

**MINUTES**

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

January 7, 2010

**Meeting held at:**

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

**Mailing address is:**

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

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members Present**

Laurie Burgett (arr. 6:08)  
Jeri Dilno  
Michael Singleton  
Vicki Granowitz  
Michael Hager  
Andrew Kahng  
David Kinney  
Donald Steele

**Members Absent**

Don Liddell  
Mike McDowell,  
Rob Steppke

**Staff Present**

Stephen Hill  
Susan Lowery-Mendoza  
Bruce Martinez

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MSC IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED AND CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2009 MEETING WITH THE FOLLOWING CORRECTIONS;**

- 1) PAGE 4, CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP UPDATES, DECEMBER NIGHTS, CHANGE \$8,000.00 TO \$80,000.00 IN FREE ADMISSIONS.
- 2) PAGE 5, ACTION ITEM - WEST MESA SUBCOMMITTEE, ADD THE WORDS, "ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE PARK" TO DESCRIBE THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA THAT THE MEMBERS LIVE IN.

**(STEELE/DILNO 5-0-2) ABSTENSION KAHNG/SINGLETON.**

**REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES**

None

**NON AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT**

Warren Simon provided the Committee feedback about the Balboa Park December Nights event. He noted that he attended various meetings with Park groups and received positive feedback. The only difficulty was coming to compliance with County Health Department codes. There were no major incidents and Mr. Simon will return with financial reports in 60 days.

Dale Hess noted that he saw a comment on the Hillquest website from a Spanish Village artist regarding paid parking in the Park. He inquired as to whether or not the parking study addressed this issue? Staff will ensure that the study is put back on the City's website.

### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Chairperson Vicki Granowitz reported on the following:

- The Park and Recreation Board did not meet in November or December.
- She met with the Hungarian Ambassador regarding the Sandor Marai plaque. The plaque is currently on display in the House of Hungary.
- A 1.25 million dollar donation will benefit two gardens in Balboa Park was made by Thomas and Lilyan Frank.
- The Balboa Park Trust at the San Diego Foundation published a walking tour of the gardens which is available at the Visitor's Center.
- A high level meeting called by Mayor Sanders was held in December to talk about the Centennial in 2015. Ms. Granowitz spoke of the need for the public to be included in the planning process and a concern about existing special events in the Park.
- The San Diego Zoo's centennial will be in 2016.
- The Balboa Park Task Force on the Future of Balboa Park is looking at board development and relationships. The meetings are open to the public and held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month. The January and February meetings will be held at the Rueben H. Fleet's Community Room.
- Ms. Granowitz reported for Don Liddell that the Balboa Park West Mesa Sub-Committee meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at the War Memorial Building and they are identifying goals and analyzing their recommendations regarding special events to possibly be applicable park-wide.
- As a member of the Land Use Sub Committee, she met with David Kinney and Park and Recreation staff to learn more about special events.
- Banker's Hill/ Park West and Uptown Planners are working with Councilmember Faulconer to prevent accidents on 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues by requesting the installation of stop signs. There is a proposal to install a sign at 6<sup>th</sup> and Nutmeg.
- Ms. Granowitz requested that the Parking Circulation and Land Use Report be placed back on the website.

### **STAFF REPORT**

Stephen Hill, City Council Third District representative reported the following:

- He invited all to Councilmember Gloria's State of the District address which will be held at 6:30 p.m. on February 1 at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theater at the Old Globe.

Susan Lowery-Mendoza, Facilities and Special Events District Manager reported the following:

- December Nights was a huge success with an estimated 300,000 in attendance for the two day event. Our Civic Dance Arts Program was well received with standing room only crowds in the patio of the Casa del Prado. The County Health Department was more stringent this year with conformance to health codes.

- Circus Vargas will be loading in on January 30 in the lower Inspiration Parking Lot and shows begin on February 4. There are no changes to their operation from last year.

Bruce Martinez, Operations District Manager reported the following:

