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SWEETWATER VALLEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION
MEETING HELD AT BONITA-SUNNYSIDE LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING
AUGUST 5, 2026

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

Members Present: Dennise Elliot, Steve Elliot, Bill Coleman, Mark Kukuchek and Tony Tieber.

Guests Present: Fire Chief Mike Smith, Ardyel Lim, Marianne Delatorre, Ernesto Castenada, CHP Officer Marcus Marlin, and SD Sheriff Sgt. Carrillo.

1. **Call to Order:** 6:35 PM by President Felix Felix at the Bonita-Sunnyside Library Community Room. Pledge of Allegiance.

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 June 3, 2026 Minutes:** Judy Tieber motioned to approve, Richard Scott seconded. Passed.

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

$2,288.41 Previous balance
-$45.00 PayPal to Mail Chimp (June)
-$45.00 PayPal to Mail Chimp (July)
-$210.00 Ck#878 Paid to Keep It Growing June Web Fee
-$210.00 Ck#879 Paid to Keep It Growing July Web Fee
+$1,125.00 Membership Dues Received
$2,903.41 Ending balance

6. **Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Department:** Fire Chief Mike Smith provided an update on District activities for both June and July, noting that because the Association did not meet in July, he wanted to provide an overview covering both months. Chief Smith thanked everyone for the warm welcome and support as he officially transitioned into the role of Fire Chief on July 1. He also thanked those who attended the celebration honoring former Chief Mike Sims and wished him a happy retirement after more than 30 years of dedicated service to the Bonita community.

   Operationally, the Bonita Fire Department continued to stay very busy. During June, the District responded to 165 emergency incidents. In July, the Department responded to 200 emergency incidents, making it the busiest month of the year so far. Chief Smith noted that approximately 78% of the calls were medical emergencies, including medical issues such as chest pain. The remaining 22% included structure fires, vegetation and vehicle fires, hazardous materials incidents, public service calls, animal and snake-related calls, rescues, and other emergency responses.

The Fire Prevention and Community Risk Reduction Division also remained very active during June and July, completing dozens of plan reviews and inspections, vegetation management inspections, investigations, and meetings with residents regarding development projects and the Fire Marshal approval process. These efforts help ensure that new development is built safely while reducing fire risk throughout the community.

Community education continues to be a priority for the District. During the past two months, the Department hosted a well-attended Community E-Bike Safety Workshop at the fire station and participated in the community Public Safety Forum. In addition, the Department hosted a Hands-Only CPR class at the Bonita-Sunnyside Library. Chief Smith encouraged community groups interested in fire safety, emergency preparedness, e-bike safety, or other educational programs to contact the Department regarding community outreach opportunities.

The District's ambulance service partnership with Chula Vista continues to operate smoothly and remains above recommended performance standards. Chief Smith reported that the District has renewed its contract with Chula Vista and will continue serving as the community's primary ambulance service provider. The partnership has served the community well since its inception.

Chief Smith was also pleased to report that the fire station kitchen remodel is now complete and the frontline fire engine has returned to service following major repairs. The return of

the engine to service is particularly important as emergency activity continues to increase during the warmer weather.

The District continues to aggressively pursue state and federal grant funding to improve emergency services while reducing the financial burden on local taxpayers. Chief Smith thanked Congressman Juan Vargas' office for securing federal grant funding toward the purchase of the District's next fire engine and for continuing to assist with additional funding opportunities, including the Emergency Operations Center project. He also recognized Assemblymember David Alvarez and his staff for their continued partnership and assistance in pursuing state funding to help close the remaining funding gap for the new fire engine.

Chief Smith emphasized that these relationships and outside funding opportunities are essential to improving emergency services while helping alleviate the financial burden on the District and local taxpayers.

Finally, Chief Smith invited everyone to attend the Bonita Firefighters Association's 9th Annual Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, August 9, from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the fire station. The event provides an opportunity for community members to meet their firefighters, enjoy breakfast, and support the Bonita Firefighters Association. Chief Smith noted that the breakfast traditionally concludes when food begins running out and the volunteers begin cleaning up. He expressed hope that many members of the community would attend.

7. SD County Sheriff/CHP

A. **SD County Sheriff:** Sgt. Luis Carillo reported that the Sheriff's Department responded to approximately 200 service calls during the month of July. Of those, crimes against persons included three (3) battery-type assaults. Crimes against property totaled 12 incidents, including two (2) vandalism cases, one (1) identity theft, three (3) larceny thefts, one (1) residential burglary, three (3) thefts from vehicles, and two (2) vehicle thefts. Sgt. Carrillo also reported that deputies conducted traffic enforcement and issued citations during the month.

