



## **Board Meeting Minutes of the Indian Valley Associates (IVA)**

For meeting held on November 8, 2011

Home of Rodney Bosche, Indian Valley, Novato CA 94947

### **Board Members:**

*Present:* Rodney Bosche, Nita Bruinsslot, Jonell O'Day, Kitty Houghton, Bob Abeling, Monica Brett, Ed Grundstrom, John Isaacs, Craig Knowlton, Sherman Leland, Lynn Perry, Vivian Poole, Barry Sheppard, Bill Stewart, Tom Tharsing, and Ron Witzel. Peter Gruhl sat in as a non-voting IVA member for his wife Vicki Martinez, who was absent.

*Absent:* Gary Frugoli, Vicki Martinez.

*Meeting called to order* at 7:37 pm by President Rodney Bosche.

*Minutes:* Minutes of the June 11 Annual Meeting and of the September 13 Board meeting were approved. There was discussion about whether a spouse of a Board member could act as proxy for an absent Board member. The consensus was yes, but without a vote.

*Treasurer's Report:* Jonell distributed the report dated November 8, 2011. Voluntary contributions, currently at \$213.89, are used to buy flowers for IVA members (ill or bereaved) and to underwrite the electricity costs for the community Nativity Scene. Bills for website development, Chipper Days, and printing which had not yet been submitted at the time of the report will be reflected in the next financial report in early 2012. The Treasurer's report was accepted.

*Road Safety:* Rodney had nothing to report. The CHP was reported to have been ticketing motorists at the entrance to the Open Space on the Indian Valley Fire Road.

*Use Permits/Variances:* Nita had no applications to report.

*Website:* Kitty reported that the website ( [www.indianvalleyhome.org](http://www.indianvalleyhome.org) ) had been updated as requested by the Board, and that webmaster Nancy Niche had submitted her invoices to the Treasurer. Craig confirmed that the website was up to date. A request was made that the webpage detailing the Indian Valley Specific Plan also show the map that goes with it. Kitty relayed the request to the webmaster.

*Chipper Days:* Tom reported that the Autumn Chipper Days on the weekends of Oct. 8-9 and Oct. 15-16 had gone well. Hector Chan of the firm Mr. Arbor did his usual very professional job. As has been the case in the past, some non-chippable material (stumps, logs) was left off to be hauled to the dump by people ignoring or defying posted signs. The total of two bills from Mr. Arbor was \$1,440, to be divided equally for payment between Novato Fire District and IVA. However IVA received \$500 toward the cost of chipping from FireSAFE Marin this fall, thereby reducing its share of the cost to \$220 plus postage and printing. Last spring IVA received \$1,000

from them. FireSAFE Marin has again expressed its appreciation for IVA's management of its brush for disposal twice a year. Rodney remarked that IVA pays less these days for chipping than it did in the past. Of \$1,500 that Novato Fire District budgeted for IVA's chipping work this fiscal year, \$780 remains unspent. Rodney thanked Tom for coordinating the effort, and Bob for having organized the program originally.

***Feathered Nest business on Indian Valley Road:*** In recent weeks Bob had been in contact again with Christy Stanley, Code Enforcement Specialist at the Marin County Community Development Agency, about periodic barn sales at a private residence on Indian Valley Road. Some area residents had raised concerns over the last year about parking along the road and traffic congestion during the events. Another barn sale had taken place at the residence three days earlier, on Sat. Nov. 5. Bob handed out copies of a letter dated October 14 from the proprietor, addressed to Christy Stanley, detailing the history and operation of the events, pointing out their popularity in the neighborhood, and requesting the County's acquiescence in allowing them to continue. The neighbors reportedly like the proprietor, and not everyone thinks the events are a bad thing. Under County regulations, residents can hold up to six garage sales a year.

However critics of the barn sales believe they go beyond the definition of a garage sale and are a retail business. The proprietor reportedly receives samples from vendors and sells them as new merchandise, charges other vendors to sell their merchandise at her event, collects sales tax, and sells food. Critics say the events appear to be a commercial operation that is an extension of an online business. Section 3.1 of the Indian Valley Specific Plan states that there is no commercial activity in the Valley, other than home office-oriented businesses and several horse stables and plant nurseries.

Bob reported that Ms. Stanley had said she would respond to the proprietor's letter, spelling out what the County code does and does not permit. [Note: Bob later reported to the Board by e-mail that Ms. Stanley, upon being asked, had said she had subsequently decided to not respond or take any action.]

