

City of San Diego
Parks and Recreation Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 18, 2024

“TO PROVIDE HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE, AND ENRICHING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL”

Meeting Held by In Person and Teleconference:

This meeting was held at the Balboa Park Club Santa Fe Room and remotely using the Zoom Webinar platform and was streamed online. The public was invited to join the meeting by phone or computer, as well as invited to submit “Public Comments” in writing via a webform. The form was made available on the Parks and Recreation website at <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/boards>.

NOTE: Both verbal and written communication were used by Board Members, City staff, and presenters during the meeting. City staff also used the screen-share function to allow viewers to view content shared by the speaker which included PowerPoint presentations and websites.

Before the meeting was called to order, City staff read instructions to the public regarding technical procedures for making live public comment during the webinar.

Members Present	Members Absent	City Staff Present
Martin Armstrong Marcella Bothwell Dr. Andrea Dooley (Virtual) Shaina Gross Rick Gulley Daniele Laman Evelyn Smith Agatha Wein	Nick Anastasopoulos Dr. Judith Munoz Allison Soares	Ryan Barbrick Mark Berninger Benny Cartwright (Virtual) Karen Dennison (Virtual) Sarah Erazo (Virtual) Andy Field Darren Genova (Virtual) Ilisa Goldman (Virtual) Kaitlyn Porter (Virtual) Elvi Ricafort Jon Richards Michelle Abella-Shon (Virtual) Andre Smith Tom Tomlinson (Virtual) Gabriela Verendia

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order by Chair Marcella Bothwell at 2:05 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JUNE 20, 2024

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MOTION/SECONDED:

Mr. Gulley/Ms. Laman

A motion was made by Mr. Gulley and seconded by Ms. Laman. The motion was approved 5-0-2 and passed unanimously with the following vote: Yea: Marcella Bothwell, Rick Gulley, Daniele Laman, Evelyn Smith, and Agatha Wein. Recused: None. Abstained: Martin Armstrong and Dr. Andrea Dooley. Not Present: Nick Anastasopoulos, Shaina Gross, Dr. Judith Munoz, and Allison Soares.

Public Comments:

No public comments on the meeting minutes.

Board Comments: None

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jeff MacMaster reported a need for brush management and eucalyptus tree trimming on City-owned parcel near 8019 Wing Span Drive near Cowles Mountain. Mr. Field referred Mr. MacMaster to speak with Natural Resource Manager Mark Berninger for assistance.

Janice Stewart also reported a need for brush management and eucalyptus tree trimming on City-owned parcel near 7987 Wing Span Drive. She expressed a concern about homeowners inability to obtain fire insurance.

David Moty, chair of the Kensington Talmadge Planning Group, spoke about the Parks Master Plan. He expressed the importance of Appendix D related to park scoring. He is concerned that these policies and procedures are not being followed consistently, especially given concessions for acreage. He believes this is a concern during the development of the Mid-City Community Plan Update.

Gary Blume from the Total Altruism Project reported on the outcome of the Fourth of July fireworks celebration at Lake Murray Community Park including clean up that occurred the day after the celebration.

Deborah Sharpe spoke about the Parks Master Plan. She is concerned about the scoring for park amenities and expressed concerns that the Mid-City Community Plan Update may not properly calculate it.

Sally Smull spoke about hard court improvements for \$400,000 and whether those funds can be used for basketball court striping.


Bertha Lopez spoke about concerns with finding parking in Balboa Park. She recommends more board meetings occur in the community.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCE: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Balboa Park Committee – Ms. Soares was absent, so no report was provided.

- Mission Bay Park Committee – Dr. Munoz was absent, so no report was provided.
- Mission Trails Regional Park Citizens’ Advisory Committee – Mr. Gulley reported the last meeting was July 2, 2024. Topics including East Elliott land acquisition, Old Mission Dam dredging, and the proposed Max Lenail Bridge
- San Diego Parks Foundation – Chair Bothwell provided Board members with the impact report over the past five years. A copy of the impact report is available at <https://www.sandiegoparksfoundation.org/whoware> and is provided below:










Celebrating 5 Years of San Diego Impact

The San Diego Parks Foundation's mission is to improve the quality of life of communities throughout the city of San Diego through equitable investments in parks, greenspace, and recreational opportunities.


