

MINUTES

City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE
February 4, 2021

Meeting Location:
Online Meeting

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

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present

William Aaron (arr. 6:21pm)
Victoria Curran
Vicki Granowitz
Katherine Johnston - Chair
Luanne Kanzawa
Don Liddell
Dang Nguyen
Micah Parzen
Johanna S. Schiavoni

Members Absent

Sarah Dawe
Kenneth Davenport – Vice Chair

Staff Present

Kristina Peralta
Christina Chadwick
Charles Daniels
Mario Llanos
Susan Lowery-Mendoza

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Johnston called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and read the statement listed on the agenda. This Committee meeting will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the California Executive Order 29-20 which suspends certain requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 20, 2021

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED MS. GRANOWITZ / MS. KANZAWA

A motion was made by Ms. Granowitz and seconded by Ms. Kanzawa to approve the January 20, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried (7-0-1) with Ms. Curran abstaining.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES – None

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Daniele Laman – Questioned why safety and security for Balboa Park did not make the cut from the seven originally presented categories to the four under current consideration when clearly it is a priority with the public.

Arlan Arnsten – Has noticed that the Date Palm and Canary Island Palm trees around San Diego and the Park are being stricken by this infestation. Is the park operation department being proactive towards protecting the existing palms in the park?

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT - None

STAFF REPORT -

Codi Vierra – City Council Third District – No report
Assistant Deputy Director Christina Chadwick -No report
Balboa Park District Manager Susan Lowery-Mendoza- No report
Balboa Park District Manager Mario Llanos- No report

BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES

Balboa Park Conservancy – No report
Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – No report
Committee of 100 – No report
Friends of Balboa Park – No report
Save Starlight – No Report

ACTION ITEMS

Consent

101. None

Adoption

201. None

Special Events

301. None

WORKSHOP ITEMS

401. Balboa Park Mall Walkway Improvements Workshop. Presenter: Charles Daniels, Park Designer, Parks and Recreation, City of San Diego.
Mr. Daniels stated that he is asking for feedback regarding pedestrian improvements between the Plaza de Panama and the Organ Pavilion in the Mall area. Current conditions are poor for pedestrian access along the west side of Pan American Road and the cross slopes are steep. He provided some photos of the area and the alignment of the walkways. The construction at the Mingei Museum is prompting thoughts of a new walkway along Pan American Rd. and the Alcazar Parking Lot access road for connection to the Palm Canyon walkway and to abandon or remove an existing sidewalk connecting the two driveways leading in and out of the Alcazar Parking lot.

Community Comments:

- How do you walk to the Organ Pavilion? (noted the route from Alcazar Garden and the Mingei Museum)
- The collection of presentations at this meeting tonight are incredible. The amount of thinking of care for the park is evident.

- The blind curve coming in and out of the Alcazar lot creates a danger for pedestrians who are crossing there
- Like the alternatives presented
- Are there ADA parking spaces in Alcazar lot with signage for an accessible route? (yes)
- Recommend removal of sidewalk in the median – blind corner

Committee Comments:

- Thanked Charlie and inquired about wheelchair access on the new walkway improvements (path of travel along Pan American Rd. is accessible)
- Think idea is great – a vast improvement

INFORMATION ITEMS

501. Balboa Park Walk Up Vaccination Site at Municipal Gym. Presenters: Kristina Peralta, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Neighborhood Services Branch, City of Diego and Christopher Heiser, Deputy Fire Chief, San Diego Fire-Rescue, City of San Diego.

Ms. Peralta noted that she is excited about the progress made with Parks and Recreation staff assistance this last week to establish a vaccination site at the Municipal Gymnasium. She introduced Chief Heiser, San Diego Fire Rescue who noted that since we started on Tuesday, over 900 individuals aged 65 and older and those receiving their second does under Group 1A tier 1- 3 have been vaccinated at the Municipal Gymnasium to date. He is looking forward to increasing the numbers while minimizing the impacts to the park. It was a critical event for the City, and he thanked all involved for the support.

502. “One Voice” Experience Plan for the Balboa Park Cultural District. Presents: Dr. Stephen Snyder, President and Chief Executive Officer – Fleet Science Center and Makeda Cheatom, Founder and Executive Director, Worldbeat Cultural Center.

