

MINUTES

**City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE
April 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

Allison Soares
Molly Chase
Howard Blackson
Makeda Cheatom
Chris Eddy
Tim Shields
Kathy Vandenheuvel

Members Absent

William Aaron Jr
Brer Marsh
Mary McKenzie
Dang Nguyen

Staff Present

Jon Richards
Johnny Chou
Victor Johnson

CALL TO ORDER

Allison Soares called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES March 7, 2024

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

A motion was made by Ms. Vandenheuvel and seconded by Mr. Eddy to approve the March 7, 2024, meeting minutes. The motion carried (5-0-1).

NON- AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Web Form:

Bruce Dammann - The West Mesa of Balboa Park is considered the front yard of Balboa Park and Sixth Avenue is used as a major entrance for visitors and the local community to the Central Mesa. At a recent Uptown Planners meeting the Engineering and Capital Improvement Department presented an inadequate design for a roundabout at Sixth and Juniper Street which is an important location for the park. Any design at that location has a visual impact on Balboa Park because of the exit from the park at Juniper and the view to the Cabrillo Bridge and Central Mesa. Since a portion of the project is in the park, the engineering solution doesn't take into account the importance of having a well-designed project adjacent to and in the City of San Diego's Crown Jewel.

Because of the projects impact on the park, please request that the Engineering & Capital Improvements Department present their design to the Balboa Park Committee for input so that Balboa Park can be enhanced by an appropriate project. I can just imagine the engineers, without design input, installing all sorts of materials, signs and objects that will detract from the beauty of the park.

If the City can't do a design with the community and Balboa Park Committee's approval, it would be better to do nothing.

In-Person:

Stephen Hill – Wanted to express appreciation of Johnny Chou's 33 years of service with the City from the Mayor's office.

Daniele Laman – New CRO for the Balboa Park area. Announced upcoming April HPR lawn programs.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

None.

STAFF REPORT

Emily Bonner, Council District 3 – None

Michael Bravo, 78th District – None

Jon Richards, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation – Thanked Jonny Chou for his nearly 34 years of service with the City. Will be sending out more update electronically.

BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES

Forever Balboa Park – Elizabeth Babcock – Spark Awards will be on May 9th. This is her last meeting as she will be moving to Washington DC for a new opportunity. Phillip Sammuli and Jackie Higgins will be co-Interim CEOs.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – Peter Comiskey – Encouraged all to be active advocates for Arts and Culture, Parks and Recreation and San Diego Police since it is budget season.

Committee of 100 – None

Save Starlight – Steve Stopper – Looking for Parks and Recreation to help them move forward.

Spanish Village Arts Foundation – Frank Casciani – Programs have been moving forward. Have a full schedule for summer camps. Have 2 artists to bring to the Committee for approval.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

None

CONSENT ITEMS

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Item 1. Balboa Park Committee Meeting Time Change: 4:00pm-6:00pm: Allison Soares, Chairperson, Balboa Park Committee

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

Howard Blackson – Good with it.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Will be harder, but if majority can make it, she will support it.

Makeda Cheatom – Supports it.

Molly Chase – In support of it.

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Ms. Soares/ Ms. Chase

A motion was made by Mr. Soares and seconded by Ms. Chase to approve changing the Balboa Park Committee time from 6:00pm to 4:00pm. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

Item 2. San Diego Nice Guys – Nice Guys Xmas Event: David Walters, President of San Diego Nice Guys

Public Comment:

Peter Comiskey – Has concerns that this event will cause traffic issues that were not there before due to the redesign of Park Boulevard. Asks that South Morley Field be considered for a spot for the event.

Committee Comment:

Tim Shields – The Old Globe was not contacted regarding this event. They have 3 events that day. Worried about access for Old Globe patrons.

Howard Blackson – Inquired if there were any lessons from last year to improve this year.

David Walter (responded) – Event went smooth last year, but there are some minor changes.

Howard Blackson – The issues on Park was created by adding bus lane. Parking has not changed in that area.

Chris Eddy – Asked if Old Globe attendance for their events exceeded 500 people.

Tim Shields (responded) – Get 400-500 people per performance.

David Walter – The event goes from 10:00am-2:00pm. Everyone is gone by 2:30pm. Setup is done the Friday before.

Chris Eddy – Inquired if 2500 was the amount of people they get.

David Walter (responded) – 900 families are invited. Just under 2500 people attended last year.

Tim Shields – Hopes there is a way to monitor traffic to see what the impact of these events having are.

Kathy Vandenheuevel – Would support having the event. Does believe that it does brings up that there are parking issues in the park.

Makeda Cheatom – Supports the event but does see that Park Boulevard has been an issue on the weekends.

Molly Chase – See if can work with Balboa Park Cultural Park to see what can be done on the high impact days.

