



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2010

MAYOR JERRY SANDERS FACT SHEET

MAYOR SANDERS APPLAUDS DONORS FOR SAVING BEACH FIRE PITS

Two foundations and Councilmembers Faulconer, Lightner provide funding

Mayor Jerry Sanders announced today that San Diego's beach fire pits will remain available to the public for at least another year, thanks to contributions from the public, two local foundations and the offices of Councilmembers Kevin Faulconer and Sherri Lightner.

The donations will fund the cleaning and maintenance of the city's 186 concrete fire pits at the city's beaches and shoreline parks through at least June 2011.

The San Diego Foundation contributed \$90,000 of the \$120,500 needed to maintain the pits for the next fiscal year. The La Jolla Community Foundation pitched in \$4,700 while roughly 50 individual citizens contributed another \$2,896. The two councilmembers made up the balance using money from their office infrastructure funds.

"Today, we see what happens when civic-minded folks step forward for the sake of the public good," Mayor Sanders said.

Council President Pro Tem Faulconer, who helped broker the deal, called the fire pits "part of the fabric that makes up San Diego."

"I was happy to help bridge the gap, but I don't want the city to be in this position year after year, nor do I want our residents wondering every year if the fire pits are on the chopping block," Faulconer said. "So I plan to help find a solution that works for everyone."

Bob Kelly, President and CEO of The San Diego Foundation, noted that since 1975, the nonprofit has helped public-spirited citizens find ways to address community problems.

“Many San Diegans have fond memories of the fire pits and expressed concern and sadness over their potential demise,” said Kelly. “The preservation of the fire pits ensures that the celebration of families and friends around a campfire will continue. This is about our quality of life and why we live here.”

The fire pit program was slated for elimination in 2008 as a cost-saving measure when the national recession – and plummeting tax revenues – necessitated budget cuts at the city. At that time, an anonymous donor stepped forward and funded the service through June of this year.

###