

Making the Sweetwater Valley the best place to live.

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



SWEETWATER VALLEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION
MEETING HELD AT THE BONITA-SUNNYSIDE LIBRARY
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING
March 4, 2026

Directors Present: President Felix Felix, Vice President Judy Tieber, Treasurer Stephen Stonehouse, Sharon Coleman, Mike Clowers, Richard Scott, Secretary Liz Stonehouse, and Mike Parnell.

Members Present: Bill Coleman, Jim Groth, Susan Heavilin, Dennise Elliott, Steven Elliott, Al Zimmer (Bonita Optimist), Tony Tieber, and Elizabeth Cox.

Guests Present: Captain Mike Smith, Ardyel Lim, Amanda Fredeluces, Genevieve Fong, and Marianne Delatorre.

1. Call to Order: 6:40 PM by President Felix Felix at the Bonita-Sunnyside Library Community Room.

2. Special welcome: A welcome greeting was provided to our members, guests, representatives of our elected officials, and to those contemplating joining the SVCA.

3. Attendance: Members were reminded to sign in for attendance record accuracy.

4. Approval of Feb. 4, 2026 Minutes: Judy Tieber motioned to approve: Steve Stonehouse seconded. Passed.

5. Treasurer's Report: Stephen Stonehouse provided the March 2026 Treasurer's report.

\$3,755.54 Previous balance
-\$45.00 PayPal to Mail Chimp
-\$210.00 Check # 872 Paid to Keep It Growing Web Services
-\$261.95 Godaddy.com Domain and Hosting renewal
\$3,238.59 Ending balance

6. Bonita Fire Department: Deputy Chief Mike Smith mentioned, our ambulance compliance for the most recent reporting period is just over 95%, continuing our strong participation in the regional ambulance transport system and ensuring reliable emergency medical response for our community. On the personnel side, we have recently promoted Josh Krimston to Captain, and he will be taking over the role and responsibilities of Fire Marshal for the District. Many of you may remember that Captain Jason Oosterbaan previously served as our Fire Marshal and has now moved into the role of Department Training Officer. We are also preparing for our upcoming Engineer promotional exam, which will take place at the end of this week as we continue developing the next generation of leadership within the department.

Additionally, Chief Sims, Director Pocklington and I recently traveled to Washington, D.C., where we met with Congressman Vargas and the staff of Senators Schiff and Padilla to discuss potential federal funding opportunities that could benefit our district and the region. Finally, the Bonita Firefighters Local 1827 are currently working on securing a date for the annual Pancake Breakfast, a long-standing community event that we look forward to hosting again this year. Once the date is finalized, we will be sure to share that information with the community. Thank you for your continued support of the Bonita Sunnyside Fire Protection District. We're proud to serve this community

7. CHP/Sheriff: Not present.

8. Elected Officials Representatives Reports:

A. Ardyel Lim mentioned the following report: Senator Padilla has introduced two new bills, one SB 1033 is to test for heavy metals, the second bill, SB 300 deals with child content creators. There is another bill, AB 2389, which is for solar property tax exemption. Our coffee and chat

went well with 90 people showing up. If you have any additional questions, please reach out via email, website, or by calling the Senator's San Diego County office and I'd be happy to speak with you more. Thank you.

Contact: Ardyel Lim, District Representative, Office of State Senator Steve Padilla, District 18, Ardyel.Lim@sen.ca.gov.

Office of State Senator Stephen C. Padilla, 18th District

Offices: San Diego County (619) 409-7690,
Sacramento (916) 651-4018, Imperial County (760) 335-3442.

B. Amanda Fredeluces, Chief of Staff for John McCann reported the following: Last weekend, we had the first Senior Fraud Awareness Session of the year. District Attorney Summer Stephan and Deputy District Attorney Martin Nunez gave amazing presentations focused on helping seniors recognize and avoid scams and financial elder abuse. We are currently planning more sessions for the rest of the year and will be sure to share details once finalized.

Save the Date for the 2026 Chula Vista State of the City Address! We will be hosting this event on Tuesday, April 28th from 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM at the Chula Vista Elite Athlete Training Center. Formal invitations will be coming out soon.