Sgt. Carillo noted that the Fourth of July was particularly busy, as the Sheriff's Department provides coverage for Imperial Beach, Bonita, and Otay. He assisted with public safety operations surrounding the Imperial Beach fireworks show and responded with the Fire Department to several fire incidents. Additional fires occurred in the Otay area due to fireworks activity. Sgt. Carrillo reported that the various events were handled successfully through coordination with the Fire Department and other law enforcement agencies.

During the question-and-answer period, a community member expressed concern regarding groups of children riding e-bikes and performing wheelies near Corral Canyon and the church area. Additional concerns were raised about riders traveling through open space, digging holes and jumps, and potentially damaging private property. The community member noted that the issue involves multiple jurisdictions, including County and City of Chula Vista areas.

Sgt. Carrillo acknowledged that e-bike-related concerns are becoming an increasing problem throughout the region. He

explained that enforcement can be challenging due to jurisdictional boundaries and the difficulty of locating riders after an incident has occurred. If riders are causing damage to private property, property owners or property management representatives should contact law enforcement so the issue can be investigated. Sgt. Carrillo encouraged residents to report incidents while they are occurring so deputies have an opportunity to respond, contact the individuals involved, and determine where they are coming from.

B. CHP: Officer Marcus Marlin introduced himself and provided information about the CHP's newly established **COPS** program. Officer Marlin explained that he and his partner, Officer Justin Macias, are assigned to patrol unincorporated areas, including Bonita, Lincoln Acres, Otay, and 4S Ranch. The program represents a renewed focus on these communities, with dedicated CHP officers available to address local traffic and public safety concerns.

Officer Marlin stated that the COPS team will focus on traffic complaints, school zone enforcement, parking concerns, stop sign violations, and abandoned vehicles. Vehicles parked on public streets for more than 72 hours may also be addressed through enforcement. He encouraged community members to report traffic concerns directly to the CHP.

During the question-and-answer period, community members expressed strong concerns regarding excessive speeding throughout Bonita, including Winnetka Drive, which one resident described as a frequent location for unsafe speeding. Officer Marlin acknowledged the concerns and explained that

the new COPS team was established in response to the need for additional traffic enforcement in unincorporated communities. He noted that he has already conducted enforcement in the Corral Canyon area and will continue monitoring community traffic concerns. Additional concerns were raised regarding groups of e-bikes and e-motorcycles operating unsafely on San Miguel Road, including riders performing wheelies, traveling in groups, occupying multiple lanes, and engaging in apparent racing activities. Officer Marlin stated that he would look into the reported locations and conduct enforcement in the area.

Officer Marlin provided the following contact information for the CHP COPS program: Email: 645-COPS@chp.ca.gov
San Diego CHP Office: (858) 293-6000.

SVCA members asked whether Officer Marlin would be able to attend future monthly meetings. He confirmed that he plans to attend regularly and provide future reports, including local traffic and enforcement statistics as they become available. Members expressed their appreciation for the additional CHP presence and the establishment of the new COPS program.

8. Elected Officials Representatives Reports:

A. Amanda Fredeluces, Chief of Staff for John McCann reported the following: Amanda Fredeluces, representing the Office of Chula Vista Mayor John McCann, provided information on several upcoming community events. She encouraged residents to attend the Lemon Festival on Saturday, August 15, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in Downtown Chula Vista along Third Avenue. The

annual event celebrates Chula Vista's agricultural history and its former recognition as the "Lemon Capital of the World."

Ms. Fredeluces also announced the return of Harbor Fest, scheduled for Saturday, August 22, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Harbor Park, 999 Bayside Parkway, Chula Vista. The free, family-friendly event is returning after a seven-year hiatus and will feature coastal-themed entertainment and activities for children and families.

The annual El Grito Celebration, commemorating Mexican Independence Day, is also scheduled for September 13. The free, family-friendly event will include cultural performances, mariachi music, Ballet Folklórico, local musicians, food, vendors, and community activities.

