

MINUTES

**City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE
March 7, 2024**

Meeting Location:

Balboa Park Club Santa Fe Room
2150 Pan American Road West
San Diego, CA 92101

Mailing Address:

Balboa Park Administration Building
2125 Park Boulevard
San Diego, CA 92101-4792

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present

Allison Soares
William Aaron Jr
Howard Blackson
Makeda Cheatom
Chris Eddy
Brer Marsh
Dang Nguyen
Tim Shields
Kathy Vandenheuvel

Members Absent

Molly Chase
Mary McKenzie

Staff Present

Christina Chadwick
Jon Richards
Tyler Canales
Johnny Chou
Victor Johnson

CALL TO ORDER

Allison Soares called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES February 15, 2024

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Marsh / Ms. Vandenheuvel

A motion was made by Mr. Marsh and seconded by Ms. Vandenheuvel to approve the February 15, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion carried (4-0-3).

NON- AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Web Form:

None

In-Person:

Daniele Laman – Discussed upcoming weekend events and traffic/parking effects at Safety and Security meeting. Announced upcoming March HPR lawn programs.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Excited quorum was met and meeting started on time. Considering changing the start time of meeting from 6pm to 4pm. Will be issuing a calendar for rest of 2024.

STAFF REPORT

Christina Chadwick, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation – Announced she will be moving over to the Shoreline/Mission Bay Division. Was a privilege to work in Balboa Park. Introduced Jon Richards as new Deputy Director for Balboa Park.

Jon Richards, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation – Honored to be in this new role. Looking forward to working with everyone. Thanked Christina for her hard work for the past 4 years. Asked for patience during his transition.

Emily Bonner, Council District 3 – The IBA will be holding a budget course on March 28th via Zoom at 5pm. Mobility Department is asking residents for input on the new Mobility Masterplan. Will be a virtual hearing on Zoom on April 4th regarding it.

Michael Bravo, 78th District – 2 bills introduced by Assemblymember Ward were passed. Bills were to help first time homeowners to achieve the American dream. Assemblymember Ward is now the chair of the Housing and Community Development Committee and sitting on several other committees. Have several webinars on their website now.

BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES

Forever Balboa Park – Elizabeth Babcock – The new strategic plan has been completed and uploaded to the website. Completed annual report and that is on the website as well.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – Theresa Wulf – Would like to recognize the work of Parks & Rec on the prioritization framework. Would like to know if there are any families that could benefit from the Community Access Pass Program that ensures those who have obstacles getting the park will be able to get to it. Will be actively advocating for Parks & Rec for safety and security.

Committee of 100 – Ross Porter – Awaiting estimates for the Muni Gym exterior renovation. In a season of blossoming reports and visionary strategies. Eager to share their presentation later in the meeting.

Save Starlight – Steve Stopper – Read a letter welcoming Jon to Balboa Park and looking forward to working on restoring the historic asset.

Spanish Village Arts Foundation – Natasha Papousek – Currently accepting applications to jury artists until March 11. Have ongoing classes on the premises. Doing outreach with different schools.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

Brer Marsh – Working on potential event called “Parkway for a Day.” Proposal is to close SR-163 to stage a festival. Hope is for people experience various interventions or installations. Looking for ideas from the community.

CONSENT ITEM

Item 2. National Carousel Day - Summer Moratorium Waiver Request: Craig Batrez, Vice President of Facilities and Operations, Forever Balboa Park.

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Nguyen/ Ms. Vandenheuvel

A motion was made by Mr. Ngyen and seconded by Ms. Vandenheuvel to approve the consent item. The motion carried unanimously (8-0-0).

DISCUSSION ITEM

Item 1. Environmental Systems Research Institute “ESRI” User Conference Closing Event - Summer Moratorium Waiver Request: Michele Cole, ESRI.

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

Brer Marsh – Inquired on the plan for transportation due to Park Blvd redesign.

Michele Cole (responded) – Work with the City for approval and to minimize impact.