C. Marianne Delatorre, Senior Community Rep. for SD County District 1 Supervisor, Paloma Aguirre reported the following:

The Office of Supervisor Paloma Aguirre is working with County departments to address concerns brought up at the February Sweetwater Community Planning Group meeting. We are looking at touring the intersections of Sweetwater Rd. & Central Ave., as well as, Sweetwater Rd. & Bonita Rd. with the Department of Planning Services and Public Works for tumbleweed clean up and the exploration of designing micro-parks. We are also working with Department of Public Works and Code Enforcement to conduct more street sweeping on local roads, in addition to citing parking violations for over-parked cars. We are working with public safety groups including CHP and Sheriff to find solutions on traffic congestion and speeding. We are also working with the Department of Park and Recreation

to support regional park infrastructure for the Sweetwater Valley Little League.

Supervisor Aguirre hosted a small business walk on Third Ave with the County Office of Economic Development and Government Affairs, County Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement, and Downtown Chula Vista Association. We shared county resources and collected insights on needs such as marketing and permits. The next business walk will be on March 26. We hosted our first small business walk in Bonita joined by SVCA President, Felix M. Felix. We highlighted Flora Café, a women-owned business in Bonita, as part of our Plates and Places segment on social media. You can find the segments here:

1. [Instagram](#)
2. [Facebook](#)

On March 4, the separate sales of ADUs came to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) LUEG Meeting. There was no action taken at this time and the BOS has directed County Counsel to come back in 120 days with more information about the item.

Lastly, the Office of Supervisor Paloma Aguirre invites everyone to the Fiscal Transparency and Accountability (FTA) Ad Hoc Public Presentation that is co-hosted with Supervisor Joel Anderson (District 2). This session introduces key components of the County's contracting structure and provides a general overview of the processes and standards that guide County procurement. The event details are the following:

Date: March 18, 2026

Location: San Diego County Administrative Center, Room 402

1600 Pacific Hwy, San Diego, CA 92101

Procurement Portal Enrollment Support, 2PM-5PM

FTA Public Presentation, 3:30PM-5PM

D. Elizabeth Cox, South Bay Water Board Director, Division 5 reported the following: Central Wheeler Tank is under construction and will be online later this year to improve pressure for over 180 properties. These properties will require the installation of pressure regulators. Please contact us if you reside in this pressure zone to schedule your installation.

The Sweetwater Reservoir is undergoing an Aeration and Destratification project to reduce organic matter turnover supported by a \$1.5 Million Bureau of Reclamation grant.

Sweetwater selected Carollo in December for a PFAS pilot using Rapid Small-Scale Column Testing (RSSCT) to evaluate its efficacy with Best Available Technologies (BAT) like reverse osmosis, granular activated charcoal, and ion exchange. PFAS reached the Notification Level 4 PPT. The Response Level is 40 PPT.

New Sweetwater rates took effect Jan 1, with a 3.25 increase vs. a planned 6.5%. A water transfer completed in December moved water from Loveland to Sweetwater Reservoir (-21% below to 68% full). Colorado River negotiations remained ongoing with a federal target of Feb. 14, 2026 for agreement. Sweetwater Authority currently has the lowest water rates in the area.

9. Continuing Business:

A. SVCA Website Redesign & Maintenance Bid Selection Review

Update: After conducting an evaluation scoring matrix on submitted bids, KIG, Boost Yr Style, and eSEO Space came out having the best proposals for cost, design, and maintenance. We have coordinated an on-site web designer presentation and Q&A to be held at the Bonita Museum and Cultural Center from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM on Tuesday March 24th. The public is welcome to observe, but there will be a closed session for the Board following. The format will be that each presenter will be given 15-30 minutes to present followed by 15 minutes for Q&A. The goal is to select the best presenter to help the SVCA become more inclusive as a "one-stop-shop" in achieving its mission: The Sweetwater Valley Civic Association (SVCA) fosters and promotes community spirit and civic pride through proactive engagement with the County, local elected and appointed officials, law enforcement, emergency first responders, and community groups/organizations with the goal of improving the quality of life within the Sweetwater Valley community.

B. SVCA OPS Manual update: The Board is currently working on the SVCA's first Ops Plan to complement our updated Bylaws. The purpose of this is succession planning so when new people take over they will have a manual to help them have a smoother transition into the position. We look forward to present them to our members soon.