\$4 Million Raised
486,000 San Diegans Served To Date


OUR COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Parks are critical to a thriving community. Park engagement impacts health and wellbeing, while providing environmental and economic benefits to the City.
- Thousands of families enjoy FREE activities and events year-round in safe, positive outdoor communitywide park settings.
- Public and FREE access to a reliable internet connection leverages technology at our parks for homework or job searches.
- Improvements to park spaces from new trees and updated sports courts, to a community garden makes a positive and lasting impact on the environment.

PARKS AFTER DARK Since 2022  OVER 45,800 FAMILIES enjoyed FREE family events & free food distributions	COME PLAY OUTSIDE Since 2021  OVER 7,200 KIDS learned water safety & how to swim for FREE	PARK AMBASSADOR Since 2022  84 YOUTH ages 16-24 are now Park Ambassadors and have their first paying job
URBAN GREENING Since 2019  353 TREES planted in City of San Diego parks	 OVER 500 KIDS went deep sea fishing for the first time  OVER 7,800 KIDS got to go to summer camp	FREE WI-FI Since 2021  60 PARK & REC CENTERS have received free Wi-Fi

Your support and generosity has played a critical part in our success and we look forward to making a difference together for generations to come.

 **Your GIFT makes an impact.**
SanDiegoParksFoundation.org



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Some key successes for San Diego Parks Foundation include the Come Play Outside program after many youth indoors during the pandemic years, Parks After Dark, free wireless internet at recreation centers, over 400 trees planted, and the park ambassador program that provides youth an opportunity to gain job skills and become future leaders in recreation. A membership campaign is coming this fall.

CHAIR COMMENTS:

Chair Bothwell had no additional comments after providing the San Diego Parks Foundation update.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Ms. Laman indicated that she needs more information on signage especially in fire prone areas such as Chollas Park. At City Heights and Colina del Sol Community Recreation Group meetings, concerns were raised regarding pool boilers. She asked for an aquatics report at an upcoming Board meeting. Director Field indicated the aquatics update can be scheduled for the Board later this year.

Ms. Gross asked about whether a park memorial program exists and whether the City can resume acceptance of donations in exchange for new benches and trees in parks that contain plaques in memory of loved ones. Director Field stated that this program ended about 20 years ago when the position coordinating the memorial program was eliminated from the Department's budget. Since the role of accepting donations from those grieving loved ones can be very sensitive and involved, the Department has not been able to restore the position nor revive this program. Several nonprofits have declined to participate in this role due to the administrative burden attached to it.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Director Field provided the Board with the following updates:

Parks Master Plan Update:

- **Blueprint SD/General Plan Refresh:** City Planning Department will present this to City Council on Tuesday, July 23, 2024, in the afternoon session under Item 333. The Blueprint SD (General Plan Refresh) will encourage sustainable growth - including more homes and jobs - in areas that will help the City achieve its housing and climate goals and improve opportunities to walk, roll, bike and take transit.
- **Equity Forward:** The Environmental Justice Element (see <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/ej-element-draft.pdf>) as approved by the City Council on Monday, July 1, 2024.
- **Hillcrest Focused Plan and University Community Plan:** City Council will consider both plans at its meeting of July 30, 2024, during the afternoon session.
- **Parks Master Plan:** Staff is preparing a Status Update of Parks Master Plan Policies and Recommendations for Fall 2024. This update will address 142 policies and recommendations. The Parks Master Plan and related documents can be found at the Parks for All of Us webpage (<https://www.sandiego.gov/parks-for-all-of-us>) or <https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/parks-master-plan>.

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- **Trails Master Plan:** On July 15, 2024, the City Planning Department launched a new webpage (<https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/citywide-trails-master-plan>) to engage with community members on the Citywide Trails Master Plan. As part of Equity Forward (<https://www.sandiego.gov/equity-forward>) and as identified as a key implementation action within the Parks Master Plan (<https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/parks-master-plan>), the Citywide Trails Master Plan (Trails Master Plan) will guide the provision and enhancement of open space multi-purpose trails that serve pedestrians, hikers, bicyclists, mountain bikers, and equestrians. Throughout the planning process, the City will host several public workshops and public engagement activities to gather input from community members. An online survey will also become available. Details of these events will be posted on the webpage, and members of the public can sign up for updates today to stay informed of these opportunities. Questions are welcome by email to publicspaces@sandiego.gov.

Recreation Programs: Summer programming continues. Many sites are hosting summer camps, and the Department is hosting popular Come Play Outside, Parks After Dark, and Teen Nite programs at several sites.

