

**SKY VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
Sky Valley Chamber and Community Center  
May 13, 2008**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Barbara Hall called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. Roll call was taken and all Board members were present; Barbara Hall, Stephanie Greene, Robert Reeves and Julie Casserly. John Flanders was absent and excused.
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Led by Robert Reeves. Followed by group introductions.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes from the April 8, 2008 Community Council meeting were reviewed. With no corrections, a motion was made to approve the minutes. Casserly/Reeves. APPROVED.
5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Sky Valley resident, Bob Green, wanted to mention that Sheriff finally hauled the flatbed U-Haul that had been abandoned. He also wanted to update the Council on the mistreated horses, noting that 2 were euthanised and he feels that Animal Control and all agencies need to seriously address the other malnourished horses now located on Vee Bee under the same ownership. He complained that Animal Control was not working on the case, and mentioned his Equine Rescue operation near Idyllwild.
6. **STAFF REPORTS:**
  - a. County Supervisor: Nothing to report per Lynda Gregory.
  - b. Sheriff's Department: Lori Hardcastle read a press release about the recent homicide on 5/11 and reported on a car jacking on 5/10, a robbery on Rudder Row, and a rape on Dillon Road and that there had been 15 calls for service. Residents asked if this increase was abnormal, and the Sheriff reported that these were single incidents however crime is on the rise everywhere.
  - c. Fire Department: There were 81 calls in March, with 50 medical, a few traffic accidents and a structure fire.
  - d. Code Enforcement: A report was submitted for the record, and noted that there are 81 open cases, with 11 newly closed cases.
  - e. Other County Departments: Animal Control representative, Betsy Ritchie (343-3644 ext 231) was present, and reported on 60 calls with an average response time of 1 hour 51 minutes. Also reported:
    - There are many new cases of equine neglect as people cannot afford the increased price of feed. A recent case consisted of 4 neglected horses, 2 were destroyed and 2 are recovering.
    - A discussion ensued regarding the neglected horses originally located on Aurora and now on Vee Bee, The case was opened in August of 2007. The herd has been reduced from 25 horses to 12 horses (some destroyed, some adopted to other homes), and the remaining horses are recovering slowly. Resident Bob Green expressed his grave displeasure regarding this case and his disbelief that enough action has been taken. Officer Ritchie addressed all comments from residents and Council members, noting that while prosecution is possible in a case like this, it takes up to 3 years and requires quite a lot of back up and reports. Animal Control would rather solve the problem and have the animals in question saved. They are working closely with the horse owners (who were also present and are covered later). Officer Ritchie also informed the group that she joined Animal Control only 7 months

ago and is the only “horse-person” on staff and is taking all cases very seriously.

- It was suggested that a volunteer program be established to provide hay for horse owners who are financially unable to buy feed. If County Animal Services can provide names of owners in need, and provide storage for donated hay, the community would likely find a number of willing volunteers and donors. Betsy Ritchie will look into this possibility.

f. CSA 104: The next meeting is set for 7/19 at 9 am at the Chamber building.

**7. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a. Citizens on Patrol: John was on vacation however a representative reiterated that this program needs more volunteer drivers. Funds are OK at this time thanks to the recent grant.

**8. OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. Request to Divide 43 acres northerly of Hilltop/Mr. Alibaba Farazaneh landowner. APN 645-080-001 – It was moved, seconded and approved to continue this item off-calendar until additional information is received from the applicant by Riverside County Planning.

**9. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. Elise Tarrant: Ms. Tarrant attended as a representative of the property on Vee Bee with the 12 neglected horses, spending time to describe the plans for the ranch. She complimented Animal Control on their tenacity and went into detail on how the herd was reduced and tried to assure the group that the remaining horses are receiving adequate food and water and are gaining weight. She advised the group that she and her husband are pastors of a church in Desert Hot Springs (Covenant on Pierson), and that the property on Vee Bee was purchased in order to provide a ranch environment for orphans and abused children, using the horses and other activities as therapy. They are currently in the fundraising process. The ranch is named All the Kings Horses, located at 18557 Vee Bee Road, just south of the Fire Station. There was much discussion from the group, specifically about the condition of the horses, with Julie pointing out that the original herd was severely mistreated and she does not feel that the Tarrant’s are taking this seriously enough, and wants the community to help monitor the situation. Stephanie closed the discussion by imploring the Tarrant’s to first tend to the health of the horses before moving on to adding other elements, since this important part is clearly not being handled well. The Council thanked Ms. Tarrant for attending and reiterated that they are very concerned about the health of the horses. Officer Ritchie noted that Animal Control is monitoring the horses very closely.
- b. Council Summer Meeting Schedule: Based on the normal course of Council business, a motion was made to cancel the July and August meetings. With no one opposed, the motion was Approved. Casserly/Reeves.

**10. COUNCIL MEMBERS’ REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:**

- a. Desert Edge: Barbara Hall reported that Desert Edge is working to secure easements on 18<sup>th</sup> street to Ford to Mountain View, in order to provide a secondary road for east/west travel through Sky Valley.

**11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:**

- a. Peaker Plant: A resident expressed concern about the new proposed energy plant in Desert Hot Springs as it will need significant amounts of aquifer water, from the same source that supplies Sky Valley, They are concerned that our rates will go up even though the plant does not serve Sky Valley, and it will drain needed resources. Lynda will discuss with Supervisor Wilson and report back. (Carried over from April meeting).
- b. Animal Control: Officer Ritchie will provide an update on open cases and the neglected horses on Vee Bee.
- c. Election of Officers
- d. Trails Alliance: CVAG is analyzing this now and will report in September.

12. **ADJOURNMENT**: With nothing further to discuss, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 pm. Reeves/Casserly. APPROVED. The next meeting is set for June 10, 2008 at 6 pm.

**END**

*DRAFT #1*

*Respectfully Submitted by Stephanie Greene, Secretary  
May 28, 2008*