



Hot Topic at August Meeting – Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)

County Supervisors James Ramos and Robert Lovingood successfully led the charge insisting on meetings in the desert communities with planners from DRECP.

Jim Harvey, former president of the HVCC, spoke to the August 18 meeting about DRECP. He is one of several residents of the Morongo Basin Area who meet regularly to assess the affects of fast-tracking industrial-scale solar and wind turbine installations in the California desert. Jim for years has been recognized as an expert on renewable energy issues and a founder of the Alliance for Responsible Energy Policy.

He pointed out that Johnson Valley and Lucerne Valley are so-called Development Focus Areas on DRECP maps, and that the areas along Highway 247 are not appropriate for the installation of industrial solar fields and transmission lines.

Jim urged the Council and guests to go to the public stakeholder meetings, to support development of renewable energy generation on rooftops and parking lots in the already built-up environment. He cited the rapid creation of local jobs and improvement of the local economy everywhere it has been done.

Public meetings with DRECP planners and other officials are on:
Friday, September 6 at 6:30 p.m. at the
Lucerne Valley Elementary School
Saturday, September 7 at 9:00 a.m. at the
Yucca Valley Community Center

Good Report from County Fire Department

Battalion Chief Dave Benfield gave the HVCC encouraging news when he outlined funding being anticipated from a new contract with the state. He told us the long-awaited fire/rescue helicopter service is becoming a reality, not only giving aerial firefighting capability but also dramatically shortening response time to accident scenes and ambulance service. Dave also described plans for a new self-funding County ambulance service.

Questions for Sheriffs Department

Rick Collins, Administrative Sergeant for the Morongo Basin area fielded questions from the Council and guests. The huge district being covered, from the Riverside County line out to Cadiz, by limited personnel results in long response times. Patrolling is usually done at night when calls for service are not as numerous.

No news on the proposed expansion of the Marine Base until the appropriations bill is voted on by the Senate in September

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