10. New Business:

A. Discussion to create a Sheriff/CHP panel for more presence:

At our last SVCA meeting on 2-4-26, Jim Groth requested to have the SVCA write a letter to SD County District 1 Supervisor, Paloma Aguirre to have more of a law enforcement presence in our community. Mr. Groth missed the opportunity to attend the forum we held for our District 1 Supervisor and other meetings and panels that occurred, where we invited our local sheriff and CHP to discuss more presence and create a safer community. That said, we felt it would be premature to write another letter as the recent forum for Aguirre proved to be very fruitful as she was very responsive in engaging and addressing community concerns. Instead, the SVCA consensus was to consider holding another panel with our Sheriff and CHP to continue our discussion.

We had already reached out to invite CHP, Lt. Jeffery Lane and waiting for his RSVP. It was discussed to see if our District 1 Supervisor could ask our SD County Sheriff's Office, Lt. Christopher Galve, SD County Sheriff's Office, Crime Prevention Specialist, Jose Ortiz and Chief, Departmental Operations Code Compliance, Conor McGee to show up so that we could have a proactive discussion to increase public safety and quality of life in our community.

Mr. Groth felt that maybe it would be best to hold separate venues for different issues instead of holding a forum of competing issues. Senior Community Rep. Marianne Delatorre mentioned she would look into options to include maybe holding it on a weekend to allow for more community participation.

Related to the need for more police presence, were issues brought up regarding party venue noise complaints on San Miguel Road and jackhammering before allowed time for Secure Storage construction work on Quarry Road. In addition, there are traffic safety concerns related to

congestion from skip loaders and dump trucks entering and exiting the construction site as they make their way onto Sweetwater Road with no traffic control flagmen as excessive speeding occurs in the area. It was recommended for community residents to document these events by cell phone video and audio and file complaints with the County.

11. Community Forum:

A. SCPG Chair Felix Felix updates:

1. Action-Item to vacation parts of Sweetwater and Quarry Rd. Presented by Real Estate Division, Senior Land Surveyor, Tom McCabe, DPW, Project Manager/Transportation Specialist, Richard Chin, Project Civil Engineer Ben Huber the project presented is to better align traffic for the new Secure Self-Storage facility and affected nearby properties. After discussion, the project was approved, but not before concerns about safety, property realignment, and the history associated with the County Board Hearing Appeal Process that was not in our favor and therefore, what our level of advisory discretion was presently with the project.

2. The next item was a Non-Action item presented by DPW, Project manager, Robert Sanchez for a new Bike Lane on Bonita Rd. from Acacia to Central Ave. The work entailed includes a new black top seal coat and painted green zone for bicyclists with limited funding thru Caltrans. Plans development in late 2026 with project completion by late 2027. There were many concerns about the pre-existing heavy traffic during peak hours and having a bike lane would compound the traffic congestion in those areas. Likewise, would the construction of bike lanes make it more unsafe for bikers, as well as, motorists not used to sharing the road. A lot of proactive discussion proceeded and the County walked away with a lot of feedback to consider options to improve the new bike lane and traffic by widening the road to installing social engineered curbs to protect bikers like what we see in parts of National City.

3. The third item on the agenda was also a non-action item that had to do with a two-story commercial building proposed at 5202 Bonita Rd. at the same location for the already under-construction Nectar Restaurant project. Many concerns included the open stairway design and materials, lighting, parking and of course the third story balcony with its design

purpose. Many neighbors showed up and requested that the building be located further away from their back yard for more privacy as others were concerned about the need for more social engineering to control traffic from crossing the road barrier and making short cuts through Frisbie St. In addition, the public and planning group would like the applicant to show up to answer questions regarding the specific use of the commercial building, would the facility be purposed for a bar, marijuana dispensary or party venue rental facility for the balcony? Should a mitigated negative declaration or Environmental Impact Report? Chris Jacobs the County's Project manager walked away with a lot of feed-back to give back to the applicant Dr. Carlos Bautista and the design architect Techne along with the County' Scoping Letter with their concerns. Much to think about.

B. Traffic and Roads: Mike Clowers reported that the Sheriff's department had started removing cars from Briarwood Road that had overstayed their 72-hour allotment, by using the street sweepers as warning then towing them.

C. SVCA Membership: Judy noted that we have 68 members: 28 gold and 40 paid. It's time to start preparing for our membership drive in June.

12. Other Announcements & Items not on the Agenda:

A member asked what happened to our participation in the Warmth with Compassion-Coat and Blanket Drive: The blanket drive was cancelled as we did not hear back after several attempts in contacting the nonprofit organization that spear-headed the drive.

13. Meeting Adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted by Liz Stonehouse, Secretary

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