

MINUTES

City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE
July 6, 2017

Meeting Location:

Balboa Park Club
2150 Pan American Road
San Diego, CA 92101

Mailing Address:

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

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present

Victoria Curran
Kenneth Davenport – Vice
Chair
Katherine Johnston – Chair
Andrew Kahng
Luanne Kanzawa
David Kinney – Chair
James Lawson
Don Liddell
Dang Nguyen
Johanna S. Schiavoni
Rob Steppke (arr. 6:17 p.m.)

Members Absent

Amy Bernal
Micah Parzen

Staff Present

Susan Lowery-Mendoza
Mario Llanos

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Johnston called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2017

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED MS. SCHIAVONI/MR. KAHNG

A motion was made by Ms. Schiavoni and seconded by Mr. Kahng to approve the May 4, 2017 meeting minutes as presented. The motion was unanimously approved (8-0-2) Ms. Johnston and Mr. Lawson abstaining.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES – None

NON AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Efron Castillo inquired about the property tax that the Zoo receives from the City of San Diego and the dirt bike trails on the SR 163 slope.

Daniele Laman reported on the Safety and Security committee meeting held today; officers were elected; park rangers are updating the radios used in the park; and people are living inside the columns the Cabrillo Bridge. The House of Pacific Relations has written to Councilmember Ward and the Park and Recreation Director requesting a one year curfew at the cottage area during construction. She also noted upcoming events.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Katherine Johnston introduced herself, has ten years in public affairs; is currently the Senior Vice President of the Downtown Partnership; and worked in the Mayor's Office on Balboa Park issues, which is why she is interested in this work.

STAFF REPORT

City Council Third District, Molly Chase – Chief of Staff, reported the following:

- Congratulated Katherine on her appointment.
- Councilmember Ward will be joining the Friends of Balboa Park at National Carousel Day.
- The Balboa Park Working group in May identified priorities in the park. The next meeting will be on August 1, 2017 at the San Diego Museum of Art.
- As Vice-Chair of the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, Councilmember Ward is excited about the hiring of Gordon Walker as the organization's new CEO.
- Pleased that the arts and culture funding was restored.
- Councilmember Ward will be walking in the San Diego Pride Parade.

Susan Lowery-Mendoza, District Manager, Balboa Park Facilities and Special Events, reported the following:

- The City is coming to end of the Elevator Modernization CIP Project for Balboa Park. Elevators have been brought up to current standards at the Casa de Balboa, Casa del Prado, SD Museum of Man, and the SD Air and Space Museum. The final project is at the SD Museum of Art which is nearing completion.
- The Marston House Roof replacement project is expected to be complete in later part of September.
- Our summer activities are well underway. Twilight in the Park – our free summer concert series features a wide array of musical genres is happening every Tuesday – Thursday from 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. through August. The Ice Cream Social and concert will held on August 24 starting at 5:30 p.m. and is sponsored by the Friends of Balboa Park.
- Our Dept. is sponsoring movies all summer long in the City of San Diego parks. The next movies to be shown at Morley Field in Balboa Park will be on Saturday, July 29 featuring “The Lego Batman Movie” and on Saturday August 26, “Rogue One: A Star Wars Story.”
- The Spreckels Organ Society is hosting the International Organ Festival on Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m. The search committee for the next Civic Organist and the Artistic Director of the Spreckels Organ Society is continuing.
- Upcoming large special events:
 - July 8 - Patrons of the Prado in the Spreckels Organ Pavilion
 - July 13 – ESRI – end of conference party – Botanical Building Lawns and El Prado
 - July 15 – 16 – LGBT Pride Festival and Parade – South of El Prado on the West Mesa

Mario Llanos, District Manager, Balboa Park Operations, reported the following:

- Recently, the City of San Diego received a number of inquiries regarding three dogs that suddenly passed away after recently attending Grape Street Dog Park. Initial word spread that the dogs may

have died as a result of poisoning, perhaps due to fertilizer or pesticides that were applied at the park or at the Balboa Park Golf Course driving range nearby. The City of San Diego DOES NOT fertilize or spray chemicals in any proximity to Grape Street Dog Park. The City is aware of the potential hazards to dogs who may ingest fertilizer or pesticides, and for that reason does not use chemicals at the dog park. The driving range that touches the park also does not fertilize. Staff continues to make visual inspections of Grape Street Dog Park on a regular basis and is on alert to investigate anything or anyone that might be suspicious in the area.

