on February 22nd. A new person from the County was assigned to be our contact and is coming up to speed.

The Traffic Advisory Committee did not address anything in our Area at the February meeting. There was a discussion regarding storm water and the lack of San Miguel Rd. infrastructure.

Sweetwater Community Planning Group Stephen Stonehouse & Harriet Taylor: Stephen reported that the Planning Group did not meet in March. But the Planning group was attempting to schedule Supervisor Nora Vargas for the April Meeting. If the scheduling is successful, the

planning Group will have an agenda that includes a discussion of Flooding on San Miguel Road and Solar Panels on the Sweetwater reservoir.

There was a discussion relating to SANDAG and the Planning Group input to that organization.

Senior Volunteer Patrol Jim Woodford: Jim was not available for the meeting but did send the following report:

February 2024 SHERIFF SR. VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Hours on patrol	48
Number of Patrols	5
Number of Miles Driven	304
Vacation Checks	0
Citizen Assists	0
Traffic Control	5
Number of Volunteers	4

Membership Sharon Coleman: Sharon was in attendance and provided the following report.

Membership:

- 16 Family
 - 1 Family/silver
- 16 Individual
- 21 Gold Members

- 2 Non-Profit Organizations
 - 1 Gold Non-Profit Organization
 - 2 Local Businesses
 - 2 Local Businesses Gold Members

Sweetwater Authority Karen Henry. Karen Provided the following written report. Just double click on the PDR to open it.



2024-03-06 SVCA
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Karen reported the following with her written report. There may be an overlap in the report which follows. I will let the reader make that determination.

Karen's written report, above, includes links to other reading such as Voice of San Diego articles about the floating solar project and an Opinion about Sweetwater Authority water rates.

Another link will be to the Sweetwater Authority's new Capital Investment Program (CIP) dashboard. Project status will be updated quarterly. Project information also includes a contact name, email, and phone number to get more information.

At the February 14, 2024, Board Meeting, the General Manager gave a Floating Solar Project Update. He did not mention the Sweetwater Valley Civic Association's opposition or the

environmental scope of work (that was attached to the Board Memo supporting the recommended action on September 27, 2023.) That environmental scope of work included study of a future 12-acre community solar array by others in addition to the Noria Energy arrays. Mike Sampsel and Karen both made a public comment that were critical of the Citizen Advisory Work Group meetings.

The Citizen Advisory Work Group meeting held on February 27, 2024, discussed Recreational Opportunities at Sweetwater Reservoir. That discussion was mostly about opening new trails. Josie Calderon-Scott mentioned that the floating solar project and new trail opportunities may be related. Josie continues to have concerns about the floating solar project. The decision to do a Mitigated Negative Declaration or an Environmental Impact Report to comply with CEQA still remains. She also mentioned that there is a new trend for water districts to “bottle” using milk cartons to get away from plastic bottles.

The next Citizen Advisory Work Group meeting will be on March 26, 2024. The topic will be Recreational Opportunities at Sweetwater Reservoir (again.)

Karen will provide Judy with upcoming important dates related to floating solar. A floating solar community strategy meeting will be held shortly.

Other Announcements. Judy reported that the County Emergency Management department has an Earthquake Safety video available. She also reported on an App from the State of California that provides Early Warning in the case of an earthquake.

Daryl Hern reported on upcoming April activities at the Bonita Museum to include a local middle school student art display with opening reception April 12, 2-4 p.m. April 13th will be the Organic Plant Club sale, and on April 20, the Bonita Garden Club spring sale. (Both on Saturdays). Saturday, April 27th from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 pm, will be the Back-to-Back Wool Challenge. Teams compete to shear a sheep, spin the wool, and knit as fast as they can to finish a sweater in record time. They will have a llama, food truck and vendors. May 4th will be the gala opening of “Asian Pacific Islander Fashion and Stories” event. Tickets are \$40 online or at the museum.

Meeting adjourned: The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Anthony P. Tieber, Secretary, SVCA
tony.tieber@cox.net

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.