Dr. Snyder presented the concept which was formed over a year ago. Everyone has a different idea of what the park is and when the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership is asked about the park means to them, it is the cultural district defined by the exposition spaces which were designed within a park. The experience at the expositions was a thoughtful, singular experience. When they closed, each individual organization in the park took their own approach which has caused some issues or constructive interference because there is no overall plan. For a guest in the park, it is one experience. We need to view what occurs in the park as one experience by using the park assets creatively to achieve more with this One Voice Plan. Some examples were given such as looking at where entertainers are placed, where and what kind of food service is available, and food truck events collaborating with museums. He introduced Makeda Cheatom who wished everyone a happy Black History Month and reviewed their board lead IDEA initiative (inclusion, diversity, equity and access) planning which will provide strength to the One Voice Plan to ensure that all feel welcome in the park and the culture in our bi-national region is inclusive. Music, art and dance are vehicles to celebrate all cultures. We will embrace our differences and plan incredible cultural experiences for all San Diegans.

Dr. Snyder announced that there will be other briefings and asked for feedback if it is something to be pursued with further engagement?

Committee Comments:

- Great idea – what is the timeline? (continue meeting and developing a process and scope, fundraising and RFP)
- Excited about the idea, about time

- Coordinating with the Framework and excited about engagement with young people and diverse populations
- Unique and different experiences are valued
- The park needs a curated experience, especially for food and how they get to the park, move through the park, how to experience it. How to improve the park experience and in an inclusive way is important and the effort is to be commended.
- Lovely PowerPoint presentation – please make available for viewing

503. SDG&E and SDMA Utility Box Beautification. Presenters: Morgan Justice Black, Community Relations Manager, San Diego Gas and Electric and Kari Kovach, COO at San Diego Museum of Art.

Ms. Kovach presented the partnership and the described the Young Art Program which is in its 46th year. A juried exhibition of artwork from San Diego County students' grades K-12 will take place starting March 26 and the theme is My World, Our Planet focusing on the environment and sustainability with inspiration from the Museum's permanent collection. The pandemic has shifted focus to bringing art outdoors. In partnership with SDG&E, utility boxes from Balboa Park to Chicano Park are being chosen. A digital map will be created for a walking tour. Ms. Justice Black stated that they are creating a tour route of 25 utility boxes and a few in the Cultural core of Balboa Park from Roosevelt Middle School through East Village to Chicano Park where art can be appreciated and supported. SDG&E builds community partnership through these types of programs.

Community Comments:

- Brilliant project using the professionals at the San Diego Museum of Art
- Could be tied into the Experience Plan and artwork to reflect the history of the area of the park where it is located

Committee Comments:

- Will the utility boxes be in the historic areas of the park? (anticipate that most locations will be between Park Blvd. and the Prado – will work with Parks and Recreation on the locations)
- Good example of Park Masterplan goals
- Utility box near the Japanese Friendship Garden is graffitied often and would benefit from artwork application
- Fun and interesting project and bringing art outside to the public is wonderful

504. Shared Mobility Device Corral Locations in Balboa Park. Presenter: Mario Llanos, District Manager, Parks and Recreation, City of San Diego.

Mario Llanos reported that the park is one of the only locations in the City without identified corral locations. Allysa Muto, Director of the Mobility Department and some representatives from the scooter companies are also in attendance tonight. He shared some statistics on scooter use in the park with more than 140,000 total trips ending in the park in 2019. He described the corral sizes and where the concentrations of riders are in the park. Staff identified possible corral locations in those areas which will help get some control where scooters are being staged. He presented a map of the park with corral locations and it is hoped that riders will park in the corrals, then walk through the park. He asked for input on the locations from park stakeholders as this is a planning starting point.

Ms. Muto stated that this is a good effort taking into consideration viewpoints in the park, to provide order while working with the operators to figure out solutions.

Community Comments:

- Thanks to Mario for identifying and acting on this need to provide practical solutions to address the scooter litter which is creating visual blight. Due to the upsurge in unregulated street vending, some locations may not produce the desired results. Will discuss locations with members and provide input.
- Possible location is at the Zoo entrance and in front of the Air and Space Museum

Committee Comments:

- The Experience Plan can be helpful providing direction with both the scooters and artwork project to allow for integration and guidance in the park in to create a wholistic experience

SUB-COMMMITTEE REPORTS

- 601. Land-Use and Policy – No report
- 602. West Mesa Subcommittee – No report

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' REPORTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: Thursday, March 4, 2021
6:00 P.M.
Online Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowery-Mendoza
District Manager