- It has been reported that the Balboa Golf Course is experiencing problems with people walking their dogs on portions of the front 9 at dusk. Golfers and staff have approached the dog walkers and have found them to be argumentative and uncooperative. Park Rangers have offered to assist and will be including the area in their afternoon patrols.
- December 7 Storm Damage- the Park lost or had significant damage to approximately 42 trees in the Park. We lost a specimen Park tree in a Guadalupe Cypress, *Cupressus guadalupensis* on the West Mesa that was thought to be planted by Kate Sessions. Staff was able to recover cones from the tree and we hope to eventually propagate the seeds. Staff is making every effort to plant trees the Park in locations where trees were lost.
- Lately we have had some transient issues at the Marston House. We seem to be in a confrontational relationship with an individual who has broken a few windows and has vandalized other parts of the property. Police and Ranger staff are working together to remedy the situation.
- We have been notified by the Public Utilities Department that the sewer line running down the middle of State Route 163 through Balboa Park will be relined in the near future. The majority of work will be done in the evenings however there is a potential for lane closures for some of the work. Park staff has explained the importance of access to the Park and the potential impacts this could have. Public Utilities has committed to providing us with information on any lane closures. They are expected to make a presentation to the Balboa Park Committee next month.
- Finally, the Botanical Building will feature a colorful display of Cymbidium (simbidium) orchids in bloom from Feb. – Mar. The Botanical Building’s collection of Cymbidiums includes hundreds of plants representing different varieties which are very popular with visitors, artists and photographers.

### **CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM UPDATES**

Large Institutions - Michael Hager reported the following:

- Mr. Hager will be out of town for the February meeting.
- There will be an Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant meeting at the Rueben H. Fleet Science Center on January 19.
- An Environmental Sustainability workshop will be held on January 14 at the Natural History Museum, House of Hospitality and Museum of Photographic Arts. LEAD Certification recognition will be given to the Natural History Museum. The Natural History Museum may be the oldest museum building to obtain LEAD Certification in the country.
- The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Non- Profit Governance Symposium at the University of San Diego is on January 8 and 9.

- The Balboa Park Cultural Partnerships is conducting a learning institute regarding demographic changes and the future of museums on January 27.
- The Balboa Park Cultural Partnership is a very unique organization and will be featured at the American Association of Museums annual meeting in May in Los Angeles.
- Mr. Hager commended the San Diego Zoo for a calendar issue that talks about climate change.
- Mr. Hager clarified an article in the newspaper regarding the Natural History Museum's downgrading of bond issue.

David Kinney reported the following:

- The economy has affected non-profits and is a struggle for many. The Central Cultural de la Raza has released their executive director, Stephanie de la Torre.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Consent**

101. None.

### **Adoption**

#### **201. House of China proposal to install Foo Dogs**

Susan Lowery-Mendoza requested a recommendation regarding a donation and installation of a pair of Foo Dogs (Chinese lions) to be placed in landscaping at the front door of the House of China. Staff prepared a report for the Committee in reference to Park and Recreation Board Policy #1102 and the Council Policy 100-02, City Receipt of Donations. The House of China is a charter member of the House of Pacific Relations in Balboa Park and wishes to commemorate their 75<sup>th</sup> year in the Park in 2010. The three foot, cream color manufactured stone lions would be placed to the right and left of the French doors of the cottage. The Commission for Arts and Culture was consulted, but because the lions are mass manufactured, they do not fall under their prevue. It is staff's opinion that the installation does meet the requirements of the policies, but staff does have the following concerns:

- Removal of existing landscaping for the installation
- The grounds are outside their permitted area
- The size of the proposed features may be out of scale with the buildings
- The master landscape plan (Requa) is to adorn the buildings with an ever-changing pattern of natural beauty against unadorned wall masses.
- The potential for cumulative adverse impacts to the Historic District from placement of special features.
- The use of gravel could add potential maintenance liability issues.

David Seid of the House of China and Carolyn Lee, landscape architect stated that the bush outside the doors are larger in height than the Foo Dogs, larger gravel could be used and some landscaping would be provided at the base of the Foo Dogs.

Committee Comments:

- Inquiring if adjacent cottages concur with the plan? Would like to hear from the House of Scotland.
- May open the doors to other installations which may clutter the area.
- How would they fit in the space? It is a tight area.
- Requa saw the potential for visual blight and aimed to keep things simple
- Policies have not kept up with the times.
- Can they be placed inside the cottage?
- Need to pay attention to cumulative impacts to the area.
- May be out of character with the historic district.
- Enhances cultural enrichment of area.
- There is a difference between memorial plaques and cultural features and the policy doesn't reflect this.
- Changes to the community character.

**MS IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED TO APPROVE THE PROJECT AS PROPOSED. (STEELE/SINGLETON 2,6,0) THE MOTION FAILED.**

It was suggested that House of Pacific Relations needs to holistically review the area along with staff and Committee members. The House of China withdrew their proposal.

### **Special Events**

#### **301. Healing Arts Festival – Ryan Altman, Alternative Healing Arts Network**

Susan Lowery-Mendoza noted the discussion at the last meeting of issues at this event last year. Ryan Altman is suggesting some changes to the event to address the issues, however they do significantly change the event. Staff supports his recommended changes.

