

**SOLEDAD CANYON HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION (SCHA) GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**  
**Held February 4, 2006, 5:30pm-7:30pm, at the Talavera Substation of Las Alturas Fire Station**

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Meeting called by: SCHA Membership  
Type of Meeting: Pot-Luck Dinner & General Meeting

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Next Regular Meeting: Early May 2006

**I. Greetings and Introduction of New Neighbors**

**II. Thank You's!** To all the folks that participated in the Community Clean-Up (34 kind folks volunteered), to the hardworking members of the Bylaws Committee (Larry Cottingham, John Smith, Joan Scherer, Stephanie Charitonenko, Mike Park, and Karen Perez), and to Larry Cottingham and Gary Aschbacher for helping obtain the entrees and soft drinks for the pot luck dinner, respectively.

**III. Financial Report: Stephanie Charitonenko, SCHA Secretary/Treasurer**  
**Summary of discussion, outcomes, and next steps:**

Stephanie reported that as of the end of 2005, SCHA funds amounted to \$1,599.28 based mainly on receipts of \$30 lifetime membership dues paid by members to date. The balance was virtually unchanged from last quarter except for the addition of \$5.14 in interest. Expenditures expected for the next quarter include \$160 for signage and \$160 for chicken and beef for the Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> pot luck dinner. No other significant expenditures are planned for the first quarter of 2006; however, there is expected to be considerable income to the fund given the SCHA membership's acceptance of the draft Association Bylaws and the receipt of \$25 annual dues from members begins. The annual dues were proposed to allow the Association to purchase additional tables and chairs for the fire station and to allow its members to plan community activities that may require SCHA funds.

**IV. Proposed Tortugas Mountain Park: Gregg Henry, Tortugas Mountain Park Committee Chairperson**  
**Summary of discussion, outcomes and next steps:**

Gregg informed the membership that NASA is withdrawing control of about four sections of land on and around the Mountain that will revert to BLM control. The Tortugas Mountain Park Committee, appointed by Doña Ana County, had announced and listened to interested parties during the last year to gauge what community members would like to see done with the land once it reverts to BLM

control. Based on the input, the Committee is recommending that the county take control of a minimum of 1,280 acres and perhaps up to 1,500 acres, in conjunction with about 500 – 600 acres of NMSU land, to make a regional park. This land and this timing represent a unique opportunity within the greater Las Cruces / Doña Ana County metropolitan area to set aside a large primary significant cultural, historical, and geologic feature, and the related parcels of land, at little or no cost. It will be a wonderful open-space element of the future greater City of Las Cruces. Both the BLM and NMSU agree in principle to the plan and all parties are now waiting to see if the county also agrees. The proposed park would be reserved for activities such as hiking and biking that would have low environmental impact. Other parties are also submitting proposals for different uses of the land. Greg will report back to the SCHA as to what the County Commission decides with respect to holding public hearings to review the proposals later in 2006. To view the Tortugas Mountain Park Committee Proposal or to obtain any other additional information, contact Gregg at [fullcircle@zianet.com](mailto:fullcircle@zianet.com).

**V. Update on the Talavera Flood Area Survey: Al Vickers, SCHA President**

- Objective(s): The Doña Ana County Flood Commission has conducted a flood study of our area and submitted their draft findings to FEMA for review in order to make Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) as accurate as possible. The flood study will impact many residents in our area, by either taking their property out of a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area or placing it in a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area.

- Current Status: The draft findings are also available for public review and comment at the Flood Commission office in Las Cruces. Based on the draft findings, the SCHA compiled a set of 16 questions and submitted these to the Flood Commission. The answers to the questions have been posted on the SCHA website, <http://www.zianet.com/scha/>.

- Next Steps: FEMA and the county will now verify the findings and prepare a preliminary

map **by March 2006**. A notice of the findings will be sent to every property owner in the area. At that time, any person who has scientific data (to be completed by any licensed engineer) that challenges the study finding can submit such data as a challenge to the designation on the map. This challenge period will last for ninety days from the time the preliminary map will be released (TBD). Once all challenges are reviewed and either accepted or rejected, the final map will be drawn and certified.

Once certified, the results will be sent to the banks and mortgage companies that hold mortgage loans. Those companies will notify the home owners that flood insurance is needed to protect their property and the assets of the loan. **It may be beneficial to homeowners that may find themselves in the new FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area to go ahead and obtain flood insurance once the preliminary map is released so as to “grandfather in” lower insurance premiums before the new flood zone designations are finalized.**

#### **VI. Review of Proposed Bylaws and Vote on Changes and Acceptance: Al Vickers, SCHA President**

- Objective(s): Al explained that the SCHA formed a Bylaws Committee in order to study and review the issues involved in formalizing our association. The growth in the community and the constant need to protect our property rights, inform the residents, and respond to changes in the area planned by developers and county government has sparked the interest in this endeavor.