Brer Marsh – Inquired if the bike lane will be closed.

Michele Cole (responded) – They will do whatever the City recommends.

Brer Marsh – Received feedback from the community regarding issues with the bike lane during last year’s event.

Michele Cole (responded) – They will look to minimize any impact from the event.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Would like them to consider making donations to the park.

Michele Cole (responded) – They make donations to many of the museums but will look into it.

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Marsh/ Mr. Aaron Jr.

A motion was made by Mr. Marsh and seconded by Mr. Aaron Jr. to approve the summer moratorium waiver. The motion carried unanimously (8-0-0).

WORKSHOP ITEM

Item 3. Prioritization Framework Consultant: Daniel Payne, Managing Principal AEA Consulting, Laura Zucker, Senior Associate, AEA Consulting.

Public Comment:

Daniele Laman – Wanted clarification on the pie chart of which part was HPR. Asked that the colors be changed for clarity.

Laura Zucker (responded) – Will change colors for clarity.

Committee Comment:

Brer Marsh – The survey missed out on the opportunity to get more information on mobility. Noticed environmental sustainability was not high on the results and believes the message needs to be better translated to the public. It is his top priority.

Laura Zucker (responded) – Made a note. Has noted mobility should be looked at. There should be a mobility/transportation plan, comprehensive lighting plan and seismic report for the park.

Brer Marsh – Would have like to have seen another session at Morley Field- to get North Park feedback.

Laura Zucker (responded) – AEA was contracted for 2 sessions, and they ended up doing 5. There was much representation from North Park at the last session.

Howard Blackson – Inquired if there is anything unique or that stands out from this process.

Laura Zucker (responded) – There are several Departments that have significant decision making and impact on the park.

Howard Blackson – Inquired where they see the prioritization fitting into a vision or plan update and the implementation of the plan.

Laura Zucker (responded) – Need a solid grasp of what the actual Capital projects should be. Having a clear prioritization should help identify the funding needed and make the case for them. Need to update the Master Plan. This project is a bridge to that update.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Thought workshops were great. Appreciated the transparency of the process. Feels conservation of the open space might be missing or is it in another category.

Laura Zucker (responded) – Did not have a specific answer.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Would like to see open space areas covered in the prioritization.

Laura Zucker (responded) – Can look for ways to incorporate it.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Inquired if there was any weight difference between those answer from in-person and Zoom sessions versus the survey and how long survey will be open.

Laura Zucker (responded) – Survey is closed and just looked at who used the park and how. The criteria can continue to be voted on.

Brer Marsh: Feels there could be criteria that covers environmental assets and improving their viability and space.

INFORMATION ITEM

Item 4. Balboa Park/San Diego High School/Downtown San Diego Connections Update:
Michael Stepner, Professor Emeritus of Architecture and Urban Design.

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

Makeda Cheatom – World Beat Center and Centro Cultural De La Raza are the opening to Balboa Park. Liked that the plan included them.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – They are important. They need to be recognized and tied together. Will need staff to take this project and move it forward.

Kathy Vandenhuevel – Loved the history of the project. Wondering if there's an opportunity to connect more to the Golden Hill neighborhood as well.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – Think that is important. Council has raised that issue that everything should be easily connected.

Chris Eddy – An intellectual connection could be made with the park. A class could be put together to connect everything together again.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – High School is looking at ways they can tie into things better as well.

Howard Blackson – Inquired how he envisions the Committee leading this.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – There needs to be a vision and the keepers of the vision is the Committee.

Brer Marsh – The Park feeds into the communities and the communities benefit from the park. Sees plan as a way to expand the influence. Appreciate the approach to the many uses of the park that have developed over the years. Feel there could be more connections in the park and to the communities around as well.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – There are some proposals out there for such things. It's a great time. Lot of good things going on in the park. We'll see where it all goes.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:37 pm

Notice of Next Balboa Park Meeting: April 11, 2024
6:00 P.M.
In-Person

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Canales
District Manager