Ms. Fredeluces announced that this would be her last SVCA meeting for a period of time as she will be beginning maternity leave the following week. Marla Faraj from the Mayor's Office will represent Mayor McCann at future community meetings during her absence. Secretary Liz Stonehouse requested updated contact information for Ms. Faraj and the Mayor's Office. Ms. Fredeluces agreed to provide her business card and forward the requested contact information

B. Ardyel Lim from Senator Steve Padilla's Office mentioned the following report: the State Legislature had recently returned from summer recess on August 3. He explained that both the Senate and Assembly were entering an active period as legislation moves through the remaining committee process. A majority of Senator Padilla's bills were moving to the Suspense File, with additional legislative updates expected at the next meeting.

Mr. Lim also provided a brief overview of priorities included in the Senate Democratic Caucus State Budget Plan, including funding for

homeownership programs, affordable housing, CalFresh outreach, and strengthening the State's Rainy-Day Fund.

Several upcoming community events and opportunities were announced. The Senator's Office is tentatively planning a Senior Resource Fair in Chula Vista on September 21, with additional details to follow. Senator Padilla is also scheduled to speak at the South County Albondigas Luncheon on September 25, focusing on insurance and artificial intelligence. The Senator's Office is also partnering with the American Red Cross for a Blood Drive on September 28 from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Chula Vista Elks Lodge.

Mr. Lim encouraged residents to participate in the ongoing development of the University District–Chula Vista, a higher education initiative for South County. A Task Force Governance Meeting is scheduled for August 28, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Elite Athlete Training Center in Otay Ranch. The meeting will focus on governance options and institutional structures for advancing the University District and is the second in a four-part series.

Mr. Lim also shared information regarding the CalKIDS Scholarship Program, California's college savings initiative for eligible children. As of March 2026, more than $135 million in scholarship funds remained available for eligible San Diego County students. The funds may be used toward qualified educational expenses, including tuition, fees, required books and supplies, and computer equipment.

During the question-and-answer period, a member asked whether CalKIDS funds were limited to California State Universities. Mr. Lim explained that the program is a State-sponsored college savings opportunity for eligible children and should be viewed as a

"jumpstart" education fund. He encouraged families to contact the Senator's Office for additional information regarding eligibility, enrollment, and allowable educational expenses.

C. Ernesto Castenada, representing California State Assemblymember David Alvarez reported the following: The Legislature is approaching the end of the current legislative session. Bills are moving through their respective houses, with Assembly bills being considered in the Senate and Senate bills being considered in the Assembly. Mr. Castenada provided copies of Assemblymember Alvarez's legislative package, which includes approximately 20 bills authored by the Assemblymember. The package contains brief summaries of each bill and identifies the staff member assigned to the legislation. Community members were encouraged to contact the office with questions, comments, or concerns regarding specific legislation.

Mr. Castenada also reported that funding decisions must be finalized by the end of the legislative session. Assemblymember Alvarez continues to advocate for State funding toward the purchase of Bonita's new fire engine. The office remains hopeful that additional funding will be secured and expects to have an update by the end of the month.

Assemblymember Alvarez also plans to attend the Bonita Firefighters Association's Annual Pancake Breakfast with his family on Sunday, August 9. Mr. Castenada encouraged attendees to stop by and greet the Assemblymember.

Looking ahead to the next legislative session, Mr. Castenada invited community members to share ideas for potential legislation. He explained that the Assemblymember's office begins developing its legislative priorities for the following session during the fall and

encouraged residents to contact the office with community concerns or proposed ideas for future bills.

D. Marianne Delatorre, Senior Community Rep. for SD County District 1 Supervisor, Paloma Aguirre reported the following: Marianne Delatorre thanked the SVCA and participating public safety agencies for their partnership and support of the recent Public Safety Forum. She reported that the forum was successful in gathering community concerns and that an executive summary was prepared and shared with public safety officials and County representatives. Key concerns identified included speeding enforcement, parking enforcement, street sweeping, and other public works issues. The Supervisor's Office continues to work with County departments to address these concerns.

Ms. Delatorre encouraged residents to use the County's Tell Us Now application to report concerns such as potholes, damaged curbs, and traffic-related issues. She noted that reports are routed to the appropriate County department and that residents may also contact the Supervisor's Office to reinforce community concerns.

Addressing ongoing e-bike concerns, Ms. Delatorre reported that Supervisor Aguirre is expected to support a future County ordinance addressing e-bikes and e-motorcycles. She explained that the County is reviewing potential regulations and enforcement strategies, including vehicle classifications, speed, permitted areas of operation, and public education. County Parks and Recreation has also begun implementing signage and regulations governing e-bike use in County parks. Ms. Delatorre noted that the community will be kept informed as the ordinance and related policies move forward.

