

City of San Diego
Parks and Recreation Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 17, 2024

“TO PROVIDE HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE, AND ENRICHING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL”

Meeting Held by In Person and Teleconference:

This meeting was held at the Balboa Park Club Ballroom and remotely using the Zoom Webinar platform and was streamed online. The public was invited to join the meeting by phone or computer, as well as invited to submit “Public Comments” in writing via a webform. The form was made available on the Parks and Recreation website at <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/boards>.

NOTE: Both verbal and written communication were used by Board Members, City staff, and presenters during the meeting. City staff also used the screen-share function to allow viewers to view content shared by the speaker which included PowerPoint presentations and websites.

Before the meeting was called to order, City staff read instructions to the public regarding technical procedures for making live public comment during the webinar.

Members Present	Members Absent	City Staff Present
Nick Anastasopoulos Martin Armstrong Dr. Andrea Dooley Shaina Gross Rick Gulley (Vice Chair) Daniele Laman Dr. Judith Munoz Evelyn Smith Allison Soares Agatha Wein	Marcella Bothwell (Chair)	Jonathan Avila (Virtual) Ryan Barbrick Kathleen Brand (Virtual) Cynthia Carranza Benny Cartwright (Virtual) Karen Dennison (Virtual) Gina Dulay (Virtual) Andy Field Nicole McNeil Assistant to Nicole M Mayra Medel (Virtual) Louis Merlin Elvi Ricafort Jon Richards Scott Sandel (Virtual) Michelle Abella-Shon Andre Smith Gabriela Verendia

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Gulley at 2:03 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

MOTION/SECONDED:

Dr. Munoz/Ms. Laman

A motion was made by Dr. Munoz to approve the minutes and seconded by Ms. Laman. The motion was approved 9-0-1 and passed unanimously with the following vote: Yea: Nick Anastasopoulos, Martin Armstrong, Shaina Gross, Rick Gulley, Daniele Laman, Dr. Judith Munoz, Evelyn Smith, Allison Soares, and Agatha Wein. Recused: None. Abstained: Evelyn Smith. Not Present: Marcella Bothwell.

Public Comments:

No public comments on the meeting minutes.

Board Comments: None

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lynn Cramer from La Costa Racing Team introduced the Board to slalom skate boarding. Ms. Cramer noted limited locations for slalom practices in the San Diego area and requested a connection with Parks staff to identify locations for slalom courses.

Maureen Keating from USA Skateboarding and a board member of La Costa Racing Team supports the comments for new slalom skating locations mentioned by Ms. Cramer in the previous comment.

Orion Lehrmann participated in World Skate Games and supports locating skate slalom locations in San Diego.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCE: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Balboa Park Committee – Ms. Soares reported the committee met on October 3, 2024. This included a presentation by Howard Blackson regarding the future of Balboa Park and an update from AEA Consulting on prioritization of projects in Balboa Park.
- Mission Bay Park Committee – Dr. Munoz reported the committee met on October 1, 2024. This included a presentation of the city for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) update of the Mission Bay Park Improvement Zone and an update of the preliminary engineering report done. There was a scoping meeting at the Mission Bay High School on October 16, 2024.
- Mission Trails Regional Park Citizens' Advisory Committee – Mr. Gulley reported there was no meeting and thus no update.
- San Diego Parks Foundation – Chair Bothwell was absent. Director Field noted the fundraising event coming on November 1, 2024, for a Walk in the Park.

CHAIR COMMENTS:

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Ms. Laman shared two flyers – one for an International Cottages lawn program this weekend (Saturday, the 19th and Sunday, the 20th at 12 noon at House of Czech and Slovak Republics with food and entertainment) and another for Chollas Lake Halloween Party, which includes pumpkin painting and pumpkin archery, on October 26, 2024 at 12 noon.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Director Field provided the Board with the following updates:

Area Committee:

The consolidated area committee met three times over the past three months: August 14, September 4, and October 9, 2024. The next meeting is scheduled for November 6, 2024.

Agendas, minutes, and reports can be found at <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/boards/cp1ac> or <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/boards/cp2ac>.

Awards:

- The San Diego Architectural Foundation issued its annual orchids and onions awards on October 3, 2024. Orchids illustrate the promotion of outstanding architecture, planning, and urban design. Two projects won orchids in the 2024 awards:
 - E.B. Scripps Park (La Jolla Cove) Pavilion and Restroom – orchid for public architecture
 - Children's Park (Downtown) – orchid for landscape architecture



Balboa Park Update:

- **Botanical Building:** The first phase of work is rapidly nearing completion. The prime construction contractor will transfer the building back to the Department later this month, and the hope is to open the building for San Diegans to enjoy in early December 2024 prior to December Nights. A second phase is underway currently, and that will include garden restoration in the area around the building.
- **Starlight Bowl Requests for Proposal (RFP):** The City of San Diego is looking for organizations or individuals interested in bringing the historic and famed Starlight Bowl in Balboa Park back to life. The request for proposal can be accessed through the City's website: <https://www.sandiego.gov/insidesd/city-san-diego-seeking-rehabilitate-and-reopen-starlight-bowl>. Proposals must be submitted by 4 p.m. on November 14, 2024.

