

# MINUTES

**City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board  
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE  
June 6, 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  
Makeda Cheatom  
Chris Eddy  
Dang Nguyen  
Michael Robinson  
Tim Shields  
Kathy Vandenheuvel

**Members Absent**

Molly Chase  
Howard Blackson  
Mary McKenzie

**Staff Present**

Jon Richards  
Tyler Canales  
Victor Johnson

**CALL TO ORDER**

Allison Soares called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES May 2, 2024**

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

A motion was made by Ms. Vandenheuvel and seconded by Mr. Nguyen to approve the May 2, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion carried (4-0-2).

**NON- AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT**

Web Form:

None

In-Person:

Daniele Laman – Announced the House of Israel lawn program on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Thanked staff for working on safety and security in the park.

Mike Singleton – In support of the roundabout at 6<sup>th</sup> Ave that will be presented, but believes there are issues that will come from it that need to be better analyzed.

**CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT**

Recognized William “Bill” Aaron Jr who passed away in May and had served on the Balboa Park Committee.

**STAFF REPORT**

Emily Bonner, Council District 3 – Another Budget Committee meeting was added on June 7th. Full vote of the budget will be on June 11th.

Michael Bravo, 78<sup>th</sup> District – None

Jon Richards, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation – Will be sending out updates electronically.

**BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES**

Forever Balboa Park – New welcome signs installed in 4 locations. 4 more signs with park maps will be installed soon. New irrigation and plant identification signs were installed at the Kate Session Cactus Garden. California Conservation Corps has been hired to redo north pathway down to the Cactus Garden.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – Peter Comiskey – Just got back from Cultural District Conference. Encouraged attendance at Budget Meetings to advocate for Parks and Recreation and Arts and Culture. Requests Special Events taking place in the park reach out to BPCP as part of the application process.

Committee of 100 – None

Save Starlight – Steve Stopper – None.

Village Arts & Education Foundation – Frank Casciani – Summer camps are full and looking into expanding registration. 3 of 5 camp scholarships have been given.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT**

None

**CONSENT ITEMS**

**Item 1. Approval of Village Artists:** Frank Casciani, Deputy Director of Village Arts & Education Foundation

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

A motion was made by Mr. Nguyen and seconded by Ms. Vandenheuvel to approve the Village Artists as presented. The motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Item 2. Culture & Cocktails Event:** Sarah Grossman, Associate Director, Special Events and Corporate Relations.

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

Tim Shields – Wanted to know if audio levels had been reviewed due to Old Globe have performances next door at the same time.

Sarah Grossman (Responded) – They were discussed and precautions were taken to not interfere with Old Globe programming.

**MOTION:            MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Shields/ Mr. Nguyen**

A motion was made by Mr. Shields and seconded by Mr. Nguyen to approve the Culture & Cocktails event. The motion carried unanimously (6-0-0).

**Item 3. Susan B. Komen- More Than Pink Walk:** KC Ollila, Event Director.

Public Comment:

Peter Comiskey – Asked that the finish line be moved to North of Laurel St. Does not support closure of 163. Adds to perception of difficult access to Balboa Park.

Erika Kohler – San Diego Zoo does not support closure on 163 due to disruptions to the area.

Committee Comment:

Chris Eddy – Asked for clarification of Zoo's Position.

Erika Kohler (Responded) – Does not support freeway closure.

Allison Soares – Asked for clarification on timeline and reopening of roads and if moving the starting line has been considered.

KC Ollila (Responded) – Open once last walker finishes around 9:15-9:30am. Starting line where it is for safety concerns of people loitering after finishing walk.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Inquired if an early start time had been considered.

KC Ollila (Responded) – This is early than most walks as this starts at 8am as opposed to the normal 9am.

Michael Robinson – Inquired where on the 163 walker will be.

KC Ollila (Responded) – In the middle of the road.

Dang Nguyen – Asked if a traffic study had been done and if there are any other freeway closure events.