Ryan Altman thanked the Committee for working with him. He acknowledged the event attendance had an impact on the Park. He is working with the Fire Marshall on a plan to enclose the area with fencing which would limit capacity to 7,500 persons and he would like to change it to a two day event. The same site map would remain the same, a clean-up contractor would be used, one single entertainer used and Cal Trans is being consulted to divert traffic to the off- site parking area. The event set-up would take place on April 30, the event conducted on May 1 -2, and everything cleaned-up by noon on May 3.

Committee Comments:

- The event is tying-up a parking lot for four days.
- Concerned still about the acupuncture needles.
- The Park needs to be in balance. Events that attract large numbers and take parking lots out of use do not work for the Park.
- The time of year that an event is held has a lot to do with the impact on the Park and May is extremely busy.
- The event being held over the course of two days doubles the impact on the Park
- Not in favor of fencing off the Park

- Should be congratulated for growing such a large event but should find a suitable place that doesn't have constraints to growth.
- When an event makes a mistake and is required to come back for review, they should be offered a second chance.

**MSC IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED AND CARRIED TO DISAPPROVE THE HEALING ARTS EVENT (BURGETT/KINNEY 6,1,1)NAY SINGLETON, ABSTENTION KAHNG. THE MOTION FAILED.**

**302. San Diego Race for Autism – Juan and Sharon Leon**

Susan Lowery-Mendoza noted the proposed change to course route for this 6<sup>th</sup> annual event which occurs on Saturday, March 27, 2010. The proposal is to close the northbound lane of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Juniper Street and Upas Street for approximately one and half hours. Staff does not concur with the need to make this route change.

Juan and Sharon Leon, Executive Director noted the congestion on the bridge and the crossover points of the current route. The route was discussed with the Police Department and they were in support of the change. They do have volunteer marshals on the course and their crowds are larger. They hope to grow and modify the course for future expansion.

Committee Comments:

- The course change doesn't solve problems, just moves the problem
- Not a critical problem
- Perhaps the organization should look at hosting two events by adding a walk in North County
- The Committee is not approving new events that close roads (with the exception of Balboa Drive)
- Look at other routes such as starting at Quince and Balboa Drive and taking the Marston Loop
- Closing streets has a cumulative impact

**MSC IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO DENY THE REQUESTED COURSE CHANGE (SINGLETON/BURGETT 8,0,0).**

**303. Circo Atayde USA**

The event organizer was not present.

**MSC IT WAS MOVED/SECONDED AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO TABLE DISCUSSION OF THIS EVENT (DILNO/SINGLETON 8,0,0).**

## **WORKSHOP ITEMS**

### 401. **Florida Canyon K-Rails**

Rob Gehrke with RBF Consulting, and Ty Paulusky and Ferdando Lasaga with the City's Traffic Engineering Department are designing a guard rail for Florida Drive between Bob Wilson Drive and Pershing Drive. There are many accidents on record for this area from vehicles traveling over the center median. They studied four different guard rail choices before narrowing it down to two plans for raised barrier walls and low maintenance landscaping which will create traffic calming and a gateway to the Park. They are still in design and development and they are seeking the Committee's recommendation.

#### Committee Comments:

- Mike Singleton asked if the road is a park road or City road.
- What is the posted speed limit?
- Is it a problem of visibility?
- Suggest a six foot wide bike lane, two eleven foot wide lanes and 3foot off-set striping and reflective dots and curb.
- Don't like the look of k-rails in the Park.
- What is the true problem and alternate solutions?
- The Navy ought to be involved in the funding and solutions to the problem
- There is a problem of vehicles nearly hitting the median when turning right on Florida St. from Pershing Drive south.
- There are two lanes to turn south on Pershing from Florida Dr. which causes people to change lanes abruptly to get in the shorter lane.
- Consideration for wildlife in the area.
- Need better graphics/pictures presented, difficult to understand.
- Helpful to identify specifically where the accidents are occurring.
- Use high pressure sodium lighting.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

501. None

## **SUB - COMMITTEE REPORT**

601. Land-Use and Policy – None

602. West Mesa Subcommittee of the Balboa Park Committee – None

## **COMMMTTEE MEMBERS REPORT**

- Balboa Park/Morley Field Recreation Council – Andrew Kahng reported that elections were held and Bill Duong is their new president.
- Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – David Kinney thanked Dale Hess for providing the information regarding special events at Golden Gate Park.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Granowitz adjourned the meeting at 8:15P.M.

**Next Regular Meeting:** Thursday, February 4, 2010  
6:00 P.M.  
Balboa Park Club, Santa Fe Room  
2150 Pan American Road  
San Diego, CA 92101

Respectfully submitted

Susan Lowery-Mendoza  
District Manager