- **Haunted Trails** is underway at the West Mesa with an entrance near Juniper Street. Opening from September 27 until November 2, 2024. Webpage link: <https://hauntedtrail.net/>.

Boards and Commissions Update:

Office of Boards and Commissions (OBC) Executive Director Chida Warren-Darby offered the following updates to share with the Board:

- The Office of Boards and Commissions Code of Conduct unanimously passed City Council yesterday. When the resolution is signed, it will be part of an OBC Handbook Director Warren-Darby is developing for appointees and shared with Liaisons. Additionally, OBC will offer protocol guidelines for items addressed in the Code of Conduct. Parks staff will share this information with Board members once it is ready.
- Advisory Bodies that do not meet quorum should not be meeting. If there is no quorum, they cannot legally hold a meeting under the Brown Act, even if it is only informational items. A prior City Attorney memo reached this conclusion with respect to Council meetings in their memorandum MS-2017-25 (see question 1 in the memo). If the Board cannot make a quorum, the meeting should be adjourned, and no items heard.
- Regarding virtual attendance, under the Brown Act, an in-person quorum is necessary to have a meeting even if another member is appearing via teleconference due to just cause or emergency circumstances. As a reminder, for most boards and commissions, the limit on virtual appearances due to just cause or emergency circumstances is two per calendar year total. Also, for those attending virtually due to emergency circumstances, the board must vote to approve the virtual appearance at the beginning of the meeting.
- Boards, commissions, and committees are required to post agendas to OBC digital kiosk in CAB. Agendas should be posted to the digital kiosk websites 72 hours prior to regularly scheduled meetings (which means they should be sent to Chantai Bradford in addition to Web IT). If the meeting is taking place at a location other than City Hall, then the meeting notice/agenda should also be posted at that physical location. Elvira Ricafort handles this requirement for the Board each month.

Budget Update:

- The Office of the Independent Budget Analyst issued City Council Budget Priorities Report #24-30. This report is intended to help provide early guidance on areas of importance to each City Council Office. The report is available at <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/24-30-fy-2026-city-council-budget-priorities.pdf>. It was heard by the Budget and Government Efficiency Committee on October 16, 2024.
- Five-Year Financial Outlook (Fiscal Year 2026 through 2030): The Department is preparing its initial submission for this effort, which will be released publicly later this fall.

- **Fiscal Year 2025 First Quarter Budget Monitoring:** The reporting period ends on September 30, 2024, so the Department will prepare its submission in October for a report that will be released before the end of the calendar year.

City Parks in the News:

- **Fanuel Park (Mission Bay Park) Issues:** Two issues have been reported over the past few weeks at this location.
 - **Playground:** Unfortunately, due to substantial corrosion and deterioration of the play structures and footings, the Fanuel Street Park playground was deemed unsafe and unusable and was closed to the public on August 13, 2024. The Parks and Recreation Department is currently assessing a short-term solution to reopen the currently fenced off playground area. This short-term solution will involve removing the existing play structures and footings and replacing them with an open sand play area, small spring toys, and/or marine-themed animal statues. The short-term solution will be completed in-house by the Parks and Recreation Department. The timeline to implement the short-term solution is currently in development but is anticipated to take approximately three (3) months to complete. Removal of the obsolete structures will begin in the coming weeks. The long-term solution is to initiate a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project to replace and improve the playground, however, there currently is not any funding allocated to this project.
 - **Restrooms:** The Department is considering overnight closure of the permanent restrooms at night and is exploring options for modular restrooms to operate on site overnight. This site is particularly difficult as the restrooms are set back near the adjacent residences rather than closer to the sandy beach along the Mission Bayfront. See <https://sdnews.com/city-acknowledges-cleanliness-of-fanuel-street-park-restrooms-an-issue/> for more.

Community Recreation Groups and Council Policy 700-42 Reform:

Preparations for an update to Council Policy 700-42 for Community Recreation Groups is still under development. Public input on the draft policy would include a workshop here at the Parks and Recreation Board and at the Area Committee, with the possibility of an ad-hoc committee for additional review and comment as needed.

Grand Openings/Groundbreakings:

- Mira Mesa Community Park Phase 2 Groundbreaking was on September 25, 2024, at 10:15 a.m.
- Carmel Mountain Ranch Pool Grand Opening was on October 12, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.
- Riviera del Sol Park Grand Opening is on October 24, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. The Communications Department is planning to notify Board members of this event via email.