- Park and Recreation staff will be working with the BP Conservancy to plant 500 trees over the next two years as part of a Cal Fire Grant the Conservancy applied for. Sites and trees selections have been made and we hope begin planting soon.
- Rangers Report: SDPD and Park Ranger will begin conducting transient enforcement details in next couple weeks throughout the park from 8pm-midnight. PD and Ranger sweeps continued in June on Thursdays, during the day, primarily in Florida Canyon. This month they will resume at night targeting the Central and West Mesa. Rangers who come in at 6 AM have been clearing transients down El Prado and in the Arcades first thing in the morning.

BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES

Balboa Park Conservancy

Mr. Tomas Herrera-Mishler reported the following:

- Welcomed Katherine Johnston
- Morgan Fox, a Conservancy staff member and his daughters have safely returned from Mexico today
- The tree inventory is well underway in the West Mesa and 1200 trees have been geo referenced
- The Cultural Landscape Report underway and are finding that the West Mesa is really intact from its original design
- Economic Impact and Benefits Study was commissioned by the SDSU Payne School
- A stakeholder meeting on September 13, 2017 to review results in the Ballroom from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
- Cal Fire Grant which will bring 500 trees to the Park also includes Tree San Diego involvement
- Food Truck Fridays has evolved with programming in the Plaza de Panama and institutions wanting to share what they do with attendees.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership

Mr. Peter Comiskey shared the following:

- Applications are now open for 2017 Balboa Park Sustainability Awards recognizing BPCP member organizations for implementing innovative sustainability projects. The awards breakfast, held on October 26 is open to all Park stakeholders.
- BPCP received a grant from San Diego County Water Authority and San Diego Gas & Electric to install high-efficiency water fixtures in our member institutions. Through this effort 48 urinals, 155 toilets, and 162 flow control valves will be installed at various buildings throughout Balboa Park by July 31, saving an estimated 2.4 million gallons of water annually.
- Over six organizations and 50 team members will participate in the San Diego Pride Parade on Saturday, July 15.

- The Balboa Park Learning Institute is proud to announce the 7th Annual Smith Leadership Symposium – Wednesday, September 6 at The San Diego Museum of Art. This year's topic will focus on social responsibility and civic engagement.
- Over 800 team members joined us at the 4th Annual One Park – One Team Summer Kickoff! Thank you to our generous host, The Old Globe.
- BPCP would like to thank both the Norris Foundation and Wells Fargo Foundation for their support of the Community Access Pass program. BPCP is now working with over 65 non-profit partners to provide free annual family passes to those who are at risk, traditionally underserved or economically disadvantaged.
- We have also distributed our first round of 500 military Appreciation passes. This program was recently featured on CBS 8 – our thanks to the Downing Family Foundation for their support of the Military Appreciation program.
- Maker Faire returns October 7-8, 2017

Committee of 100

No report

Friends of Balboa Park

Mr. John Bolthouse shared the following:

- Congratulations to Katherine on her appointment
- Recognized George Hardy as new leader of their Board of Directors
- Tom Scott's life will be celebrated this Sunday at 11:00 a.m. at the Administration Building's Courtyard
- Announce the Friends purchase of the Balboa Park Carousel, thanked City departments for their assistance
- Celebrate National Carousel Day will be held on July 25 with a press conference, start of the capital campaign and offering free rides and entertainment for the public
- Proud to partner with Park and Recreation on the blue landmark signs. The Ford Building and Zoro Garden signs are being installed next.
- Two of the Information Kiosks have been updated, including the map
- Another project they are working on is replacement of the speakers at the California tower
- Offering special thanks to Steve Stopper with the Save Starlight organization. He has been helping with many projects as sound engineer in the Park.
- Emerging Young Leaders of Balboa Park nominations are being sought – more information on their website.

