

MINUTES

City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE

February 4, 2010

Meeting held at:

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

Mailing address is:

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

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present

Laurie Burgett
Vicki Granowitz
Andrew Kahng
David Kinney
Don Liddell
Mike McDowell
Rob Steppke
Donald Steele

Members Absent

Jeri Dilno
Mick Hager
Michael Singleton

Staff Present

Kathleen S. Hasenauer
Stephen Hill
Susan Lowery-Mendoza
Bruce Martinez

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Granowitz called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

Agenda Items 203 and 501 were re-ordered to be heard after the Cultural Partnership Program Updates.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MSC IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 7, 2010 MEETING WITH THE FOLLOWING CORRECTIONS;

- 1) Page 4, Cultural Partnership updates, December Nights, change \$80,000.00 to \$800,000.00 in free admissions.
- 2) Page 5, Item 301 – Motion, remove the words, “THE MOTION FAILED.”
(KINNEY/STEELE 5-0-3) ABSTENSION: McDOWELL/STEBPKE/LIDDELL.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES

Susan Lowery-Mendoza noted a request to continue Item 202.

NON AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

None

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

Chairperson Vicki Granowitz reported the following:

- Ms. Granowitz thanked staff for placing the Jones and Jones report on Land Use, Parking and Circulation back on the web page

- She also thanked Charles Daniels for placing all land use documents on the Park and Recreation Department web site.

STAFF REPORT

Stephen Hill, City Council Third District representative reported the following:

- Mr. Hill thanked members for coming out to Councilmember Gloria's State of the District Address last Monday and also thanked Lou Spisto for hosting the event at the Old Globe. The address can be found on the Council District 3 web site.
- Mr. Hill read several highlights of a report addressing affordable housing.
- The Balboa Park Alcohol Policy is scheduled to be heard at the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee meeting on February 17, 2010.

Kathleen S. Hasenauer, Deputy Director, Developed Regional Parks reported the following:

- Ms. Hasenauer reported on the significant storm damage to the urban forestry of Mission Bay Park and Balboa Park. Staff responded and did a phenomenal job getting the fallen trees cut-up and removed from the parks.

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

- Circus Vargas is now operating in the lower Inspiration Parking Lot through February 15.
- The San Diego Lunar New Year Tet Festival will be held February 19 – 21 at the corner of Park Blvd. and President's Way.
- Ms. Lowery-Mendoza stated staff is processing a permit by the Veteran's Museum and Memorial Center to bring the Dignity Memorial Vietnam Wall Exhibit to the Park. The wall will be on display at the foot of the Park Administration Building lawn from April 9 – 11, 2010.
- The Park and Recreation Department's Civic Dance Arts "Company" Program opens their show, Dance with the Masters, tomorrow evening and runs through Sunday, February 21 at the Casa del Prado Theater. It showcases the highest level of dancers in the program.

Bruce Martinez, Balboa Park Grounds Maintenance and Operations District Manager reported the following:

- Mr. Martinez reported that due to the storms in January the Park lost or had significant damage to approximately twenty-four (24) trees in Balboa Park. Mr. Martinez stated the park lost a specimen tree, an Atlas Cedar and Torrey Pine, on the West Mesa. As stated previously, staff is making every effort to plant trees in locations where trees were lost. In the occurrence where the tree was a specimen tree, staff will resolve to replace it with the same or equivalent category of tree.
- The vandalism at the Marston House continues and an arrest was made by the San Diego Police Department. It was hoped that the arrest of a suspect would reduce the problem and for a short period of time it did. However, this weekend there was another occurrence of vandalism. The most recent vandalism seemed to correlate with the release of the suspect arrested earlier in the month. Mr. Martinez stated he believes it is just a matter of

time before we get significant evidence in the case that will bring this to an end. In the meantime City staff is seeking a Stay Away Order through the court system.

- Mr. Martinez thanked Dr. Michael Hager, Dr. Exequiel Ezcurra and the San Diego Natural History Museum staff for their assistance in helping Balboa Park and the loss of our Guadalupe Cypress tree. Park staff was able to ascertain approximately four hundred (400) rare Guadalupe Cypress seeds donated to the Kate Sessions Nursery will be propagated and planted in Balboa Park. This is an extremely rare plant that is endangered in the wild. It is hoped to eventually replace the tree we lost on the West Mesa and locate additional areas within the Park to start new groves. This endeavor will take us approximately three years before any of the propagated trees will be ready to transplant.

CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM UPDATES

David Kinney reported the following:

- The Museum of San Diego History is changing its name to the San Diego History Center.
- He encouraged all to attend, “Viva Mexico” at the Mingei International Museum.

ACTION ITEMS

Consent

101. None.

Adoption

201. Requesting a letter of support for the Banker’s Hill/Park West and Uptown Planners stop sign proposal.

Ms. Granowitz reported that at the last meeting, she provided a memorandum dated December 16, 2009 by Councilmember Faulkner regarding proposed traffic control measures and Mr. Liddell is keeping the Committee up to date on the work of the Bankers Hill/Park West. The Committee asked last month to bring this item forward as an action item so that staff could write a letter of support to the Mayor and Councilmember.

MSC IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO HAVE THE COMMITTEE WRITE A LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THE ACTION BY COUNCILMEMBER FAULKNER, ENDORSING THE MEMORANDUM OF DECEMBER 16, 2009 FROM COUNCILMEMBER FAULKNER TO MAYOR SANDERS REGARDING NEEDED TRAFFIC CONTROL MEASURES. (LIDDELL/BURGETT 8-0-0).

202. House of Hungary proposal to install Sandor Marai monument – Item continued.

203. Balboa Park 2015 Centennial Projects- Charles Daniels, Requesting Balboa Park Committee Endorsement of additions to the Fiscal Year 2010 Capital Improvements Program.

Ms. Stacey LoMedico, Park and Recreation Director, introduced Iris Strauss, Mayor Sanders' Arts and Culture Special Projects Liaison. Ms. Strauss stated that the Mayor identified the restoration of the Plaza de Panama project in his State of the City Address, a signature project that will be the centerpiece of the 2015 Centennial of the Park. She asked the Committee to endorse the proposed CIP addition which will fund the project. The Mayor is providing leadership to get the job done and the City will work with all stakeholders.

Ms. LoMedico introduced Charles Daniels as the Project Manager who will follow the project through completion in 2014. The Park and Recreation Department will have assistance from the Engineering Department and she explained that this is the first public meeting regarding the project. The Committee is being asked to support the project in concept so that it can move forward to the City Council and become part of the 2010 Capital Improvement Program, which allows funds to be raised. There are three projects; the restoration of the Plaza de Panama, the park tram system and an annual allocation for a host of different projects to bring back historical elements to the buildings. The restoration of the Plaza de Panama has been endorsed by many studies over the years and has strong support. The projects are to be financed private and public funding and are expected to use no general fund monies.

Charles Daniels, Park Designer, presented information via a power point presentation on the scope of the proposed projects including the restoration of the Plaza de Panama, the implementation of an improved park tram and parking management program. The second addition to the CIP will be an annual allocation to fund a variety of projects to further enhance the historical and cultural fabric of the park. The Plaza de Panama restoration is estimated to cost \$5 – 6 million and the goal is to have it completed by 2014. The park tram system improvements will address the need for an intra-park tram system for park patrons, staff and volunteers. The total estimated cost for this project is \$3-4 million, including the purchase of new tram vehicles. The Committee will be asked at a later date for input on the type of tram vehicles to be used. The annual allocation projects will restore and reconstruct historic features that have been lost throughout the park over the last 100 years and he gave some examples of such features. The estimated cost of the various example projects is between \$100,000 and \$2 million. He then reviewed the next steps if the projects are approved in concept by the Committee.

Public Comment:

- Kathy Keehan, Executive Director of the San Diego County Bicycle Coalition, stated that they support a pedestrian and bike friendly space in the Park. She encouraged all to think bigger and support a more calm space like Central Park and provide bike and pedestrian access only during certain times of the week.
- Dan Allen, former member of the Park and Recreation Board presented a historic photo showing the Plaza de Panama surface as gravel or soil. He questioned the cost of the project being \$6 million.

Committee Comments:

- Reported pleasure that Mayor Sanders and staff is working on this big project
- It was asked that Mr. Daniels to confirm the process and the need for significant public input and outreach to the stakeholders.
- Inquired about the re-location of parking spaces
- The need for sensitivity towards the institutions and lessees who will be impacted
- The need for public workshops for input
- Is it possible to restore the Plaza de Panama without implementing the tram system

MSC IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE CONCEPT AS PRESENTED (STEELE/KINNEY 8-0-0).

