

MINUTES

**City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE
July 11, 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

Molly Chase
Howard Blackson
Chris Eddy
Mary McKenzie
Michael Robinson
Tim Shields
Kathy Vandenheuvel

Members Absent

Allison Soares
Dang Nguyen
Makeda Cheatom

Staff Present

Tyler Canales
Victor Johnson
Anthony Harrington

CALL TO ORDER

Molly Chase called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES June 6, 2024

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Shields / Mr. Robinson

A motion was made by Mr. Shields and seconded by Mr. Robinson to approve the June 6, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion carried (4-0-2).

NON- AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Web Form:

None

In-Person:

Andera Zinko – Received \$13,000 grant to teach puppetry to communities of need. Announced upcoming night puppet shows from various puppeteers. Requested air conditioning for the Puppet Theatre.

Erika Kohler – Excited for the arrival of the pandas to the Zoo. Working with the City to work through the anticipated increased attendance that will affect traffic.

Daniele Laman – Requested a copy of Balboa Park 6-month event calendar. Raised issue of transients using power outlets in the park. City is transferring security contract to a new provider. Informed of the upcoming lawn programs for HPR.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

None

STAFF REPORT

Emily Bonner, Council District 3 – None.

Michael Bravo, 78th District – None

Tyler Canales, District Manager, Parks & Recreation – Deputy Director Jon Richards will be sending out updates electronically.

BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES

Forever Balboa Park – 4 new signs with park maps have been installed in the park. Thanked staff and donors for their support of the project. Thanked donors for the support of the new irrigation system installed at the Kate Sessions Cactus Garden. RFP for first part of Phase 2 of the Botanical Building has been sent out.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – Peter Comiskey – World Beat Center has had their new lease finalized. This is a great step forward for the institution.

Committee of 100 – Ross Porter – The Bay to Park Paseo project had the northernmost portion completed with banners on the San Diego High School fence. They have figures for Municipal Gym work and will be submitting for approval and to obtain the Right of Entry permit. Applauded staff for the good work for National Skateboard Day.

Save Starlight – Steve Stopper – Has a date to meet with Jon Richards. Intrusions and vandalism have been very active recently.

Village Arts & Education Foundation – Frank Casciani – No Report.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

Howard Blackson – Requesting to have a BPC workshop on October 3rd from 1-3pm at the World Design Capitol Pavilion for a visioning workshop.

Kathy Vandenheuevel – Noting that there is a missing pedestrian piece from the 26th St trail to the Pershing and 26th St point.

CONSENT ITEMS

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Item 1. World Athletics Road Running Championships – San Diego 2025: Tracy Sundlun, CEO, 2025 WARR Championships.

Public Comment:

Andrea Caldwell – Concerned about ingress and egress to the park for the event. Welcome events, but they need to consider impacts to institutions, park users, and neighboring communities.

Erika Kohler – The Zoo supports the event as long Park Blvd stays open to vehicular traffic and a detailed parking and access plan is in place.

Peter Comiskey – Organizer has been forthcoming in meeting needs of stakeholders. There will be Letter of Understanding with the institutions. Encourages City to consider events of this scale in the future.

Jim Kidrick – In support of the event for two main reasons. Organizer met early to understand stakeholder needs and how to meet them. They changed times to meet needs and adopted a compensation model as well.

Jan Rhines – Believes a lot of athletes will agree San Diego is an ideal spot for this event. Saw firsthand the event brought the excitement that was brought by event as coach.

Meb Keflezighi – Grew up and started his running career in San Diego. City deserves to hold an international event like this. Balboa Park is a great place for this and supports the event.

Mark Neville – Group actively seeks events that would be great for the community, tourism and create jobs. In support of the bid as it checks all boxes for them. This will attract runners from all over and Balboa Park is the ideal venue.

Marc Bailey – Continues to have concerns about safety in the park, especially with events that closes roads. Surrounding areas are always impacted during events. Urge committee to consider impacts when large events happen in Balboa Park. Hopes Park Blvd remains open and a detailed traffic plan is submitted with the event.

Paul Greer – This event will bring great exposure to City. This board does a lot of work to put on great events. 1,000s of runners will be excited for this event and will be life changing for participants. Hope the world with focus on San Diego when this event happens.

Michael Meechem – Sounds like an amazing opportunity for community and racing community. Would ask they work the Parking District to add more trash collection similar to PRIDE event.

Committee Comment:

Chris Eddy – Think it is very exciting for San Diego and Balboa Park. Appreciates the level of detail brought forward and that Organizer will continue to work through any issues. Looks forward to supporting it.