Check the recreation center webpages (<https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/centers>) for more information on summer programs.

Upcoming P&R Board Agenda Items:

- Animal Services Update – September
- Chair’s Award for Community Services – September
- Aquatics Overview – October
- Brush Management Overview – October
- Area Committee Reform – October or November
- Parks Master Plan Update – October or November
- Joint Use Update – November
- Opportunity Fund – November
- Chollas Creek Flood Mitigation Modifications – November
- Council Policy 700-42 Community Recreation Group Reform – November or January
- Mid-City Communities Plan Update – TBD

Other Topics for Discussion:

Director Bothwell asked about the San Diego Parks Foundation (SDPF) Awards Breakfast that occurred on July 17, 2024. Director Field stated that the California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS) awarded the SDPF with a community advocacy champion award for its first five years of successful programming and projects in San Diego Parks.

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REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE: None

CONSENT ITEMS: None

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

101. Election of Vice-Chair to the Parks and Recreation Board

Director Field outlined the vice chair role (serve as acting chair in the event the designated chair is not present at the meeting) and requested nominations for this role. Ms. Laman nominated Mr. Gulley. Ms. Gross seconded the motion. Mr. Gulley accepted the nomination.

MOTION/SECONDED:

Ms. Laman/Ms. Gross

A motion was made by Ms. Laman and seconded by Ms. Gross. The motion was approved 8-0-0 and passed unanimously with the following vote: Yea: Martin Armstrong, Marcella Bothwell, Dr. Andrea Dooley, Shaina Gross, Rick Gulley, Daniele Laman, Evelyn Smith, and Agatha Wein. Recused: None. Abstained: None. Not Present: Nick Anastasopoulos, Dr. Judith Munoz, and Allison Soares.

Public Comments:

No public comments were received on this item.

Board Comments:

Ms. Laman nominated Mr. Gulley.

Ms. Gross agreed with this nomination.

Mr. Gulley agreed to serve as vice-chair if elected.

102. Election of Board Member to Area Committee Chair

Director Field indicated that the role of area committees has changed substantially over the past ten years. This group includes community recreation group chairs and designees. The role used to have advisory roles such as general development plan and park renaming approvals, but those tasks are no longer assigned to the area committees. However, there remains a need to help information flow between the Department leadership and the community recreation groups. The future area committee (consolidated) would be able to fulfill this goal by holding forums to discuss budget development and monitoring, fees, opportunity fund, equity goals, recreational programming, contractual programming, permitting, special use permits, and related topics. Director Field indicated that Deputy Director Sarah Erazo and her team would bring an area committee reform effort to the Board this fall.

MOTION/SECONDED:

Mr. Armstrong/Ms. Wein

Mr. Armstrong moved to continue this matter until the duties of the Area Committee can be fully described and was seconded by Ms. Wein. The motion was approved 8-0-0 and passed unanimously with the following vote: Yea: Martin Armstrong, Marcella Bothwell, Dr. Andrea Dooley, Shaina Gross, Rick Gulley, Daniele Laman, Evelyn Smith, and Agatha Wein. Recused: None. Abstained: None. Not Present: Nick Anastasopoulos, Dr. Judith Munoz, and Allison

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Soares.

Public Comments:

Bertha Lopez stated that she would like to see changes in meeting location and time of day for the meeting. Chair Bothwell asked for an update on this. Director Field indicated that about 20 years ago, the Board used to meet in City Hall downtown. However, about 15 years ago, the meetings moved to Balboa Park to increase access (free parking, no elevators, etc.). Since the Department does not have many large meeting rooms outside of downtown aside from gymnasiums, it has proven difficult to move Board meetings to other locations away from Balboa Park. Closing gymnasiums for a Board meeting prevents normal use of the gymnasiums, which is undesirable. The Park de la Cruz large conference room proved to be too small for the Board to effectively meet.

Sally Smull asked whether the Area Committee meeting of the future would be a clearinghouse with specific topics such as recreation value points scoring to be presented. Director Field agreed with this premise.

Board Comments:

Mr. Gulley asked if there are plans to consolidate Community Parks I and II into one committee. Director Field indicated that yes, a consolidated meeting would make the most sense.

Ms. Laman asked for a status update for updating City Council Policy 700-42 related to community recreation groups. Director Field indicated that this should come to area committee first and the board second, most likely in the fall.

Mr. Armstrong recommended continuing this matter to another meeting. Ms. Wein seconded this motion.

