

MORONGO VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
11207 OCOTILLO STREET. MORONGO VALLEY, CA 92256

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

6:00 p.m. Regular Business

March 16, 2022

Conference via Zoom

Call: 1 (669) 900-6833 **Meeting ID:** 832 3125 1241 **Password:** 981897

<https://morongocsd.specialdistrict.org/>

Public input/questions will be conducted through Microsoft Forms which can be found on our website under the "Board Meetings" tab. The Morongo Valley CSD is in alignment with the Order of the Health Officer of the County of San Bernardino for the Control of COVID-19 dated April 23, 2020, and still in effect. More information on how to join a Zoom Meeting or access Public Comments is on our website.

The Morongo Valley Community Services District complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you require special assistance to attend or participate in this meeting, please call (760) 363-6454. Materials related to any items on this agenda submitted to the Board after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the CSD Main Office, 11207 Ocotillo Street, Morongo Valley, CA 92256.

A. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Board Meeting of March 16, 2022 was called to order at 6:01 PM.

B. ROLL CALL

1. Christina Gorke, President, Present
2. Shawna Johnson, Vice President, Present
3. Kristina Brook, Director, Present
4. Johnny Tolbert, Director, Present
5. Jennifer Henning, Director, Present

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Gorke.

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Board of Directors now takes time to consider your comments on items which are on the agenda. The President will recognize you at the appropriate time to assist in the orderly and timely conduct of the meeting. When called upon to speak, please state your name and residence. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes or less. If you wish to comment on an agenda item or non-agenda items during Public Comment, fill out the form on our website, or raise your hand. There will also be a one (1) minute Public Comment period before each agenda item.

Jessica Lawson - I am submitting my comment to formally object to the communications tower that is proposed in Morongo Valley on BLM land off of Canyon House Road. My family and I bought our first home on Mockingbird Lane last year, and one of the primary reasons we were drawn to this property is because of the unobstructed views of Mount San Jacinto. The proposed location of the new communication tower is going to be directly in our sight line and a mere 400 meters from our backyard, and will be obstructing the view of many of our

neighbors. We believe that this nearly 200 foot tall communication tower will significantly detract from our views and also negatively affect the property values of not just our home but of our neighbors' homes as well. We are hard-working, middle-class citizens and our home values are our biggest assets. We propose that an alternate location for this communication tower be presented somewhere that does not obstruct the views of dozens of neighbors who are lucky to call Morongo Valley home.

Meg Foley - "I ask the Board to consider adopting a resolution, opposing the multi-tenant cellular tower, unless the comment period - currently 3/21 - is extended. Reasons contained in draft resolution language offered for Directors' discussion and convenience:

Whereas, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) did not notify the affected local government, the Morongo Valley Community Services District (MVCSD), regarding the proposed project that will impact nearly every parcel in Morongo Valley,

Whereas, the BLM added a public presentation to the 30 day scoping process, only after requests from residents,

Whereas, the Morongo Valley CSD's regular board meeting is held the day before the BLM information presentation and days before the comment period deadline,

Whereas, it is reasonable for local governments and residents to have a sufficient time to consider the proposal, community impacts and/or benefits, and comment accordingly,

Whereas, the BLM rejected the San Bernardino County 3rd District Board of Supervisor and Friends of Big Morongo Canyon's requests to extend the comment period,

The Morongo Valley CSD is strongly opposed to this project unless the comment period is extended for a minimum of 30 days, so the MVCSD can receive project information, may thoughtfully consider and communicate with our constituents. "

Debra Freeland - " After seeing a mock up of what this tower will look like from my neighborhood, I am concerned how much this will negatively affect my property value. Notice, I did not say if it would, because it absolutely will. Morongo Valley is already considered a disadvantaged area in many state and county aid and grant programs. We have many unmaintained roads, and are at the end of the priority list for the county of San Bernardino. The state has listed us as a fire prone area, which affects our home owners insurance. We have recently had issues arise with our local Community Services District and local fire dept. All of these things are considered when property values are established.

The proposed tower will most definitely lower the property values of all of the residents in my neighborhood which is about 150 yards north of the space proposed for it. Those people who may want to sell in the future would find the eyesore of that tower makes a difference for most individuals. Most people, looking to buy a home in our valley, are in search of a place away from the trappings of industrialization, for space to enjoy nature, and perhaps a view out the back door of the beauty of the California desert. This would change that for every house within a 10 mile radius of the tower, and perhaps further.

You want our input as far as the impact to the locals. I see zero positive impact. I have internet, cell service and television at my home, as do my neighbors. This will not lower our bills, it will not give us anything that we don't already have except lowered property values and ugliness where there once was beauty. The impact to the local ecosystem will be forever changed. Even the Paradise fire in 2005 did not create the ugliness that this tower will.

