

**HOMESTEAD VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING IN LANDERS OCTOBER 19, 2009**

Opened with Flag Salute at 3:00 pm

A Certificate of Appreciation from HVCC was presented by Mike McGrath to Carl Gorham, for his efforts toward establishing March 30 as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day in California.

Betty Munson requested that meeting be recorded.

Present were Maryan Barkley, Phyllis Burns, Jim Hanley, Jim Harvey, Elizabeth Karman, Earlene McCloskey, Mike McGrath, Betty Munson, Barbara Renton, Nancy Sammons, Rick Sayers, Carl Schmitt, Ken Stermetz, Joyce Wheeler.

Guests: J. Larry Coulombe, Judy Corl-Lorono (BDVWA), Carl Gorham, Vivian Gorham, Catherine Janowicz, Jan Kirkpatrick, Joe Kirkpatrick, Janea Jackson (MCAGCC, G-5), Marina West (BDVWA), Martha Oswald, Carl Peter Ripaldi, Jaelyn Sarnowski (MCAGCC, G-5), Pete Schmuckle, Warren Strodel (BDVWA), Paul Lopez(?), Alan Rasmussen 3rd District Field Representative.

Delegate List was changed, removing Judy Kemp and Linda Wilgues as Landers delegates.

Agenda was approved with additions: Alan Rasmussen added Yucca Mesa MAC proposal as #3. Maryan Barkley added Hwy 247 improvements as #5

Minutes of August meeting, in the agenda packet, previously approved by e-mail.

Treasurer's report: Earlene McCloskey.

Beginning balance 6,230.97; Income 491.00 including Plant Sale and PayPal donation; Expenses 12.00 including new 3.00 charge from USBank; Balance 6,709.97.

CD coming due Oct. 30; since the return is the same, moving funds from CD to Money Market was approved.

IRS taxes discussed, possible law change. Mike McGrath and Ken Stermetz said they sent letter to Secretary of State to get certification of good standing. Mike will send information to Earlene.

Earlene will look into moving account to Chase to get free checking.

1. Guest Comments

Carl Ripaldi, Environmental Specialist with LA Metro, offered to comment on the letter about hauled water, on the agenda.

Janea Jackson introduced Jaelyn Sarnowski, new employee at Base, a contractor going to various meetings to get familiar with the area.

2. Rebecca Unger article, Oct. 13, 2009: Betty Munson read minutes from September meeting, recording Alan Rasmussen's comment about attendees at HVCC and other public meetings showing respect to speakers, and behaving in a professional manner, etc., to which the Council had agreed. The Hi-Desert Star article on the water agency candidates forum at Landers reported that Alan had chided HVCC "for stooping to low levels of public discourse with their attacks on the water agency." Betty wanted to ask Rebecca how she came up with this unfortunate wording, since Alan did not say it. Alan said he also was disappointed to read that story. The wording was not what he said. He said that though "I was at an HVCC meeting, it applies to other meetings, where someone will snicker, whisper, walk away, show disrespect..." Betty said that HVCC had not made "attacks" on Bighorn. HVCC wrote a letter about the veterans' complaint that the agency had changed their observance of Veterans Day, which she did not construe as an attack.

Alan said he was sorry Rebecca was not here, that the Landers meeting was much more lighthearted than the article made it seem. Delegates and guests spoke of discrepancies between events and the way they are portrayed in the Star. It was suggested Alan talk to the paper since the article misquoted him, smeared HVCC and smeared the candidates. Jim Harvey said all the delegates' e-mail comments agreed that Alan was not reported correctly.

Larry Coloumbe asked if what he said at the September meeting was recorded. It was. He said the minutes were not

complete, but that he also said the comments about the water agency could have been made in a more professional and civil way. That the president had said his statement was foolish. Jim Harvey replied that he thought that Columbe's complaint had been directed toward the veterans exercising their right to speak their opposition to Bighorn's action.

3. Establishing a MAC for Yucca Mesa: Alan Rasmussen reported a group within the umbrella of HVCC was exploring establishing a Municipal Advisory Council for Yucca Mesa, and he had brought a copy of resolution they needed to send to the Supervisor. Questions arose as to who has initiated the action. Alan answered they were YMIA members. Elizabeth Karman said it was a group from the Coalition. In an effort to help establish Yucca Mesa with its own independent identity, about 12 Coalition members went to Alan to see about establishing a MAC. When asked what were the pros and cons. Elizabeth said the people of the Mesa would be better informed; that they would have a place to go to speak to someone with authority, to express their concerns.

There was a MAC in Yucca Mesa before they joined the HVCC. Elizabeth stated she would not be on the MAC. Alan said he was surprised that YMIA delegates did not know about the MAC, that he thought it was part of the HVCC. When asked if her people could come to a YMIA meeting to explain this, Elizabeth said there was nothing set up yet. Alan said that the document was what they needed, that they had to work out whether or not they need a MAC. He said it is an information conduit between the people and the county, that it works well in Joshua Tree. Comments included that the problem was getting people to work the MAC; Elizabeth said there were plenty of volunteers right now.

Jim suggested putting this under purview of Community Services Committee as they proceed, for communication purposes. Elizabeth said she was not expecting it to be known until it was finalized.

A comment was made that a MAC is a Brown Act body, and that the HVCC itself could become a MAC.

Jim Harvey questioned why would HVCC not get access to plans, just as a MAC can.

