

MINUTES

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

March 1, 2012

Meeting held at:

Balboa Park Club
2150 Pan American Road
San Diego, CA 92101

Mailing address is:

Balboa Park Administration Building
2125 Park Boulevard
San Diego, CA 92101-4792

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present

Jeri Dilno
Michael Hager
Andrew Kahng
Luanne Kanzawa
David Kinney
Mike McDowell
Minnie Rzeslawski
Michael Singleton
Rob Steppke
David Strickland

Members Absent

Don Liddell

Staff Present

Susan Lowery-Mendoza, Balboa Park
Bruce Martinez, Balboa Park

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Kinney called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED (STRICKLAND/ HAGER) TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2012 MEETING. MOTION CARRIED (7,0,3) KAHNG, KINNEY and MCDOWELL ABSTAINING

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES

None

NON AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Jarvis Ross stated that all of the residents of the City are stakeholders in the Park. The maintenance backlog on City streets, storm drains and buildings totals 898 million dollars and the infrastructure is crumbling faster than it is being fixed. Over 360 million gallons of water was lost due to water main breaks last year. The proposed bypass bridge and connecting roads have no provision for maintenance funding.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Kinney reported the following:

- The deadline to respond to the draft EIR has been extended to March 22, 2012. Responses must be in the form of a letter or email. If anyone wants responses to go through the Balboa Park Committee, he will forward the responses to Development Services. No responses have been received to date.
- The Park and Recreation Board met last week which also serves as the San Diego Regional Park Improvement Fund Oversight Committee, which receives funds for capital improvement projects from Mission Bay Park lease revenues. Recommendation for revenues to be allocated for Balboa Park for Fiscal year 2012/2013 include relocation of an electrical room in the California Tower at the Museum of Man to accommodate the seismic retrofit of the tower and to cover additional costs for the Museum of Man re-roofing project.

STAFF REPORT

Steve Hill, representing City Council – District 3

Steve Hill reported the following:

- Councilmember Gloria, Chair of the City's Budget and Finance Committee was proud to stand with Mayor Sanders last week to announce that for the first time in years, the City has erased its structural budget deficit due to spending cuts, reforms and an improved economy. Funds will allow for increased hours at recreation centers and libraries, along with other emergency infrastructure projects.
- The City Council recently approved measures to provide additional protection to historic structures by enabling the assessment of penalties for unpermitted damage of historic structures.
- The Historic Resources Board recently released its annual report and it is available on the City's website.
- In an effort to promote urban agriculture, the City Council passed new regulations for keeping chickens, goats and bees in backyards.

Susan Lowery-Mendoza, Balboa Park Facilities and Special Events District Manager

Susan Lowery-Mendoza provided the following report:

- It was requested at the last meeting to show the Balboa Park capacities separately from the other City Parks. Our Department is working on this and will separate capacities by park and have it available on our website by the end of the week.

Upcoming Events:

- Saturday, March 3, 2012 Finish Chelsea's Run originating on the West side, running through the Central Mesa and returning to 6th Avenue North lawn.
- March 10 -11, The Thursday Club Rummage Sale at the Balboa Park Activity Center
- March 17 – 25, The San Diego Science Fair at the Balboa Park Activity Center
- March 17 – a very busy day in the park –Saint Patrick's Day Parade and Festival, Cherry Blossom Festival at the Japanese Friendship Garden, Youth Fitness Expo at the Organ Pavilion, Science Family Day in the Park, and Citywide Basketball playoffs at Municipal Gym
- March 24, Race for Autism – 6th and Laurel South Lawn – walk through the Central Mesa
- March 25, Hot Chocolate 5K and 15/K using the East mesa as approved last month

March 30, 2012 is Cesar Chavez Day and City Offices are closed.

Bruce Martinez, Balboa Park Operations District Manager:

Bruce Martinez provided the following report:

- Sixth Avenue Tot Lot is basically completed. The City will be installing four benches next week and spreading mulch over the surrounding area. The Friends of Balboa Park are eager to have the fence removed and it is expected that within the next two weeks the tot lot will be opened to the public.
- Balboa Park Arbor Day 2012 will be on April 27, 2012 which happens to be National Arbor Day. This year's event will be dedicated to replacing the Honey Locusts Trees inside the Spreckels Organ Pavilion. We are currently working in conjunction with the Friends of Balboa Park and the Urban Corp of San Diego County to complete the project.
- Turf renovation around the Lily Pond should be concluded by mid month and will be opened for spring break.

- The City Water Department will be performing some required modifications to one of the main water lines which serve the Central Mesa of Balboa Park. It is expected that the work will take one day to complete and it will be done at night to mitigate impacts on the Park. As soon as we get an exact date we'll send out notices to make sure the project date doesn't conflict with any events held by the institutions.

CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM UPDATES

Michael Hager reported the following:

The Balboa Park Cultural Partnership is commencing implementation planning for a Park Wide Annual Pass Program. Sixteen institutions have submitted resolutions agreeing to participate in implementation planning and we are excited about using this opportunity to expand access to the Park and create a more seamless visitor experience between the institutions. We expect the program will launch in the year leading up to the 2015 Centennial.

Luanne Kanzawa reported the following:

The Balboa Park Sustainability Program is on track in completing energy upgrades throughout the Park with EECBG Funds. This month we're adding new lighting projects at the House of Hospitality, Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, San Diego Art Institute: Museum of the Living Artist, San Diego Museum of Man, San Diego Automotive Museum, and the San Diego Model Railroad Museum. We are currently working with City staff to complete an audit of projects completed in fiscal year 2011.

ACTION ITEMS

Consent

101. None

Adoption

201. None

Special Events

301. None

WORKSHOP ITEMS

401. Plaza de Panama, Circulation and Parking Structure Project, Presenter: Mark Johnson, Civitas Inc. and David Preciado, Estrada Land Planning

Mark Johnson introduced David Preciado of Estrada Land Planning who has joined the design team along with Vicky Estrada. The EIR deadline has been extended to March 22, 2012 and all written comments are due to Development Services Division by then. They will be seeking advisory committee votes in May, June and July. They have made some significant improvements to the plans which he presented. There was a thought that the design was too contemporary, the use of palms was questioned and the relationship to the Organ Pavilion was improved.

David Preciado noted the new lineal forms and clean, orderly arrangements. A number of features were added or changed: larger shade trees; a more traditional garden with four quadrants using traditional California landscape; the plaza space reduced; a vista allowing for easterly views of the Australian Garden and the World Beat Center; the large turf panel is rectilinear and has clean edges; a tree bosque at the southern entrance; improved maintenance access; transition improved from the rooftop to the Organ Pavilion; and rotated restroom building. Historical Resources staff and Park staff have reviewed the changes.

Committee Comments:

- Inquired as to the size of the green open area. (over 100 ft wide by 200 ft. long)
- The trees work better than the palms
- Concerned that the trees in the raised planters will not grow tall
- Not a traditional layout – the axial arrangements are not there – needs to be more formal with a visual terminus
- The eastern edge near the canyon is not pedestrian friendly and the road is wide
- The southwest bosque of trees is not needed
- Concerned about the loss of trees

Mark Johnson thanked the Committee for the comments.

Public Comment:

- All alternatives for circulation in the Park should be considered. The plan is a water consuming, noise generating, high maintenance structure, with potential hazards to women and children. Instead, look at light rail on the east side of the Park and alternate transportation on the west side, with a tram service for the elderly and disabled.

INFORMATION
ITEMS

501. Ben and Nikki Clay – Update on Balboa Park 2015 Centennial Celebration

Chairperson Kinney introduced and thanked the Clays for volunteering to chair the Committee. Mrs. Clay announced that since September, a lot has happened; Mike McDowell is now the CEO for the Celebration; and 501 (c)(3) status has been established as Balboa Park Celebration Inc.; office space is established in the San Diego Hall of Champions and insurance is in place. The MOU has approved by the Rules Committee and the City Council and one million dollars in seed money is in place. An initial planning grant for the institutions has been sent out and will be awarded by the end of the month. She announced their current board members and advisors and is going through a nominating and election process to add more members to the board and is seeking those with finance, sponsorship and fundraising and marketing experience. Celebrate imagination, inspiration and innovation is the current theme. They plan to enhance the stature of the Park, provide free activities, extraordinary exhibits, and economic stimulus by targeting local, national and international visitors.

Mike McDowell announced that he is excited to be a staff member and is ready to get busy turning ideas into possibilities. Regional support and participation is needed and they will be continuing to reach out to all communities. A rough forecast of room nights, TOT and economic impact was prepared and presented. A world class event will attract people to the event as well as the residents. While planning the event, they will be sanctioning events, working on a calendar and releasing Park areas back for public use that are not being used. The MOU requires deliverables and a community outreach plan is being prepared. In November, a master calendar will be presented as well as a sponsorship plan. They will come and report to the Committee as often as requested.

SUB - COMMITTEE REPORT

601. Land-Use and Policy – None

602. West Mesa Subcommittee – None

COMMMTTEE MEMBERS REPORT

Balboa Park/Morley Field Recreation Council – Andrew Kahng reported that the Recreation Council’s budget subcommittee met and finalized its 2012 year budget. The grant from Councilmember Gloria and the added city-funded operating hours announced last week will substantially reduce our projected deficit for 2012, and these resources, along with support from donors such as the Thursday Club, are deeply appreciated by the Council and user groups. The Recreation Council will have a special meeting next Wednesday, March 7 at 6:00 P.M. in the War Memorial Building; the main agenda item will be a presentation of the Plaza de Panama EIR.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 P.M.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, May 3, 2012
6:00 P.M.
Santa Fe Room/Balboa Park Club
San Diego, CA 92101

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowery-Mendoza
District Manager