103. Proposed Renaming of Grape St. Park to Tonahill-Ruopp

Mr. Richards and Ms. Flaming presented the proposed renaming. This included a video outlining the events that occurred in Grape Street Park.

MOTION/SECONDED:

Ms. Laman/Mr. Gulley

Ms. Laman moved to accept staff recommendation with the caveat that signage should be added to explain the situation and was seconded by Mr. Gulley. The motion was approved 8-0-0 and passed with the following vote: Yea: Martin Armstrong, Marcella Bothwell, Dr. Andrea Dooley, Shaina Gross, Rick Gulley, Daniele Laman, Evelyn Smith, and Agatha Wein. Nay: None. Recused: None. Abstained: None. Absent: Nick Anastasopoulos, Dr. Judith Munoz, and Allison Soares.

Public Comments:

No public comments were received on this item.

Board Comment:

Chair Bothwell indicated that this is the type of naming proposal at a park that makes sense and is appropriate.

INFORMATION ITEMS

201. San Diego Canyonlands Update

Mr. Tschudy presented the status of Canyonlands ongoing effort to Re-Oak San Diego, build environmental workforce, and address ecological restoration needs across the park system. He highlighted several efforts to improve City open space, focusing on a streambed restoration project in Manzanita Canyon in City Heights and efforts to streamline permitting and regulatory compliance for similar projects elsewhere in habitat areas. If successful, streamlining could reduce the project schedule and reduce cost.

Public Comments:

Sally Smull is glad to see the number of good works Canyonlands is doing in San Diego and looks forward to continuing future collaboration. She agrees with additional blue-green infrastructure concepts and looks forward to future collaboration with the City and the County on projects similar to Manzanita Canyon.

Board Comments:

Ms. Smith echoed what Ms. Smull stated during public comment and noted that she has worked extensively with Mr. Tschudy and believes his team does a great job.

Mr. Armstrong noted that Canyonlands has taken on quite a bit work and appreciates the good work.

Ms. Wein asked if streambed alteration involves natural hardening of the creek. Mr. Tschudy stated that the Water Board Statewide Regional Restoration Order (SRGO) set a new standard for streambed restoration uses only natural materials such as rocks, wood, biological elements (plants), and related items. Ms. Wein sees extensive graffiti in riverbeds near Mountain View Community Park. She would like to see a beautification project to restore streambeds and eliminate opportunities for graffiti. Mr. Tschudy noted that riparian canyons have quite a bit of potential for streambed improvements.

Chair Bothwell stated a development in Mission Valley on a former golf course stopped construction due to flooding issues. She asked Mr. Tschudy how to navigate development side by side with riparian areas near flood zones. Mr. Tschudy noted that this is a significant challenge, especially given bigger swings in precipitation from cloud bursts such as the storm of January 22, 2024. He noted that storms in the future will have large rainfalls similar to that storm. So development must account for these storms and flooding potential. Canyon riparian systems can help reduce flooding damage but will not eliminate the risk of flooding. Deborah Sharpe in the audience noted that these challenges of balancing watersheds with development will continue.

Ms. Gross would like to discuss workforce development further with Mr. Tschudy as there can be synergy with other efforts to bring more youth into the workforce and particularly environmental jobs.

Ms. Abella-Shon asked about whether Canyonlands has been continuing to partner with Storm Water Department, and Mr. Tschudy indicated that he has been doing so extensively.

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202. Open Space Division Resource Management Overview

Mr. Berninger provided the Board with an overview of the natural resource management planning section. Duties of this program include monitoring sensitive habitat areas such as bird nests, protecting habitat areas including endangered and threatened species, restoring land to native habitat, adhering to regulations such as the Multiple Species Conservation Program and Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Program, and acquiring land to add to the Multiple Habitat Planning Area. He noted that the City's preserve system is among the largest municipal open space systems in the nation with 27,000 acres open to the public and a total of 51,000 acres inside and outside the City limits. A rare-plant dashboard keeps track of where staff and interns have located endangered and threatened plants in the park system.

Public Comments:

No public comments were received on this item.

Board Comments:

No board comments were received on this item.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Copies of the reports, attachments, PowerPoint presentations, and audio-video recordings can be found on the Parks and Recreation Department website at <http://www.sandiego.gov/parkandrecboard/reports>.

Next Calendared Meeting: September 19, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Andy Field
Director
Parks and Recreation Department