Ms. Delatorre also provided an overview of the County's recently approved balanced $16 billion budget and highlighted several District 1 priorities, including funding to address the Tijuana River sewage crisis, support for the County Film Initiative, mental health workforce development, assistance to offset federal program reductions affecting residents, senior services, and veteran-directed care. She also reported that the Board of Supervisors approved the future San Diego Regional Firefighter Memorial, which is expected to be located at the County Administration Building.

Additional community announcements included the State of Bonita, scheduled for September 3, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Bonita Museum. The event will include a performance by Bonita Vista High School's award-winning Music Machine, recognition of local institutions, and food from local restaurants. A flyer with additional information was expected to be distributed the following week.

Ms. Delatorre also announced Supervisor Aguirre's annual Día de los Muertos celebration, scheduled for October 24, from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the County Administration Building. Community members will have an opportunity to submit altars honoring loved ones.

Regarding concerns previously raised about the Bonita Community Garden, Ms. Delatorre reported that she met with the Resource Conservation District, which oversees the garden's management. Community concerns regarding maintenance and upkeep were shared, and the Supervisor's Office will assist with connecting the organization to the community to encourage additional communication and outreach.

During the question-and-answer period, SVCA representatives discussed the need to continue follow-up from the Public Safety Forum, including the organization of photographs and

documentation of specific community concerns for submission to County officials. Ms. Delatorre agreed that continued coordination was needed and indicated that follow-up would occur before the State of Bonita event.

Additional discussion focused on e-bike and e-motorcycle use on County trails. Community members expressed concern about motorized bikes traveling at high speeds near horses and livestock, creating safety concerns for riders, pedestrians, and equestrians. Ms. Delatorre explained that current rules permit certain Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes on County trails, while regulations may differ for higher-powered e-motorcycles. She acknowledged the concerns and noted that the developing County ordinance will need to consider enforcement, safety, education, and the unique conditions of different trail environments.

9. Continuing Business:

A. State of Bonita – Update

Update: President Felix reported that the State of Bonita event has been rescheduled to Thursday, September 3, 2026. Discussion focused on the event location, anticipated attendance, logistics, vendors, participating organizations, and the overall program.

President Felix shared that there had initially been concerns regarding the capacity of the Bonita Museum and the possibility of exceeding fire code limitations. After discussing the event layout with museum representatives and considering the use of open doors and outdoor space to allow attendees to move freely throughout the venue, he felt the location could work well. The use of the outdoor area near the flagpole may also provide additional space for the event.

Marianne Delatorre reported that Bonita Vista High School's award-winning Music Machine vocal program is expected to participate. Tentative local food vendors include Donny's Cafe, The Flora Café, Murrieta's, and Hans & Harry's. Additional community organizations may also be invited to participate or table at the event, including the Kiwanis Club, Live Well Bonita, Bonita Melodrama, Sweetwater Women's Club, the Bonita Museum, and the Resource Conservation District.

President Felix explained that the event schedule and flow are still being developed. The intent is to hold a shorter SVCA meeting followed by the State of Bonita program and community engagement activities. Final details will depend on confirmed attendees, participating organizations, vendors, and program logistics.

Vice President Judy Tieber expressed concern that the event could become too busy and that the SVCA meeting and its role as the sponsoring organization could become an afterthought. She emphasized that the State of Bonita is an SVCA function and that Supervisor Paloma Aguirre is being invited as the Association's featured guest. Other attendees agreed that community collaboration is valuable but stressed the importance of maintaining sufficient time for the Supervisor and ensuring the SVCA remains clearly identified as the host organization.

Secretary Liz Stonehouse recalled that previous State of Bonita events were structured with the SVCA conducting its business during the first portion of the evening, followed by the featured program and community activities. At the conclusion of the event, the SVCA formally thanked attendees and closed the meeting.

President Felix and Marianne Delatorre will continue working together on the event schedule and program flow. More information will be provided as the details are finalized.

B. Nomination Committee for SVCA Elections extended to Sept.
2026, Update: The Nominating Committee reported that, because their Board seats are not up for election, Mike Clowers and Mike Parnell were selected to serve on the committee. The upcoming election includes the Executive Officer positions and Board Seats 2 and 4. Board Seats 1, 3, and 5 are not up for election until next year.