The proposed site is about 100 or so yards from my home. Many neighborhood residents take nature walks in the area, because of the abundance of desert wildlife and vegetation. We have seen the white-tailed deer on that hill, several bobcats making their way, and golden eagles perching on the burnt end of a juniper. The coyotes have a trail that they use on an almost daily basis during the spring and fall, and it goes right through the proposed sight. How can this project be proposed in a space inhabited by both the endangered desert tortoise, and the

protected California Rosy boa? We see several Rosy boas per year on and around your proposed site. There is a species of desert toad that inhabits the area as well, not to mention the owls, and hawks that nest in the vegetation. Migrating birds and the monarch butterfly call these hills home during certain times of the year. The site is part of the acreage of native desert plants that have only recently begun to propagate after the Paradise Fire (2005) which swept through the proposed project space. That fire wiped the land clean of all vegetation for miles, and as the drought quickly followed, it has not been until these last few years that the vegetation has seen growth and regrowth of plants like the Chaparral Yucca.

The symbiotic relationship between the vegetation and the local bee population is crucial to a continued pollination and growth and the implementation of such a project will absolutely change the ecosystem again, but unlike the fire, it is not a natural form of rejuvenation. It will halt that continued cycle and put many forms of local plants, insects, and animals at risk.

I think that you should revisit placing this tower next to the current communications tower, where there are no neighborhoods to impact so negatively."

Evan A Hoffman Jastermsky - "Comment on item H-3 Interconnect Towers LLC:

As a Morongo Valley resident and avid hiker, I am commenting to encourage the CSD to make a resolution of opposition to the proposed tower project. The environmental effects such as erosion from the proposed access road (which would run across ungraded slopes) will disrupt existing habitat on those slopes well above the advertised 2.2 acres, and would limit hiking on these parcels. Being a 5-minute walk from my house, this would be a loss of a valuable recreational resource. I have seen coyotes and a golden eagle utilizing the proposed development area. Being adjacent to known wildlife corridors, the proposed development would negatively impact wildlife in a region already stressed by fires and drought. For obvious reasons, there are also visibility concerns from so many areas in the valley and the hills above. There are better ways of helping our community with broadband access, such as the county TV tower and installations on existing poles. Please say no."

Peter Jastermsky - "Agenda Item H-3 INTERCONNECT TOWERS LLC.

I am a Morongo Valley resident and homeowner and I request that the CSD Board of Directors make a resolution against the proposed communications tower that would be built on the Sand to Snow Special Recreational Management Area and located at the west end of Morongo Valley.

A 196-foot-tall tower like the one proposed would require significant onsite infrastructure, including auxiliary buildings, propane tanks and backup generators. To put all these items in place would require very significant, and damaging clearing, leveling, and grading of the site, as well as a construction of an access road that would be wide enough to accommodate large trucks and other machinery.

It should be mentioned that other tower facilities built by this contractor have produced a hum, and this factor would certainly impact the quietness of our community by creating a source of noise pollution. Nearby residents, and there are many, would be affected significantly.

The proposed tower location is part of a rich natural area, one with hiking opportunities, breathtaking views of the mountains that surround us, and a place where Nature itself can thrive, free from development. When so many individuals are scraping the land and building at a phenomenal rate, natural areas, such as the proposed tower site, are becoming increasingly rare – and priceless.

For those who are certain that the proposed tower will create excellent cell reception despite no evidence to that effect, all that is certain is a contractor stands to profit. Today, there are other options that don't require the destruction of natural land, such as signal boosters, upgrading the existing TV tower, and Starlink!

In closing, I again request that the CSD Board make a resolution against the proposed tower.

Thank you very much!
Peter Jastermsky

Estelle Yerman – First I have to thank the hard-working board, Kristina Johnny and Shawna and the others. I wanted to thank all the neighbors and friends for sharing about our community. I've gotten a letter I want to post. I was surprised there was going to be a high tower. We need to contact the Board of Supervisors and have an amendment to the endanger species so that BLM must get approval to put their tower on our land. We don't know how it will impact wildlife, home values, or how it will affect the view. I would like to slow down the process. We should be provided information and transparency. We must have information that is discussed with the Board.

E. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Board generally considers items in the order listed on the agenda. However, items may be considered in any order as established by the direction of the Board. Under certain circumstances, new agenda items may be added by a two-thirds vote of the Board. [Gov. Code Sec. 54954.2(b)(2)]

1. Agenda for the Regular Board Meeting of March 16, 2022.

Director Tolbert asked to have the General Manager job description added to the agenda as item four under new business.

MOTION: Director Tolbert motioned to approve the Agenda for the Regular Board Meeting of March 16, 2022, with the amendment.

SECOND: Director Henning seconds.

RESULT: Motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

F. AGENCY REPORTS

1. Sheriff's Report – San Bernardino County Sheriff's Representative

John Scalise – there were no high priority calls in the town of Morongo Valley, which is again good for the Community. The second item is the off-road vehicle enforcement. Officers are out patrolling the area.