KC Ollila (Responded) – Not that she was aware. Using the same traffic company as American Heart Walk.

Makeda Cheatom – Inquired if the event had received approval from Parks and Recreation.

**MOTION:            MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Eddy/ Mr. Nguyen**

A motion was made by Mr. Eddy and seconded by Mr. Nguyen to approve the Susan G. Komen – More Than Pink Walk event. The motion carried (4-3-0).

**Item 4. World Athletics Road Running Championships – San Diego 2025: Tracy Sundlin**

Public Comment:

Peter Comiskey – Unique event with extreme impacts. Still a disconnect between the institutions and organizers on impact and slope and scale. Have come to resolution on many items, but parking and access are still issues.

Jim Kidrick – Supports approval of the event. Organizers contacted them early on and have been easy to work with coming up with solution to concerns.

Mark Neville – His organization’s purpose is to recruit sports events to San Diego that contribute to tourism and hospitality industries and benefit the city economically. Event will create an inconvenience but team has worked to minimize them.

Erika Kohler – Event will highly impact Balboa Park. Organizers have been open to address concerns. Parking and access issues need to be addressed. Permit must have shuttle plans. Recommend tabling until more details are finalized.

Wendy Urushima-Conn – Excited when they heard event was coming and for the economic impact. Great opportunity for San Diego.

Paul Greer – Local running community would be excited. Championships do not come very often to the City. Event will be long remembered as one of the best. William “Bill” Aaron Jr. would want it. Consider approving it.

Willie Banks – Is the only member on the World Athletics Council from the United States. Voted unanimously for San Diego as a great place to host and had Balboa Park. Local organizing committee has done so much work for the running world. Important for World Athletics and is on the second time it will be held. Hopes Committee supports it.

Committee Comment:

Kathy Vandenheuvell – Good to hear how organizer has been working with institutions. Recommends tabling until more details are finalized.

Chris Eddy – Supports having the event. Inquired to how important Balboa Park was in choosing San Diego.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – Several locations were presented. Waterfront Park and Balboa Park were considered, but Waterfront was unavailable. All runners will be coming from event in Tokyo straight to San Diego.

Chris Eddy – Would love to feature Balboa Park and compensate institutions. Would like all institutions to be featured somehow.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – Would work with each institution to figure out best way to individually feature them.

Makeda Cheatom – Appreciated organizer contacting all the institutions. Would like to map it out and determine impact of event. Inquired if Parks and Recreation had approved event yet.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – Approval is in process. Could put institutions into fundraising opportunities.

Chirs Eddy – Some details still need to be worked out.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – Courses were sent to the Parks and Recreation Department. Window of time has been shortened. Traffic control was submitted. Wants to take advantage of Olympic Trials to promote the event.

Allison Soares – Inquired when bid was presented to World Athletics.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – Submitted in June and accepted in August.

Dang Nguyen – Inquired how long before San Diego no longer a viable option.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – Sent a variety of locations. Balboa Park was determined most viable. Wants to make sure it's done right.

Allison Soares – Wants to make sure everything is done right and the organizer is on the right path.

Tim Shields – Noted that existing economic drivers (institutions) will be impacted. Perception of Balboa Park being closed is difficult to overcome. Wonder of timeline of bid versus being brought on. Would recommend tabling until more details come in.

Kathy Vandenheuvell – Requested maps and forms that were submitted for event.

Chris Eddy – Parks and Recreation is not making a recommendation until all details have been submitted.

**MOTION:        MOVED/SECONDED Ms. Vandenheuvell/ Mr. Eddy**

A motion was made by Ms. Vandenheuvell and seconded by Mr. Eddy to table vote to July meeting pending all details are submitted. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

**WORKSHOP ITEMS**

None

**INFORMATION ITEM**

None

**ADJOURNMENT** – 5:20 pm

**Notice of Next Balboa Park Meeting:**

July 11, 2024  
4:00 P.M.  
In-Person

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Canales  
District Manager