4. Committee Reports

-SOI Committee: Elizabeth said we will need to go to the LAFCO hearing which will be no sooner than Jan 10. Kathleen McDonald is going to retire in June. YMIA has agreed to match HVCC \$500 pledge for a bus and expressed appreciation for HVCC support. Coalition will have watchdog committee.

- Public Outreach Committee: Newsletter posted, both print and e-mail version. Brochure is not posted on website. Jim will print more for Welcome Center. Market and other local places suggested to distribute brochures.

Need Yucca Mesa and Landers profiles for website.

Thank you letters will be sent to YMIA for letting us have the Plant Sale space for free; also to donors. Contact newspaper and radio stations.

-Fund Raising/Events: The Christmas Party at Landers, Saturday, Dec. 19, tickets available to public. Goal 100 attendance. Suggested \$5 donation, bring a toy for boy or girl worth \$10 or more, get 2 free drinks. Neil Derry and Alan Rasmussen will be attending. Need organizations to participate with food. Ken Stermetz will handle supplying the liquor, and he has a band who will donate their time. Time 6-9 pm. Jim Harvey to do tickets; need flyers for newsletters, distribution. Toys to go to Tender Loving Christmas, too late for Toys for Tots. Sell will-call tickets through website.

-Community Services/Improvements/Communications: Rick Sayers said no progress on CalAware seminar. Jim said Alan had recommended setting date in January or later. We have a grant of \$500 from the Town of Yucca Valley and offer to use Yucca Room for free.

Ken Stermetz said every 3rd Friday there is a Veterans Outreach at Landers at 9:00 am. AmVet member Gary Douglas volunteers to help with veterans and survivors benefits.

No word on Census activities to promote count.

Reviving Chamber of Commerce in Homestead Valley: Jim has information on previous C of C, need to contact businesses.

5. Hwy 247 Improvements: newspaper article stated CalTrans was planning to add 8-ft shoulders. Letter was received by Phyllis Burns as property owner. DOT is declaring Notice of Intent for shoulders from El Cortez Rd.

just past Mojave Mkt. at Napa Rd. Carl Ripaldi said scoping meeting would be proper, valuable to encourage comment and ideas. Written comments by Nov. 16, 2009. There would be another comment period after a public meeting. HVCC approved sending letter to request hearing. Scenic highway proposal and impact on property owners was discussed.

6. Hwy 247 Homestead Valley signs: Mike McGrath made preliminary map for sign locations to figure quantity and cost. 4x8-ft. size proposed.

Two sided signs suggested. Locate some Yucca Mesa signs on private property. Wording to be settled later. Mike requested ideas by e-mail. CalTrans signs suggested saying Entering Homestead Valley, next 25? Miles⁷. Hwy 247 Zoning: Betty Munson reported conversation with Judy Tatman in Land Use Services about a meeting on Nov. 5 in San Bernardino for proposed change along Hwy 247 from Special Development Residential to Special Development Commercial, plus 1900 acres change to Rural Living 2. A map was promised but not received. Maryan Barkely said that they thought this was settled. HVCC opposed commercial zoning. Alan Rasmussen will call Ms Tatman to clarify these contradictions, he thought everyone was happy at the last meeting with Land Use Services. Zoning Committee formed; Phyllis Burns, Chairman, and Maryan Barkley.

8. Letter to Supervisor Neil Derry regarding hauled water: Jim Harvey said Carl Ripaldi was very helpful with the environmental aspect of this draft. It is still unresolved as to whether or not permits will be issued to property owners relying on hauled water. Carl's comments: the county's action is discretionary, but hones in on issues of environmental justice, discriminates against people of lower income. People of modest means have right to develop their property. County may not be aware of the environmental processes they ought to be following. Consequences are devastating. Limits property rights. Regulate, not deny. Legal issue involved.

Motion to send letter approved.

Alan thought it possible that the ruling was vague in order to be able to make exceptions to it. Carl added that Environmental Health Services has a empowered to take actions when public health is at risk. Does not mean they can skip public notification and comment. Jim said state recognizes hauled water as legal, but it is asking the county not to. But nothing is in writing. Alan will deliver letter. Guest comments argued letter too strong, and not strong enough. People have been trying to follow the process, but keep hitting brick walls and delays. Alan suggested meeting with director of Environmental Health so she can share motivations, so attack on policy can be more on target. Jim said we want to avoid petition drives. Alan said if applicant had run into the right technician in Building and Safety the problem might not arise.

9. Two plus Two Committee to Town of Yucca Valley: Jim contacted Town and a committee is set up similar to Two plus Two's with hospital, Joshua Tree, etc. Designated Town Council representatives are Lori Herbel, George Huntington. Elizabeth Karman stated that she wants to establish community of Yucca Mesa as independent; asked if Two plus Two committee could be started after the LAFCO hearing. She does not want Yucca Mesa to be gobbled up by HVCC either. Delegates questioned this statement since Yucca Mesa is not an independent entity, but one of the HVCC communities. Elizabeth questioned purpose of Two plus Two. Such a committee would avoid being blindsided with such proposals as SOI. Meetings would be on an as-needed basis. Because we are not a Brown Act body we could have more than two representatives. Tabled until after the LAFCO hearing.

10. Meeting with Senator Feinstein's office: Discussion tabled until next month, since the Route 66 Monument legislation not made public yet.

No point making comments until bill is introduced.

11. President's Report:

Get Well card given to Patricia Carey, who is getting better.

\$100 donation from Flamingo Heights received, Landers donation not received yet.

12. No items suggested for the next agenda.

Meeting adjourned 5:20

Betty Munson, Secretary