A letter was distributed to members and community groups inviting interested individuals to participate in the election process. Following the responses received during June and July, the following nominations were reported:

- President: Felix Felix
- Vice President: Mike Clowers
- Secretary: Liz Stonehouse
- Treasurer: Stephen Stonehouse
- Seat 2: Steven Elliott
- Seat 4: Richard Scott

Initially, both Judy Tieber and Steven Elliott expressed interest in Seat 2. Mike Clowers stated that, if elected Vice President, he would resign his current Board Seat 1, which would then need to be filled through the appropriate appointment process. Judy Tieber subsequently withdrew from consideration for Seat 2, allowing Steven Elliott to move forward as the sole nominee for that seat.

The Nominating Committee reported that all nominees had been reviewed and were in good standing, including meeting the attendance requirements. President Felix reminded nominees to maintain attendance at the upcoming meetings in accordance with SVCA requirements.

C. Discussion of Membership Drive for June, August or Sept. 2026, Update: President Felix reported that the SVCA Membership Drive is currently underway and thanked those who have already renewed their memberships. Members who have not yet renewed, as well as individuals interested in joining the Association, were encouraged to complete an application. Treasurer Stephen Stonehouse had membership applications available at the meeting.

Members were also encouraged to take applications to share with neighbors, friends, and family members to help expand SVCA membership and strengthen community involvement.

The discussion noted the positive attendance at the meeting and the presence of new faces. Mike Clowers emphasized that the SVCA provides an important connection between the community and government agencies, law enforcement, and other public service organizations. Community concerns can often begin with the SVCA and be elevated through the appropriate channels for further attention and action.

President Felix encouraged continued collaboration to improve the quality of life in Bonita.

D. Community Engagement Support and concept development of a Bonita Community Recreation Center to be

located at the soon-to-be vacated County Animal Shelter property, Update: President Felix asked Marianne Delatorre for an update regarding the future of the soon-to-be vacated County Animal Shelter property. He reiterated the community's interest in understanding what may happen to the property and expressed concern that the land could eventually be declared surplus and sold.

Marianne reported that the County's General Services Department is responsible for managing the County's property portfolio and is currently evaluating potential future uses for the site. The Supervisor's Office has been advocating for greater visibility into the available options and for an opportunity to engage the community in discussions regarding the property's future.

Marianne explained that the existing structures are not expected to be salvageable and that any future development would likely require new construction. The County is continuing to evaluate options, including the possibility of a community-oriented use. The Supervisor's Office is advocating for meaningful community input so that residents can help express how they would like to see the property developed.

President Felix suggested that the SVCA may consider forming an Ad Hoc Committee to develop ideas and help maintain momentum regarding the future use of the property. Marianne indicated that the Supervisor's Office supports community engagement and continued discussion regarding the site.

A community member expressed concern about the relocation of animal services and the potential difficulty residents may face transporting found or stray animals to facilities in Santee or Lakeside. Concern was also expressed that residents may release

animals rather than travel long distances to surrender or report them.

Marianne explained that the County's plan includes mobile animal services capable of responding and picking up animals in the South County area. This issue will continue to be monitored as the transition occurs.

E. Rady Children's Health Sponsorship: "Prevention Starts with Me" – Update: President Felix reported that the proposed Rady Children's Health sponsorship opportunity, "Prevention Starts with Me," was canceled due to circumstances beyond the control of the participating organizations. As a result, the SVCA did not move forward with participation or sponsorship.

President Felix expressed hope that the SVCA may have an opportunity to participate in or support a similar program in the future. Further opportunities will be considered as they become available

10. New Business:

A. County of San Diego, Grant Fund Neighborhood Reinvestment and Community Enhancement Applications: President Felix Felix reported that the SVCA had been proactive in preparing two County of San Diego grant applications: one for the Neighborhood Reinvestment Program and one for the Community Enhancement Program. President Felix and Treasurer Stephen Stonehouse met with Marianne Delatorre to review the applications and make the necessary revisions.

The proposed grant funding would support the continued implementation of the SVCA Strategic Plan, including improvements

and ongoing maintenance of the SVCA website, as well as marketing and community outreach efforts.

Marianne Delatorre explained that grant applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with applications generally due by the 15th of each month for consideration during the following month. She noted that the review and approval process typically takes approximately six to eight weeks.

Marianne further explained that each County Supervisorial District has discretionary funding available to support eligible community organizations. Applications are reviewed by the Supervisor's Office, County departments, and County Counsel to ensure eligibility, compliance, and appropriate stewardship of public funds. Applications may be submitted directly to Marianne for processing.

