



REPORT

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

DATE ISSUED: January 16, 2025

REPORT NO.: 102

ATTENTION: Parks and Recreation Board
Agenda of January 16, 2025

SUBJECT: Area Committee Reform and Proposed Modification to Parks and
Recreation Oversight Bylaws

SUMMARY

Issue – Should the Parks and Recreation Board recommend approval of the proposed Area Committee restructure and amendment to Board bylaws?

Department Recommendation – Recommend approval of approval to change the Area Committee Structure from two sub-committees of the Parks and Recreation Board to one public forum and for the approval to amend current bylaws to remove Article XI – Subcommittees and Committees, Section 2(b), officially declassifying the two area committees as subcommittees of the Parks and Recreation Board.

Other Recommendations – The following groups have reviewed and considered the proposed changes.

- August 14, 2024 Area Committee Restructure Workshop
- September 4, 2024 Area Committee Restructure Workshop
- October 9, 2024 Area Committee Restructure Workshop
- November 6, 2024 Area Committee Restructure Workshop

Fiscal Impact – None. Virtual meeting is currently hosted by city staff.

Water and Energy Conservation Status – None.

Climate Action Plan (CAP) Impact – None.

Strategic/Tactical Equity Plan Impact – This change would comply with the City Strategic Plan goal to Protect and Enrich Every neighborhood by connecting communities to safe public spaces that offer opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive.

Environmental – None.

The Parks and Recreation Department is looking for the Parks and Recreation Board's approval to change the Area Committee Structure from two sub-committees of the Parks and Recreation Board to one public forum and for the approval to amend current bylaws to

remove Article XI – Subcommittees and Committees, Section 2(b), officially declassifying the two area committees as subcommittees of the Parks and Recreation Board.

BACKGROUND

The Parks and Recreation Board (PRB) has historically held a standing sub-committee for two Area Committees one for each community park division, Community Parks I (CPI) and Community Parks II (CPII), with an assigned Parks and Recreation Board member as the designated chairperson of each respective Area Committee. The members of the Area Committee consisted of the chairperson or designated representative of each Community Recreation Group (CRG). Parks and Recreation Department (Department) staff supported the committee by coordinating the in-person monthly meetings with the designated Chairperson, setting the agenda, preparing the minutes and gathering agenda topics.

Since the pandemic, the Department has found it difficult to effectively disseminate information to all communities due to several inactive CRGs, lack of quorum and agenda items. Challenges include some CRGs dissolving over the years so not all communities' have active groups or representation on the committees. The chairperson or representatives of active CRGs find it difficult to attend in-person meetings. As a sub-committee of the Park Board, Area Committees are required to follow the Brown Act requirements, which includes in-person meetings. More often than not, due to limited attendance and lack of a quorum, Area Committee meetings were frequently cancelled further limiting the Department's ability to distribute information to the communities. In general, the committees were not performing their intended purpose of acting as a venue to gather CRGs into one forum to share information such as City updates, Department updates, common issues affecting CRGs, proposed park programs, park projects, and other items that are occurring across the City.

DISCUSSION

In an effort to expand public outreach and engagement, the Department is proposing a restructure of the Area Committees. The goal of this restructure is to:

- Host open community meetings
- Invite all general public to attend
- Unite all communities and divisions
- Disseminate Department information across all communities uniformly
- Ensure all patrons feel welcome and engaged in park projects, activities and spaces
- Implement an equitable and inclusive community engagement strategy
- Address barriers that hinder or prevent community engagement
- To inform, involve, collaborate and support each community
- Boost participation and engagement for all to learn about the department

The Department held monthly Joint Area Committee meetings between August and November, which included monthly workshops and surveys to obtain feedback from attendees on the Area Committee restructure. Two separate surveys were sent out via email to a little over 80 participants. Responses ranged from 12 to 20 people per survey. The survey asked what day and month worked best for everyone and how frequent the committee should be. The final results identified the first Wednesday of the month for when the meeting will

be held, and the majority selected bimonthly as the frequency. The survey also gathered respondent feedback on topics, discussions, or information items to include for future meetings. At each Joint Area Committee Meeting, the results of the survey were shared with the attendees, along with the overview of the committee changes. Attendees provided feedback and concerns with the Department's changes.

After multiple meetings, the attendees acknowledged struggles with participation from Community Recreation Groups, issues with disseminating information to the public and lack of community engagement across all communities as key reasons for the need for this restructure. A concern was raised regarding the loss of voting on the items being heard. As the Area Committees are sub-committees of the Parks and Recreation Board, their role is advisory in nature, and they provide recommendations. This relationship will remain intact, and should the restructure be successful it will result in more recommendations/input/information being provided to the PRB for their consideration.

Under the restructure proposal, the two committees will be eliminated and converted into an open informational public meeting for all to attend. Under this structure, meetings will not be subject to the Brown Act which means no need for officers, quorum or in-person meetings. All meetings will be held virtually with closed captions and have the option for hybrid meetings as needed. Meetings will be recorded and posted on the City website along with the agenda, staff reports and presentations. All CRG members and members of the general public would be invited to attend. Participants have the ability to opt-in to a distribution email list to receive meeting notices, agendas, surveys and meeting documentation. Department staff will work with attendees to develop an interest list for future meeting presentations, coordinate presentations, and collect feedback from attendees to share with the Parks and Recreation Board.

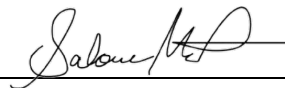
Therefore, the Department makes the recommendation that the Parks and Recreation Board amend their Bylaws to remove Article XI – Subcommittees and Committees, Section 2(b), officially declassifying the two area committees as subcommittees of the Parks and Recreation Board.

If you have any questions regarding this staff report, please contact Program Equity Manager, Salome Martinez at SYMartinez@sandiego.gov or call 619-613-7448.

Respectfully submitted,



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Prepared by: Salome Martinez
Program Equity Manager

SE/sm

Attachment(s): None
c: Council District 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 Office