

MINUTES

**City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE
May 1, 2025**

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
David Baron
Jake Banfield-Weir
Mandy Brown
Makeda Cheatom
Chris Eddy
Patty Riddle
Michael Robinson
Kathy Vandenhuevel

Members Absent

Howard Blackson
Tim Shields

Staff Present

Jon Richards
Tyler Canales
Anthony Harrington

CALL TO ORDER

Allison Soares called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES April 10, 2025

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

A motion was made by Ms. Soares and Ms. Cheatom seconded by to approve the April 10, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion carried (4-0-3).

NON- AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Web Form:

None

In-Person:

Daniele Laman – BOLO (Be On the LookOut) has been put out for and elderly African-American man who climbs up and stays on roofs within the park. Ethnic Food Fair will take place from 10am-5pm on 5/3. Asian Pacific Cultural Festival will be on 5/24.

Shaun David – Announced the San Diego International Fringe Festival.

Holly Lombardo – Represents the World Fringe Congress. San Diego. They run the conference every other year. The next International Fringe Festival has been awarded to San Diego. Looking for space to host the conference and would like to be able to utilize Balboa Park.

Marty Poirier – Seeking advice on how to pause and rethink the 6th and Juniper roundabout. Traffic would be interrupted on the West side and costs \$2.4 million on a project when installing a stop sign would preserve the park.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

None

STAFF REPORT

Michael Bravo, 78th District – None

Emily Bonner, Council District 3 – None

SDPD – None

Emily Piatanesi, Mayor’s Office – Mayor has presented his draft budget with a number for parking revenue within Balboa Park. The number is just a placeholder. There is no specific proposal yet and Mayor’s Office is still working with the institutions. Budget Review Committee is next week with Parks and Recreation Department’s section taking place on 5/6 from 2-5pm. The May revise will come on May 14 and the final Budget vote will be on June 10.

Emily Piatanesi, Mayor’s Office – Brought Certificates of Recognition for all the board members.

Emily Piatanesi, Mayor’s Office – Draft Budget will be presented on 4/15. Still in discussions/planning phase for paid parking. Looking at the issues holistically and there is no timeframe set for implementation yet. The Parking Reform package that was going to Council was Citywide and not specific to Balboa Park. Will be back to engage with the committee about paid parking in Balboa Park.

Jon Richards, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation – Thanked all the new board members for being part of the committee. Officer Tonahill-Officer Ruopp Memorial Park monument sign was installed on 4/30. Funding for the sign was raised by the SDPOA. Environmental Services Division will do a sidewalk reset within the park on 5/2 as well as 2 restrooms. ESD will continue to do a regular cleaning on a monthly basis. Parks and Recreation budget hearing will be on 5/6. Encouraged patrons to review the updated 6-month calendar as there are a lot of graduations coming up. Upcoming events included: Balboa Park Pow Wow on 5/10-5/11; March for Babies on 5/17; Rock-N-Roll Marathon 5/31-6/1.

BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES

Forever Balboa Park – Jackie Higgins – April was volunteer appreciation month. FBP held a volunteer dinner for 300 volunteers the first week of April. The volunteers contributed \$1.2 million worth of service time last year. There was a tree planting with Cox Communications on April 11th. Had an Arbor Day tree planting on April 25th with over 50 volunteers. The Annual Spark Awards will be on May 22nd. Awardees have been selected. Congratulations to the City team for a California Preservation Award for the Botanical Building. The Phase 2 contractor has been selected and construction should start within 4-6 weeks. Just notified that AmeriCorps fellows were cut due to Federal Budget cuts.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – Peter Comiskey – BPCP preferred that parking remains free, but when it goes into effect would prefer that free parking remains for staff and volunteers. Supportive of the parking

study that says parking sites should remain free. Important for the City and Council to know the effects of State and Federal budget cuts. Asks for no additional cuts beyond what is proposed.