Joint Use: Two locations have dog restrictions currently: Franklin and Hearst joint uses.

Recreation Programs: Summer programming ended with the completion of Parks After Dark, summer camps, and a variety of other programs. School is now back in session.

- **Fall Festivals:** Check the recreation center webpages (<https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/centers>) for information on fall programming, including the Department's Fall Event List at <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/2024-08/2024-fall-events-flyer.pdf>. This includes events centered around the upcoming Halloween events around the City.
- **Event Calendar:** <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/event-calendar>.
- **Permits:** <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/parks/permits> (information on permits, events, and special use permits)

Recruitment Update: The Department has a 21% vacancy rate and is hiring! Each department must submit a "request to fill" for each position hired, which has slowed hiring. Interviews are being conducted currently for several roles, including entry-level positions.

Senior Affairs Advisory Board: Created in 2000, SDMC Section 26.15 authorizes this Board to serve in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council on policy and issues relating to transportation, security at home, improved intergenerational interaction, meal delivery, housing, improved City-County cooperation, and other related issues.

The Board will make recommendations for improving communications between seniors and City government; review City employment policies for seniors; perform studies and surveys as requested by the Mayor and Council; advise on relevant issues and formation of laws, policies, or procedures which may affect seniors; and report annually to the Mayor and Council on the "State of the Seniors" within the City.

Recently, the Board was constituted with new members and plans to meet for the first time on October 22, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. at Park de la Cruz Community Center in City Heights. Information on the Board can be found at <https://www.sandiego.gov/city-clerk/boards-commissions/senioraffairs>.

Upcoming P&R Board Agenda Items:

- Area Committee Reform – November
- Fees – November
- Opportunity Fund – November
- Brush Management Overview – January
- Chollas Creek Flood Mitigation Modifications – January
- Council Policy 700-42 Community Recreation Group Reform – January
- Joint Use Update – January
- Parks Master Plan Update – January or February

- Mid-City Communities Plan Update – TBD

Other Topics for Discussion:

Ms. Laman asked about possible closure of the Normal Heights Elementary joint use field. Director Field stated that a gate at the southwestern corner of Ward Canyon Neighborhood Park used to be opened and provided access to the middle of the campus. Due to campus security issues associated with its layout, it was mutually agreed by the City and San Diego Unified School District that the middle section remain closed permanently. A second gate, located near the parking lot of Ward Canyon Park off 39th Street, leads to an athletic field that is kept unlocked outside of school hours. Ms. Laman shared that the Community Recreation Group chair indicated that the athletic field area was closed. Director Field responded that during his last visit a few weeks ago he did not notice a closure of the athletic field.

Ms. Laman also asked about the status of the Torrey Pines Golf Course Clubhouse Project. Deputy Director John Howard responded that there will be a stakeholders' meeting soon. The Engineering and Capital Projects Department is coordinating that effort and currently is putting together a presentation to outline the process. Ms. Laman asked whether the webpage is up yet. Mr. Howard responded that staff is still developing the project landing page.

Dr. Munoz asked about the Code of Conduct for Boards and Commissions and whether Board members are prohibited from criticizing staff and elected officials. Director Field indicated that the City Council struck that line from the draft Code of Conduct.

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE: None

CONSENT ITEMS: None

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

101. Director's Report

Director Field asked the Board about the usefulness and extent of the Director's Report. No motion was taken on this matter.

Public Comments:

No public comments were received on this item.

Board Comments:

Dr. Munoz shared that she trusts Director Field's judgment of what is important to present.

Ms. Soares commented that this item is the result of her email to Chair Bothwell asking for a more efficient way of presenting the report of Director Field. She commented that Director Field's report is amazing. She wants to know if there is way to shorten or modify the report to help with time management of Board meetings.

Mr. Anastasopoulos asked if the report could be shared ahead of time where the Board could look at it and review sooner. Director Field responded that historically he prepares the report immediately prior to the Board meetings, with some information arriving in the report earlier. Director Field tries to provide a balance report so all relevant information can

be captured in the minutes. Mr. Anastasopoulos commented that Director Field is doing an amazing job.

Ms. Wein commented that she appreciates Director Field's report. She finds the information included of interest to the board, listeners, and other participants. She believes that Director Field's report segment is just right.

Ms. Laman also agreed that she likes the 10-to-15-minute length of Director Field's report. She considers the report wonderful, and she appreciates the more recently added section called "parks in the news."

Mr. Gulley liked the current Director's report and time as well.

102. Friends of Windansea Donation Plaque Program

Ms. Goldman and Mr. Neri presented the proposed program.