The committee met several times during July-August and drafted the set of By Laws that was disseminated for review by the membership via the SCHA email distribution list and posting at the SCHA website, <http://www.zianet.com/scha/>.

- Current Status: Members discussed the content of the draft bylaws and a Q&A session was held between the membership and several members of the Committee. After some discussion, acceptance of the bylaws “as is” was put to a vote and accepted by the majority. Acceptance of the Bylaws entailed a change in the name of the Association from the SCHA to the Talavera Community Association (TCA). The membership also elected the sitting SCHA officers as interim Talavera Community Association (TCA) officers until the formal

nominating process can be initiated by the next general meeting planned for May 2006.

- Next Steps: Focus in the first quarter of 2006 will be on increasing membership in the new TCA and moving forward on several Association initiatives discussed in this newsletter. To become a TCA member for 2006, the interim Secretary/Treasurer, Stephanie Charitonenko, explained that those interested in joining should make out their check to the Talavera Community Association and send it to her address, 5121 Silver King Rd. Las Cruces, NM 88011. She would then deposit your check in the Association’s bank account and add your name, email and physical addresses to the TCA membership list which will ensure your ability to vote on future TCA activities and issues.

#### **VII. Paul Curry, Doña Ana County Commissioner for District 3, provided an update on several county activities affecting Talavera residents**

- **Bike Lane:** Construction of a bike lane was funded by Doña Ana County was completed in January 2006. The bike lane is not planned to be extended further East on Soledad Canyon Road (toward the mountains) at this time since the funds allocated to the bike lane have been fully utilized.

If members want additional bike lanes to be constructed, they need to petition Mr. Curry or the next County Commissioner for District 3 (to take office in January 2007) since Mr. Curry does not intend to run for another term. Members took the opportunity to thank him for being a friend to our community for so long (6+ yrs) and to wish him the best for the remainder of his term.

- **Dripping Springs Road Repairs:** Doña Ana County has developed a plan with two phases. Phase one involves a temporary repair using fill material from the adjacent dam, and special retaining materials. The county has also requested special State funding for a permanent conduit fix that will cost about \$1.2 million. There is a special fund for this type of maintenance and there is a good chance it will be approved.

However, letters to County Commissioner, Paul Curry, will be helpful as well as letters to our State Senator Lou Rawson and our State Representative Joseph Cervantes. Don’t let them ignore our critical situation. If you want assistance in writing your letter Al Vickers will

be glad to help. He can be contacted at email: [ekvickers@msn.com](mailto:ekvickers@msn.com) or at tel.: 521-1220.

### VIII. Other Matters

• **Formation of SCHA Park Committee:** Paul Curry Development has donated two acres of land adjacent to the fire station to SCHA in order for a public park to be established. A committee has been formed to plan and design the park in order to make it functional by the end of 2006. Volunteers on this committee are needed! Your ideas and time spent on this committee can help make a lasting contribution to the community. Please contact Sue Parry email: [mparry@zianet.com](mailto:mparry@zianet.com) or Al Vickers at tel.: 521-1220 to get involved in this important effort.

• **I-10 Corridor Study:** The I-10 Corridor Study is a high-profile and long-awaited project for the NM Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the residents of southeastern NM. The study will take a look at improving I-10 from I-25 to the TX State Line. It will evaluate the local and regional impacts of such corridor improvements as they relate to NM and TX, and will include the frontage roads adjacent to the interstate and the I-10 interchanges along the corridor to include I-25, NM-404, Vado, and Mesquite.

The I-10 Corridor Study is part of Governor Richardson's Investment Partnership (GRIP) program, a \$1.6 billion statewide transportation expansion and infrastructure improvement

project, and will be led by NMDOT District 1, located in Deming. The study is expected to take approximately a year to complete and at the end, an appropriate and well-defined transportation improvement alternative will be presented. For more information, please visit the website, <http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/main.asp?secid=14648>. This site contains project information, updates, and meeting schedules.

• **Planned Community Yard Sale:** Several members expressed interest in holding another yard sale at the Talavera Substation of Las Alturas Fire Station. Maureen Villmer has volunteered to help organize it for sometime in late February or early March 2006. To get involved, please contact Mrs. Villmer at email: [maureen@thevillmers.com](mailto:maureen@thevillmers.com).

• **Your Comments and Inputs Are Always Appreciated: Stephanie Charitonenko, SCHA Secretary/Treasurer.** Your comments and inputs are appreciated to help make future issues useful to you and inclusive of all the latest community information. If you have suggestions on how to improve newsletter format or content, or you would like to suggest community news items to be included in the next issue (new issues expected every three months, in line with our SCHA meeting schedule), please send them to me at [scharitonenko@chemonics.com](mailto:scharitonenko@chemonics.com). Any corrections are also appreciated.