

# MINUTES

**City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board  
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE  
September 5, 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  
Makeda Cheatom  
Chris Eddy  
Dang Nguyen  
Michael Robinson  
Tim Shields  
Kathy Vandenheuvel

**Members Absent**

Allison Soares  
Howard Blackson  
Mary Mckenzie

**Staff Present**

Jon Richards  
Tyler Canales  
Victor Johnson  
Anthony Harrington

**CALL TO ORDER**

Molly Chase called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES July 11, 2024**

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

A motion was made by Ms. Vandenheuvel and seconded by Mr. Eddy to approve the July 11, 2024, meeting minutes with the amendment to Ms. Vandenheuvel’s comment. The motion carried (4-0-2).

**NON- AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT**

Web Form:

None

In-Person:

David Seid – House of China has submitted their ROS for their Chinese New Year event in February. They’re willing to bring a report to the Committee for approval if needed.

Richard Varrasso – Would like to meet with City recruiters for an interview for a position.

Pat Sefton – Stated her support for Larry Turner for Mayor.

Daniele Laman – A presentation of December Nights and Cyber Security was brought to the last safety and security meeting. Informed of the upcoming lawn programs for HPR. Requested staff review the canyons for brush due to it being fire season.

**CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT**

None

**STAFF REPORT**

Emily Bonner, Council District 3 – Legislative recess is over. First Council meeting will be on 9/9. The agenda is online.

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

Jon Richards, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation – Mayor Gloria’s State of Balboa Park is online for viewing. Next Balboa Park Committee meeting will be on October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 4-6pm. Pershing Bikeway has been completed and is now open. The RFP for Starlight Bowl is currently out. The renaming event for Grape Street Park will be on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Heart and Stroke Walk will be on September 9<sup>th</sup> and a portion of the northbound 163 will be closed for it. The World Design Capital Pavilion is in the Central Mesa and will have an opening celebration on September 19<sup>th</sup>. The Haunted Trail will open on September 27<sup>th</sup>.

**BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES**

Forever Balboa Park – None.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – None.

Committee of 100 – Ross Porter – The ROE permit has been submitted for the exterior Municipal Gym work has been submitted. The work should be completed before the end of the year.

Save Starlight – Steve Stopper – Still having issues with ongoing intrusions into the area. Excited to see the RFP is out and that someone will activate the site.

Village Arts & Education Foundation – Frank Casciani – None.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT**

None

**CONSENT ITEMS**

None

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Item 1. Balboa Park and San Diego High School Connections:** Michael Stepner.

Public Comment:

Mike Singleton – Believes project will help people know how large Balboa Park actually is. Is in support of it overall.

Committee Comment:

Michael Robinson – Asked for clarification on the Design and Review process.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – A committee was formed 4 years ago. They are still working through the process.

Kathy Vandenheuver – Inquired if there was any specific project to connect to Golden Hill.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – This project focuses on the Park Blvd corridor.

Kathy Vandenheuver – I believe it's important to connect youth to the park. Inquired why digitization or archives was considered low hanging fruit. Worries about lost of knowledge and believes it should be prioritized.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – The report is just currently a list of what they believe can be done sooner and is open to change.

Chris Eddy – Congratulated group on the comprehensive list. Does not endorse the fruit concept of prioritization. Priority should be driven by need. Parking and transportation need to be enhanced sooner. Appreciates the social component and could see a need for an aquatics complex.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – Need will drive a lot of prioritizations. Trying to get the most bang for their buck with each project.

Tim Shields – Wanted clarification on Balboa Park Committee's role on items outside of the park. Wanted to know what would come before the Committee and who helps the Committee to consider overarching plans if they are not experts.

Michael Stepner (Responded) - School is located within Balboa Park. The Committee would review greenspace. If report is accepted, it would then be turned over to Parks and Recreation.

Kathy Vandenheuver – Felt Committee would not have as much input on the school side as items within the park.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – The lease agreement makes Balboa Park the landlords and San Diego Unified the tenant. Balboa Park is its own planning group area. Would hope that the Committee would start to think more regionally. Burnham Group is looking for a new type of governance for the park.

Molly Chase – The Committee has representatives from nearby planning groups to allow for these types of larger conversations.

Makeda Cheatom – Attended both schools in the proposal. World Beat and Centro Cultural de la Raza are the cultural gateways into the park. Working on a gateway plaza proposal for the area and hopes that it is in the report.

Michael Stepner (Responded) – Believes the plaza proposal is within the report.

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

A motion was made by Mr. Nguyen and seconded by Mr. Robinson to accept the report as presented. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

**WORKSHOP ITEMS**

None

**INFORMATION ITEM**

None

**ADJOURNMENT** – 5:17 pm

**Notice of Next Balboa Park Meeting:**                      October 3, 2024  
4:00 P.M.  
In-Person

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Canales  
District Manager

## **Balboa Park Stakeholder Updates – September 2024**

**State of Balboa Park** – On August 8, 2024, Mayor Gloria presented his State of Balboa Park Address at the San Diego Natural History Museum. Click on the following link for more info and a video: <https://www.sandiego.gov/insidesd/mayor-gloria-highlights-power-partnerships-second-annual-state-balboa-park-address>.

**Balboa Park Committee** – The next scheduled meeting will occur on **Thursday, October 3, 2024**, from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm. There was no meeting in August. Find more information here: <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/boards/bpc>

**Pershing Bikeway along Balboa Park** - The Pershing Bikeway project is complete and now open to the public for use. Find more information here: <https://www.sandag.org/news/sandag-celebrates-opening-of-pershing-bikeway-2024-07-27>

**Starlight Bowl Request for Proposal** – The City of San Diego is looking for organizations or individuals interested in bringing the historic and famed Starlight Bowl in Balboa Park back to life. The request for proposal can be accessed through the City’s website: <https://www.sandiego.gov/insidesd/city-san-diego-seeking-rehabilitate-and-reopen-starlight-bowl> Proposals must be submitted by 4 p.m. on November 14, 2024.

### **Upcoming Events (not an exhaustive list)**

**Balboa Park Events Calendar coming soon** –City of San Diego staff will be adding a link to Balboa Park’s webpage to display a calendar of events that are permitted in the park. The calendar will not be for every activity in the park; however, it will display larger activities/events with 100 or more people in attendance. Look for this addition in October.

**Renaming of Grape St. Park** – On September 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m., the City of San Diego will be holding a dedication ceremony for the renaming of Grape St. Park to “Officer Tonahill and Officer Ruopp Memorial Park”.

**San Diego Heart and Stroke Walk** – The event will take place on Saturday, September 21, 2024, starting at 6:30 a.m. Please note that the event temporarily closes SR 163 Northbound, from Park Blvd. to Robinson Ave. The route map and more information can be found here: [https://www2.heart.org/site/TR?fr\\_id=10698&pg=informational&type=fr\\_informational&sid=1020](https://www2.heart.org/site/TR?fr_id=10698&pg=informational&type=fr_informational&sid=1020)

**World Design Capital Pavilion in Balboa Park**– [World Design Experience Opening Celebration](#), is happening at the Exchange Pavilion on September 19th from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Haunted Trails Coming soon to the West Mesa** – Opening from September 27<sup>th</sup> – November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. Find more information here: <https://hauntedtrail.net/>