ACTION ITEMS

Consent

None

Adoption

201. None

Special Events

301. None

WORKSHOP ITEMS

401. None

INFORMATION ITEMS

501. Establishing a Noise Buffer and Decibel Limit on the West Mesa

Susan Lowery-Mendoza provided the history of the formation of the West Mesa Subcommittee of the Balboa Park Committee and its purpose which is to advise the Balboa Park Committee on issues within the boundaries of the West Mesa. The Subcommittee produced a report entitled, "Balboa Park Special Events on 6th Avenue and the West Mesa," which identifies issues and made recommendation regarding events. Several events identified were brought back to the Balboa Park Committee for review, which has been the practice since.

Don Liddell noted that the Subcommittee operates quietly and effectively with a focus on the neighborhood and the park, added eyes and ears to the community to bring forward recommendations to staff. This information item is to inform the Committee of the noise element included in the Uptown Community Plan adopted last November, and addressed very specifically as noise is the biggest concern regarding Park events, in addition to parking and litter. A recommendation within the plan is to establish a buffer zone in the park to buffer the noise impact away from 6th Avenue. There are many details to be worked out and data to be gathered by the City.

Leo Wilson, a 6th Avenue resident and member of the Subcommittee and Chair of the Uptown Planners stated that they have a serious problem with noise and have been addressing it event by event which doesn't work so event producers need guidelines to follow so that there can be a good neighbor policy. The 50 foot buffer zone east of 6th Avenue came out the need for the noise level not to exceed 65 decibels at the street and will remedy many of the noise issues. It was approved unanimously by the Uptown Planners. Hoping this comes back for adoption.

Danny Piper, a 6th Avenue resident stated that over the years, the amount of discomfort and noise levels from events is unbearable. Thanked Don Liddell for being a champion of the issue.

Jay Newington, a 6th Avenue resident and founding member of the Metro CDC and a member of the West Mesa Subcommittee and on the board of Uptown Planners. Spoke to the document that was approved by the Balboa Park Committee of which a part of it became part of the Community Plan. This language needs to be included as there is no way for event organizers to get the information.

Brian Scheoenfisch, Program Manager, Planning Department thanked the West Mesa Subcommittee and the Uptown Planners for their work. The letter distributed by Jeff Murphy, Planning Director outlined staff's position which is that the noise policies in the Uptown Community Plan are to supplement the ordinance and extensive process already in place for special events. Events undergo a thorough application and permit process. The regulations are in place and new permits or regulations are not needed.

Committee Comments:

- Asked for clarification about Planning Department's interpretation that no new language is needed.
- Have large events been required to do the 50 foot set-back? (staff responded that they have not been required to do so)

- The committee doesn't review every event every year so implementing on a case by case basis is problematic
- There are maximum noise allowances already listed for park permits. (Does not apply to events with a Special Event Permit)
- Inquired as to what the maximum noise levels can be?

Chair Johnston noted that the item will be placed on the next agenda as a workshop item for further discussion.

502. Moreton Bay Fig Viewing Platform Conceptual Drawing

John Bolthouse, Executive Director of the Friends of Balboa Park introduced Pat Caughy, Vice-Chair of the Friends, Landscape Architect and Project Lead for this exciting project, working in collaboration with Park and Recreation Department and a local philanthropist. Mr. Caughy noted that we have a signature specimen of a Moreton Bay Fig Tree located near the Natural History Museum which was fenced off due to foot traffic. The plan is to bring people closer to the tree and protect the tree itself by way of installation of an elevated, circular deck covering about one fourth of the tree circumference and include interpretive signage.

Committee Comments:

- Why only one quarter of the circumference? (Makes the tree the focus, not the deck)
- Will lighting be included (yes, has a great opportunity to do so)
- Inquired what the average lifespan of the tree is (150 years)

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

601. Land-Use and Policy – Chair Johnston would like to bring this committee back and asked staff for a list of those interested in serving.

602. West Mesa Subcommittee – No Report

COMMITTEE MEMBER'S REPORTS –

West Mesa Subcommittee – None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: Thursday, September 7, 2017
6:00 P.M.
Balboa Park Club
2150 Pan American Road West
San Diego, CA 92101

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowery-Mendoza
District Manager