***Arroyo-Avichi project:*** Rodney reported on the construction, on Sat. Nov. 5, of a split-rail fence along the Indian Valley Fire Road where it borders the Arroyo-Avichi creek. A volunteer work party consisting of an Eagle Scout candidate and several Boy Scouts and their fathers, and a few local residents, took on the work under the supervision of two Open Space Rangers. The project had been approved and funded by the CSA-20 Open Space Committee for next year and then moved up to early November this year. Rodney, as IVA Board President, and Jonell, IVA Board member and member of the Committee, joined the work crew. Rodney reported that the crew worked very hard. Post holes dug initially the day before in the wrong places had to be re-dug with great effort. Once in place, the fence still lacked several sections, pending delivery of seven more posts in the coming weeks. Bob had been able to negotiate a reduced price for materials from Novato Builders, and Rodney suggested that the senior CSA-20 Committee rep (Gary Frugoli) send a letter of thanks to the company.

There had been some difference of opinion on the IVA Board as to the advisability of going ahead with this project. But the decision had already been made by the CSA-20 Committee and funds had been appropriated by the time those differences surfaced. (All five CSA-20 Committee members are current or former IVA Board members.)

The project selection process starts with technical evaluation of various possible projects by a technical team made up of professional staff working for the County. The projects, once designed, are presented to the Committee for consideration. IVA members can give their input, and the

Committee then votes. In the case of this project, the Committee recommended fencing off an area around the Witzel Bridge to protect small children and animals from falling into the creek, and running a fence along the most fragile segment of land bordering the creek where dirt bikers had worn tracks in the soil, to be followed by replanting of the area between the fence and the creek after the winter rains, to return vegetation to its native state.

**President's Report:** Rodney Bosche had e-mailed Board members before the meeting, suggesting provisional dates for the Annual Board Dinner and the Board Meetings in 2012, and asking everyone to check their calendars and local event schedules to see if there were conflicts. After brief discussion, it was decided that the dinner would be on Tue. Jan. 24 and the Board meetings would be on the dates provided, except for February, when the regular Board meeting would be on a Thu. instead of a Tue. These are the dates:

Tue. 1/24/12 Annual Board Dinner

Thu. 2/16/12 Board Meeting

Tue. 4/10/12 “ “

Tue. 5/8/12 “ “

Sat. 6/9/12 Annual IVA Meeting and BBQ

Tue. 7/10/12 Board Meeting

Tue. 9/11/12 “ “

Tue. 11/13/12 “ “

Tue. 1/24/13 Annual Board Dinner

**Open time:** The following topics were raised, with comments as noted:

- a. City of Novato birthday on Jan. 20, 2012: Not an IVA issue.
- b. Marin County Citizens of the Year nominations: No discussion.
- c. Thanks to Monica for her gestures of concern toward Lloyd Loftus, on behalf of the Board, during his recent indisposition.
- d. A.B. 1103 (State Assembly legislation on affordable housing): Thanks to all for their input. The bill passed in altered form.
- e. Bicycle Coalition: The group is trying to open side trails off the fire road (“single track trails”) to bicyclists. As a coalition, it reportedly has influence. Rodney surveyed users of the fire road informally several months ago on the issue and got mostly opposition to bicycles on side trails, with only two people in favor. Sherman, Monica, and Ron will call a list of those who volunteered earlier to help with a broader survey of the public on this issue.
- f. Nativity Scene: This year's set-up date for the nativity scene on Indian Valley Road at

Bloom Lane is Fri. Nov. 25. The nativity scene is a private initiative by Indian Valley residents. A call for volunteers to come to the pasture at 9 a.m. will be posted on the IVA website. Those able to help lift heavy beams are especially needed. The lease for the rental property where the nativity scene is set up allows for its construction each year in late November. It is taken down in early January.

- g. Emergency preparedness: A list of items that should be in everyone's emergency kit was handed out. Barry suggested such a list be posted on the website. Lynn remarked that a 72 hour kit is particularly important for emergencies requiring immediate evacuation.
- h. Housing: John raised the issue of "high density housing" and said that those advocating it are allied with the bicycle coalition in pushing construction of such housing in Novato. He said Indian Valley residents should be more aware. Rodney said that any action should be taken individually.
- i. List of IV residents: The Board thanked Craig for taking over the task of updating the list of Indian Valley residents and their e-mail addresses.
- j. Cell phone reception: AT&T is reportedly improving its cell phone towers in the area to improve reception in Indian Valley. Peter remarked that individuals can buy a micro-tower to improve reception on their own property.
- k. It was suggested that a few color photos of the Arroyo-Avichi work day be posted on the website. Jonell will e-mail them to the webmaster.
- l. Barry suggested that the Indian Valley Specific Plan be revised, and said that it may not be enforceable. Bob said that it had been revised in 2003 and was not due for revision for another five years. Ed remarked that opening up the IVSP for revision is perilous, and the community would interpret it as it wished no matter how it was written. He said he was willing to review it with Barry.

***Next meeting reminder:*** The next Board meeting will be the Annual Board Dinner on the evening of Tue. January 24, 2012 at Rodney's home.

***Meeting adjourned*** by Rodney at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kitty Houghton, IVA Secretary, November 2011