Committee of 100 – Kevin Carpenter – None

Save Starlight – Vincent Puma – Thanked City staff for their communication. Trying to gather information on the Park Blvd reconfiguration and congestion.

Village Arts & Education Foundation – Frank Casciani – None

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

Patty Riddle – Represents the CRG at Morley Field. Balboa Park Tennis Club with presenting Tennis Fest on May 4. The 67th Yonex Dave Freman Badminton Classic will be at Balboa Park Activity Center 5/2-5/4.

Mandy Brown – Honored to serve on the committee.

Makeda Cheatom – World Beat had a lot of cuts as well due to Federal cuts. Support scientists, researchers and museums.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Represents the Golden Hill area.

Dave Baron – Excited to serve on the board. Served previously on the Parks& Recreation Board and Qualcomm Stadium Board.

Chris Eddy – Downtown planning delegate. Been in Balboa Park since he could walk.

Michael Robinson – Second year serving on the committee. Has volunteered with World Beat and The Committee of 100 as well.

Jake Banfield-Weir – Excited to serve. Has been on the Forestry Board and has volunteered with San Diego Botanic Foundation.

Allison Soares – Former Treasurer of Forever Balboa Park and has served on the Parks and Recreation Board.

CONSENT ITEMS

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Item 1. San Diego Heart and Stroke Walk

Public Comment:

Peter Comiskey – Inquired if all of Park Blvd would be closed at the 163 entrance and requested that the northbound side stay open.

Committee Comment:

None

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

A motion was made by Ms. Vandenheuvel and Mr. Baron seconded by to approve the San Diego Heart and Stroke Walk with the northbound lane on Park Blvd to remain open. The motion passed unanimously (9-0-0).

Item 2. National Carousel Day 2025

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

None

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

A motion was made by Ms. Vandenheuvel and Mr. Robinson seconded by to approve the National Carousel Day 2025 event as presented. The motion carried (4-0-3).

INFORMATION ITEMS

Item 3. Diplomacy Day

Public Comment:

None

Committee Comment:

None

Item 4. Timken Expansion Project

Public Comment:

David Swarens – Save Our Heritage Organization is pleased to support the expansion presented.

Committee Comment:

Michael Robinson – Inquired if there was any collaboration for the Museum of Art Expansion.

Timken (Responded) – Hoping there will be in the future.

Jake Banfield-Weir – Lots of excavation going on. Is there a good plan for it? Also inquired if the elevators were coded for an emergency.

Timken (Responded) – Felt it was important to expand downwards. Looking for a place to put all the dirt. Still a year away from construction. Have not gotten that far to comment on the elevators.

Chris Eddy – Can dirt be redistributed in the East Mesa? May want to look into a ramp for ADA purposes in case of an emergency. How will the stairwell be illuminated at night, and will there be any additional light wells around the perimeter?

Timken (Responded) – Lights in the side will illuminate the stairs. Still working with architects on it. Bringing light to the offices and classroom is important.

Michael Robinson – This a good example of why design review is important.

Kathy Vandenheuveel – Appreciates that Timken and SOHO support the expansion. Is there an opportunity to have more native landscaping?

Timken (Responded) - Met with Forever Balboa Park. They are doing the landscaping on the north side. Not at a point to have a landscaping plan yet.

Mandy Brown – Would hope glass would not harm any local wildlife.

Timken (Responded) – Still trying to decide on the height of the glass.

Makeda Cheatom – Love the idea. Solar tubes are great. Hope to do lighting so birds won't hit the building.

David Baron – How are questions being reviewed by the City?

Timken (Responded) – Doing City plan check currently.

Allison Soares – How long with the project take?

Timken (Responded) – 2-3 years.

WORKSHOP ITEM

None

ADJOURNMENT – 5:31 pm

Notice of Next Balboa Park Meeting:

June 5, 2025

4:00 P.M.

In-Person

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Canales
District Manager