Special Events

301. Circo Atayde USA – John Whitfield, Sho Management, Inc.

It was noted that Mr. Whitfield was not in attendance. This item was carried from last month. Mark Landon of Circus Vargas requested to speak regarding this agenda item. He noted that Circus Vargas opened this evening, is in their 41st year and has been a good tenant in the Park. He noted that having another circus show just prior to Circus Vargas would lower their attendance. Circus animals should also be a consideration when reviewing circuses because they more than likely will be housed in the parking lot even if they are not allowed in the show at Balboa Park.

MSC IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED AND CARRIED TO DENY THE REQUEST BY CIRCO ATAYDE, USA DUE TO HAVING TWO CIRCUSES ONE MONTH APART FROM EACH OTHER AND CONCERNS ABOUT THE HOUSING OF ANIMALS. IT WAS RECOMMENDED TO FIND A LOCATION OUTSIDE OF THE PARK. (STEELE/McDOWELL 8-0-0).

302. Rock'n'Roll Half Marathon- Bruce Walton and Elizabeth Cox, Competitor Group, Inc.

Susan Lowery-Mendoza noted that staff is in support of the addition of the Half Marathon component and route change as it will allow for better parking lot access so that Park impacts are reduced.

Bruce Walton introduced Elizabeth Cox who reviewed the event narrative and course map which allows for north-bound traffic on Park Boulevard and access to the Organ Pavilion and other lots as well. The event has continued for thirteen years and they expect 18,000 runners in the half marathon and 6,500 runners for the full marathon. The event begins at 6th Avenue and Palm Street at 6:30 AM using a waive start to release 1,000 runners at a time. It will take approximately forty-five (45) minutes to start all of the runners. There are two proposed band sites in the park, at Zoo Drive and Park Boulevard and at Park Boulevard and President's Way. It is expected that the park will be clear of runners and all roads opened by 9:05 AM.

Committee Comments:

- Noise complaints were received last year regarding the orientation of speakers from the bands playing.
- It was questioned if funds are coming back to Balboa Park? The Park should benefit through a donation.
- The event is important to the tourist industry and is on a traditionally slow weekend.
- The Committee thanked Mr. Walton for meeting to discuss impacts, particularly for Park employees and for incorporating suggestions.
- Committee would like to see access to the Alcazar lot after 7:30 AM. if possible
- When all arrangements finalized, Mr. Kinney can help to get the word out for access by Park employees.
- The closures can also be placed on the balboapark.org website.
- The Zoo still has concerns about getting some staff in to work.

MSC IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL AS SUBMITTED AND RECOMMENDED BY STAFF. (McDOWELL/KINNEY 8-0-0).

WORKSHOP ITEMS

401. None

INFORMATION ITEMS

501. Sewer Lining – State Route 163 Corridor – Dirk Smith, Public Utilities Department

Dirk Smith, Project Assistant with Public Utilities Department provided information on a sewer lining project along State Route 163 that stretches as far north as Washington Street and south to “A” Street. The lining process, rather than replacement will save time and expense. There is a proposed traffic control plan which breaks the project into four stages with 24 hour closures and they have applied for a permit through Caltrans.

Committee Comments:

- Sewer lining is done all of the time and is a solid technology.
- Will the project be completed by May 31, a busy time of the year in the Park?
- Public outreach needs to be a part of the project, closure and alternative routes posted and reported in all forms of media
- Try to avoid closures during large Park events.
- Asked for an update at the March meeting and asked staff to include update as part of their monthly report.
- There are impacts beyond Balboa Park.
- Mr. Kinney can post closures on the balboapark.org website.

SUB - COMMITTEE REPORT

601. Land-Use and Policy – None

602. West Mesa Subcommittee of the Balboa Park Committee

Don Liddell reported that they are working with staff to place a few benches along Sixth Avenue. They are also looking at the issues regarding special events as they relate to the entire Park.

COMMMITTEE MEMBERS REPORT

- Andrew Kahng noted the dissatisfaction of several user groups with the new Special Use Permit fee being back dated
- Laurie Burgett is working with the Greater Golden Hill group regarding the Florida Canyon proposals and deferring to what the Committee recommended.
- Vicki Granowitz noted a comment at the Land Use and Housing Committee regarding the stopping of mail delivery on Grape Street due to dog biting issues.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Granowitz adjourned the meeting at 7:55P.M.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, March 4, 2010
6:00 P.M.
Balboa Park Club, Santa Fe Room
2150 Pan American Road
San Diego, CA 92101

Respectfully submitted

Susan Lowery-Mendoza
District Manager