MOTION/SECONDED:

Dr. Dooley/Mr. Anastasopoulos

Dr. Dooley moved to approve plaque donation program for Windansea Beach and seconded by Mr. Anastasopoulos. The motion was approved 9-0-1 and passed unanimously with the following vote: Yea: Nick Anastasopoulos, Martin Armstrong, Dr. Andrea Dooley, Shaina Gross, Rick Gulley, Daniele Laman, Dr. Judith Munoz, Evelyn Smith, and Agatha Wein. Nay: None. Recused: Allison Soares. Abstained: None. Not Present: Marcella Bothwell.

Public Comments:

None received.

Board Comments:

Dr. Munoz asked whether more than five locations can be identified for plaques. Mr. Neri indicated there is a need to balance the number of plaques so that those participating are receiving a unique opportunity that is special to the donor and to avoid having too many plaques that could upset the aesthetic of the area.

Ms. Laman asked whether the language of the plaques would come back to the Board or if the final decision would rest with staff. Ms. Goldman indicated it would be reviewed and decided by staff.

Mr. Armstrong asked if the Coastal Commission permit approved the plaque locations given the temporal nature of the wood structures and concerns with sea level rise and king tide impacts. He felt the wood structure locations for the plaque would be less permanent. Mr. Neri looked at alternate locations but noted that wood is the material of choice for Windansea and some other beaches in La Jolla because wood weathers by rounding rather than exposing rebar as concrete does. Wood is less expensive to replace than concrete. He feels plaques can be transferred from one wood area to another. Mr. Armstrong is concerned that any structure in this location would be at risk due to higher risk from annual winter storm damage. Mr. Neri is concerned with plaques inlaid in flatwork because people would step on the plaques, which could be considered by some to be disrespectful.

Ms. Wein asked how the funds collected from the plaque program would be used. Mr. Neri stated that these funds can help fund the proposed improvement project at Windansea Beach related to the Coastal Development Permit, such as extending the post and chain barriers, improving pathways of travel, and installing the proposed belvedere.

INFORMATION ITEMS

201. San Diego High School Connections

Director Field introduced the item, stating that the framework is intended to improve connections between Balboa Park and San Diego High School along Park Boulevard after voters approved a City Charter amendment to allow the City to lease a portion of Balboa Park for San Diego High School. He turned over the presentation to Mr. Stepner to discuss specific concepts and recommendations associated with the framework.

Public Comments:

None received.

Board Comments:

Ms. Gross asked how the group is engaging with youth on this matter and asked if the Burnham Center for Community Advancement interactions could include youth. Mr. Stepner indicated he is working with San Diego High School and Forever Balboa Park to further engage youth on Balboa Park connections. Ms. Gross suggested outreach could extend beyond San Diego High School to students who do not regularly visit Balboa Park to see if students can identify barriers to access.

Ms. Gross also expressed concerns over naming City assets such as Park Boulevard becoming John Nolen Parkway. She would like to see more inclusive ways to bring people into the park.

202. Golf Business Plan 2024

Golf Operations Manager David Lanni presented an update on the golf operations business plan for 2024.

Public Comments:

None received.

Board Comments:

Ms. Laman asked if the \$60 million Torrey Pines Clubhouse project will impact the Balboa Park Golf Course. She also asked about the status of the Pro Kids lease for the Colina del Sol Golf Course. Mr. Lanni indicated that the City has repaired the Balboa Park Clubhouse from recent fire damage and wood rot, and it will soon be painting the interior. There is no connection between the Torrey Pines Clubhouse project and the Balboa Park Clubhouse operations and maintenance.

203. Aquatics Update

Assistant Deputy Director Nicole McNeil presented an update on the City's aquatics program, which consists of 15 pools spread between all nine City Council districts.

Public Comments:

None.

Board Comments:

Ms. Laman appreciated the statistics presented in the report. She asked where the money comes from when purchasing the boiler. Ms. McNeil stated it comes from the Department of General Services in the General Fund.

Ms. Wein asked whether there are free days for pool access. Ms. McNeil stated that there are programs in place funded by donors that can allow for free swimming access. The Department will continue to explore ways to bring youth and older adults to the pool for free. Ms. Wein suggested that perhaps free days can be standardized as the “first Wednesday of the month” or something similar. She asked whether free swimming access for hot weather days could be added to the program. Ms. McNeil responded that she is interested in this and consider options for having free access on extremely hot days, functioning similar to a cool zone during heat waves. Ms. Wein asked about the Barrio Station swimming pool. Ms. McNeil stated it is on City-owned property and operated under a lease agreement. The pool appears to have been closed recently. Ms. Wein is interested to know when the leaseholder will have the pool back open again.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Copies of the reports, attachments, PowerPoint presentations, and audio-video recordings can be found on the Parks and Recreation Department website at <http://www.sandiego.gov/parkandrecboard/reports>.

Next Calendared Meeting: November 21 at 2:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andy Field".

Andy Field
Director
Parks and Recreation Department