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Ms. Chase/ Ms. Vandenheuevel

A motion was made by Ms. Chase and seconded by Ms. Vandenheuevel to approve the San Diego Nice Guys – Nice Guys Xmas Event. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

Item 3. Botanical Building and Gardens Phase 2 Project: Allison Soares, Chairperson, Balboa Park Committee, and Leigh Kyle, Principal, Spurlock Landscape Architects Design and Planning.

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

Howard Blackson – Inquired why there was no southern connection to the pergola.

Leigh Kyle (Responded) – The slope was too steep.

Howard Blackson – Inquired what the overall theme was.

Leigh Kyle (Responded) – Global Mediterranean gardens.

Kathy Vandenheuevel – Has there been any changes since it was presented in February.

Leigh Kyle (Responded) – Added more detail and just got comments back from the City related to plant suitability.

Chris Eddy – Inquired how much thought was put into plants that attract butterflies and hummingbirds.

Leigh Kyle (Responded) – Quite a lot, but it is more implicit than explicit.

Makeda Cheatom – How many California natives are in the garden?

Leigh Kyle (Responded) – Don't have a number but they are interspersed throughout.

Chris Eddy – Inquired about seating.

Jackie Higgins (Responded) – Upwards of 46 benches right now.

Tim Shields – Inquired about timeline for project.

Leigh Kyle (Responded) – Will start construction at the end of this year.

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

A motion was made by Mr. Eddy and seconded by Mr. Blackson to approve the Botanical Building and Gardens Phase 2 Project with attention to pollinators and attention to salvia. The motion passed (6-0-1).

WORKSHOP ITEMS

None

INFORMATION ITEM

Item 4. World Design Capital San Diego Tijuana 2024: Jonathon Glus, Executive Director, City of San Diego Arts and Culture, Christine E. Jones, Chief of Civic Art Strategies, City of San Diego, Arts and Culture, and Joanna Salazar Harris, Chief Operating Officer, World Design Capital San Diego Tijuana 2024

Public Comment:

Daniele Laman – Inquired when the item will be back since it is the middle of the summer moratorium.

Jonathon Glus (Responded) – Are currently working with Parks and Recreation to obtain a Right of Entry permit. Will be back when we have more detail.

Committee Comment:

Kathy Vandenheuevel – Inquired where the pavilion will go when it leaves Balboa Park.

Jonathon Glus (Responded) – WDC hopes to donate it to a school or university.

Chris Eddy – It's very exciting. Feels there is not enough publicity about it.

Jonathon Glus (Responded) – \$1 million dollars of the contract is for communication. Much of the coverage is being done outside of the local market to attract tourism. Will start to see more local coverage around July.

Joanna Salazar Harris – There is a lot more coverage around Downtown and other locations.

Chris Eddy – Was any thought given to orienting the structure to the Sun.

Joanna Salazar Harris (Responded) – Deferring a lot to the museums and how it fits for them to not block views.

Howard Blackson – The location is mostly used as a performance space. Hope there is music and performances that go on more than exhibits and lectures.

Makeda Cheatom – Has concerns that this will affect the street artists and who will get granted and would like people of color included.

Jonathon Glus (Responded) – Part of the contract was to have a formal process. An application had to be submitted. WDC works hard to diversifying the community partners.

Joanna Salazar Harris – Would love to connect with Makeda directly to address this.

Item 5. Inez Grant Parker Memorial Rose Garden Pergola Project: Brigitta Rehn, Senior Project Specialist, Forever Balboa Park and Jackie Higgins, Vice President, Forever Balboa Park

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

Chris Eddy – Wondered if Douglas Fir as a material was a concern as it is flammable or vandalism.

Brigitta Rehn (Responded) – Did bring the design to the City for input since they will maintain. They identified wood as being preferable.

Howard Blackson – Appreciate the design and attention to detail.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – This space is dear to heart. Appreciates the Rose Garden volunteers and supports anything for the area.

Makeda Cheatom – Great job. One of favorite places to meditate in the park. Love the design.

Allison Soares – Inquired on the timeline.

Jackie Higgins (Responded) – May need to obtain an ROE. Hope in the next 6 months.

Chris Eddy – Inquired if there will be roses on it or if it will be bare.

Brigitta Rehn (Responded) – There will be no roses as they are what caused the deterioration on the previous pergola.

Jackie Higgins – The structures will be 12 feet and volunteers cannot maintain things at that height.

Chris Eddy – Inquired how lighting issue will be handled and have they been included in the design.

Jackie Higgins (Responded) – Currently looking at solar options and working with the fabricator on it.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:59 pm

Notice of Next Balboa Park Meeting: May 2, 2024
4:00 P.M.
In-Person

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Canales
District Manager