2. General Manager / Fire Chief Report – James Brakebill

Chief Brakebill – I went to the park grand opening, and was really pleased to see the amount of people with so much participation and the enthusiasm from everybody, we received a lot of positive comments. The fire department side- two fires, twenty-eight EMS calls that required paramedics, one hazardous materials call, and eight public assist calls for a total of thirty-nine calls. All the new hires have been going through driver operator 1A and 1B.

3. Morongo Valley Sports League – Buddy Stogner

Mr. Stogner was not in attendance.

4. Community Relations Committee – Director Tolbert and Gorke

The focus was a lot of concern with the tower proposal that the community has received.

The idea of writing a letter to BLM was mentioned.

5. Director of Operations Recruitment Ad Hoc Committee – Director Tolbert and Director Henning

Nothing to report.

6. Fire services Ad Hoc Committee – Director Brook and Director Gorke

Nothing to report.

7. Cash / Checks Disbursements & Credit Card Purchases for February – Director Tolbert

Director Tolbert – the total spent this month was \$73547.29 there was nothing extra on the bills this month. Unfortunately, there is not a final bank statement number at this time.

G. CONSENT CALENDAR

Items on the consent calendar are routine matters or formal documents covering previous District Board instruction. Items may be acted on by one motion of the Board unless a Board Member requests a separate discussion and/or action on an item.

1. Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 16, 2021.

MOTION: Director Tolbert motioned to approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of February 16, 2022, as presented.

SECOND: Director Henning seconds.

RESULT: *Motion passed with a 5-0 vote.*

2. Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of February 24, 2022.

MOTION: Director Johnson motioned to approve the Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of February 24, 2022, as presented.

SECOND: Director Brook seconds

RESULT: 4-1, Director Henning Abstained

3. Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of March 7, 2022.

MOTION: Director Johnson motioned to approve the Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of March 7, 2022, as presented.

SECOND: Director Brook seconds

RESULT: 4-1 Director Tolbert Abstains

H. NEW BUSINESS

1. RESOLUTION AB 361 RECERTIFICATION

The Board of Directors discussed and approved Resolution 22-06- recertifying remote Board meetings under AB 361.

MOTION: President Gorke motioned to approve Resolution AB 361 recertification

SECOND: Director Brooke seconds

RESULT: Motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

2. STANDING FIRE SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Board of Directors discussed creating a fire services committee, however, It was agreed that one is not needed at this time.

MOTION: Director Brook motion to keep the fire services Ad Hoc Committee

SECOND: Director Johnson seconds

RESULT: Motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

3. INTERCONNECT TOWERS LLC

It was discussed that BLM was holding a meeting for the community of Morongo Valley to be able to ask questions, state opinions, and learn more about the tower. It was recommended by a community member that the Board pass a resolution. However, a letter to BLM was recommended as well. It was notated that this item is not in the sphere of influence and fire and emergencies services should be added however, adding our sphere of influence may only be helping BLM due to it giving better communication to the fire staff's radios. It was suggested that this item be continued to a special agenda in which they address the resolution that was brought forward by Meg Foley considering all public comments to BLM were to be submitted within the next week. Due to time constraints, President Gorke and Director Henning agreed to speak at the BLM zoom meeting.

MOTION: Director Tolbert proposed to allow President Gorke to speak on behalf of the Board.

SECOND: Jennifer Henning seconds

RESULT: Motion passes with a 5-0 vote

4. GENERAL MANAGER JOB DESCRIPTION

After looking at the applications we realized that we do need a general manager, however, a complex job description needs to be prepared.

I. CONTINUING BUSINESS

2. TYPE 1 ENGINE FROM SPEEDWAY FIRE RESCUE

The Board of Directors discussed and reviewed proceeding with the purchase of a Type 1

Engine from Speedway Fire Rescue. There was no action taken at this time. It was stated that any job description that is provided to the public, must be approved by the Board. Director Brook mentioned that the General Manager description was included in the Director of Operations description.

MOITON: Director Johnson moved to allow Directors Tolbert and Henning to write a General Manger job Description and bring it back to the Board at a later date.

SECOND: President Gorke seconds

RESULT: Motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

J. INDIVIDUAL DIRECTOR REPORTS

1. President Gorke – we have the playground open, and it is wonderful for everyone to enjoy. Yeah, we hope to have lots more activities happening in the park and getting the community involved. Also, the softball games will be on Saturday. If anyone you know has the need for hot dogs and sees some softball happening, you should check that out starting at 12:30 on Saturday and thank you too Brittany and the whole crew at the fire department. We appreciate all that you do.
2. Vice President Johnson – just wanted to say thanks to Chief Brakebill I appreciate your hard work and training that you provide for our firefighters
3. Director Brook – nothing to report.
4. Director Tolbert – the firefighters auxiliary meeting, the fire department did request to have five office chairs bought in. The auxiliary is giving them the right to go out and purchase new office chairs.
5. Director Henning – nothing to report.

K. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Next Regular Board Meeting: April 20, 2022

L. ADJOURNMENT

Moved: Director Tolbert Second: Director Tolbert Vote: 5/0