President Felix reported that the applications were nearly complete and would be submitted after final follow-up on any remaining requirements. The SVCA will keep the membership informed regarding the status of the applications.

11. Community Forum:

A. County Traffic Advisory Committee Mike Clowers, updates: Director Mike Clowers provided a brief update on traffic-related concerns. He reported that he had contacted CHP Officer Marcus Marlin regarding community traffic concerns and had forwarded information to help ensure the identified areas remain on CHP's radar.

Mike also announced that the SVCA's October 7 and November 4, 2026 meetings will be held at Sweetwater Community Church, as

the Bonita-Sunnyside Library Community Room will be unavailable due to election

B. SVCA Membership: Vice President Judy Tieber reported on the ongoing membership drive. Membership information has been posted on several community platforms, including Facebook, Bonita Patch, and Nextdoor, to encourage new memberships and renewals.

The current membership activity included:

- Four new individual memberships.
- Three organizational renewals.
- Six family renewals.
- One Silver membership.
- Two new Gold memberships.

Judy reported that the SVCA had 44 active members as of the meeting date.

The Board and members were encouraged to continue promoting membership and inviting neighbors, family members, and local organizations to participate in the SVCA.

12. Other Announcements & Items Not on the Agenda for Consideration:

A. Jasmine Ernest – San Diego Rescue Mission:

Jasmine Ernest introduced herself as a representative of the San Diego Rescue Mission. She explained that the organization works to address homelessness by providing immediate and long-term support to individuals experiencing homelessness throughout San Diego County.

Jasmine reported that the San Diego Rescue Mission operates a 30-day shelter in National City, which was celebrating its second anniversary. She invited community members to attend an upcoming community event and encouraged residents to learn more about available resources and opportunities to become involved.

She also discussed the organization's new Young Professionals Initiative, designed to educate, equip, and engage younger professionals in addressing community needs and homelessness. Business cards and additional information were made available.

Marianne Delatorre thanked the San Diego Rescue Mission for its partnership and noted the County's ongoing Neighbor-to-Neighbor outreach efforts, which connect individuals with services including employment assistance, transitional housing, personal care, expungement services, and other community resources.

B. Frank Borik – Friends of the Bonita-Sunnyside Library:

Frank Borik, representing the Friends of the Bonita-Sunnyside Library, announced the launch of a new monthly concert series at the library.

Concerts will be held on the first Saturday of each month at 2:00 p.m. in the Community Room and will be free to the public. The series will focus on showcasing local San Diego musicians and artists.

Frank explained that the program is intended not only to provide free cultural events for the community but also to support local performers. Participating artists will have professional video recordings of their performances available for their personal promotion and professional use.

Community members were encouraged to attend and support the local artists. Flyers were made available.

President Felix thanked both speakers and emphasized that the SVCA supports community collaboration and inclusivity. He encouraged local organizations to reach out to the SVCA regarding future events, partnerships, and opportunities to support the community.

C. Mike Parnell – mentioned that the canal that runs by Central Ave., has vegetation growth that is now eight feet tall again. He has been in contact with the county and they plan to come out and cut those down again after bird season is over. Other concerns are seasonal torrential rains. Hopefully, Cal Fire crews can come down to help clean that out again this year.

D. Gina Bennett – Community Beautification Initiatives: Gina provided an update on community beautification efforts. She is a lifelong Bonita resident. She discussed a proposed micro-park and drought-tolerant landscaping project at the corner of Bonita Road and Central Avenue, across from Morrison's. The proposed project would improve an undeveloped County-owned area using rocks, dryscape, and other low-water landscaping materials because irrigation is not available at the site.

Gina is exploring partnerships and fundraising opportunities to support the project and has contacted local educational institutions regarding potential collaboration with students in urban development and landscaping programs.

She also discussed a separate concept to install a welcome sign identifying the Bonita community, similar to signage in other communities. Preliminary cost estimates for such signage vary

significantly from $12,000 to $350,000 depending on design, materials, and installation requirements. Gina stated that the goal would be to create a sign that reflects Bonita's character, culture, community pride, and identity.

Gina thanked SVCA President Felix for his support and stated that she is continuing to learn and navigate the process as a community volunteer. She expects to provide additional updates as the projects develop.

13. Meeting Adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 8:06PM.

Next Meeting: September 3, 2026, in conjunction with the rescheduled **State of Bonita** event

Respectfully submitted by Liz Stonehouse, Secretary

Mission Statement: 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.