Tim Shields – Inquired if the event is being considered as a onetime event or a recurring event.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – This is a onetime event.

Tim Shields – Inquired if all the assurances made to stakeholders are conditioned on approval of the event.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – Yes.

Kathy Vandenhevel – Would like to approve with condition of not closing Park Blvd and providing a traffic and parking plan.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – If that is required, then he will submit it.

Kathy Vandenhevel – Appreciates the number of considerations and modifications made for the event.

Michael Robinson – Inquired if all maps and forms requested were submitted.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – Everything has been submitted.

Howard Blackson – Inquired if Tracy had comments on the trash issue brought up by community.

Tracy Sundlin (Responded) – Fascinated to hear it.

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Blackson/ Mr. Eddy

A motion was made by Mr. Blackson and seconded by Mr. Eddy to approve the World Athletics Road Running Championships event with conditions of not closing Park Blvd and providing a detailed parking and traffic plan. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

Item 2. Pershing Bikeway Grand Opening and Community Event: Brandy Sweitzer, SANDAG, Chris Carterette, SANDAG

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

Chris Eddy – Clarifying that it would not have any impact on Organ Pavilion.

Brandy Sweitzer (Responded) – It would not. Event would be in Bird Park area.

Kathy Vandenhevel – Mentioned the connection issue from 26th St trail to Pershing Dr and 26th St intersection.

Chris Caterette (Responded) – Will look at potential ways to make it happen.

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Shields/ Mr. Eddy

A motion was made by Mr. Shields and seconded by Mr. Eddy to approve the Pershing Bikeway Grand Opening and Community Event. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

Item 3. Grape Street Park Renaming: Sarita Flaming

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

Howard Blackson – Inquired if this had come before the Golden Hill Community Planning Group.

Sarita Flaming (Responded) – Not yet, but happy to do it.

Chris Eddy – In support of the name change. Inquired how the story of the renaming will be memorialized in the park.

Sarita Flaming (Responded) – Only looking at signage at this time.

Chris Eddy – Asked for clarification if the vote is only for a name change or an event as well.

Sarita Flaming (Responded) – Would like to have something on September 14th commemorate the 40-year anniversary and the renaming.

Kathy Vandeuvel – Personally would approve, but requests that this goes before the Golden Hill Planning Committee so that the community would be aware of the name change.

Sarita Flaming (Responded) – Apologized for not doing that. Would be happy to reach out to them and make that happen.

Molly Chase – The neighbors should the opportunity to understand what is going on. Do believe it's important that it is taken to them.

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

A motion was made by Ms. Vandenheuvel and seconded by Mr. Shields to support the renaming of Grape Street Park with condition that the renaming is also presented to the Golden Hill Planning Group. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

WORKSHOP ITEMS

None

INFORMATION ITEM

Item 4. 6th and Juniper Roundabout: Louis Schultz, Senior Civil Engineer, Heidi Leon, Associate Engineer

Public Comment:

Mike Singleton – Is overall in support of the roundabout, but would like review of the popouts, planting plans and changing the park entrance to two-way traffic instead of one way. Believes south end of West Mesa has ample opportunities for future facilities and wants to ensure that is taken into consideration with the redesign.

Committee Comment:

Howard Blackson – Asked for status from Uptown of the redesign and if it was brought to the community.

Mike Singleton (Responded) – Was brought to the community and was not supported due to the sidewalk. Community’s thoughts have been circulated to the Banker’s Hill group.

Howard Blackson – Asked if community had seen updated proposal.

Mike Singleton (Responded) – Just saw it as of last week. Would like to meet with City to make some refinements.

Chris Eddy – Wanted clarification on the angled parking if it was back in or not.

Heidi Leon (Responded) – It would be back in parking.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Inquired as to it’s not being considered for two-way traffic into park.

Louis Schultz (Responded) – Existing condition is one-way. Parks and Rec prefers it to remain one-way. Could be considered in the future but would need to be a large change inside the park. Current plan adds parking to the park.

Chris Eddy – Would prefer two-way traffic in consideration of future plans.

Mary McKenzie – Inquired if bicycle use had been considered in the plan.

Louis Schultz – It was brought back to engineers to see what opportunities could be. Currently working based on current roundabout standards. Signage is currently included for how bikers should proceed for safest access through the roundabout.

ADJOURNMENT – 5:40 pm

Notice of Next Balboa Park Meeting:

September 5, 2024
4:00 P.M.
In-Person

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Canales
District Manager