

## MINUTES

**City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board  
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE  
June 5, 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**

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

**Members Absent**

Allison Soares  
Makeda Cheatom  
Michael Robinson

**Staff Present**

Jon Richards  
Tyler Canales  
Anthony Harrington

**CALL TO ORDER**

David Baron called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES May 1, 2025**

**MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Ms. Vandenhuevel/ Mr. Banfield-Weir**

A motion was made by Ms. Vandenhuevel and Mr. Banfield-Weir seconded by to approve the May 1, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion carried (6-0-2).

**NON- AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT**

Web Form:

None

In-Person:

Daniele Laman – Thanked staff for the lead abatement at the House of Czech. A stay away order was issued for Dwayne Freeman for 3 years. Announced upcoming House of Philippines lawn program.

Andrea Zirko – Commended the International Cottages for 90-year anniversary. Asked for a review of issues that come with Free Museum Tuesday since paid parking will be implemented. Lots of County schools come and lots of stress and strain is put on the institutions. Hopes a resolution can be found.

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

None

## **STAFF REPORTS**

78<sup>th</sup> District – None

Council District 3 – None

SDPD – LT. Geoff Decesari – Recently hired a new officer and are fully staffed for the SDPD Balboa Park team. Plans are in place to keep the team fully staffed for the summer.

Emily Piatenesi, Mayor's Office – Still working on the paid parking model. Will bring is back to the Committee before taking it to Council. There was a parking package passed by Council in July. User fee updates will be brought to Council in July. Paid parking plan for Balboa Park is still in discussions with factoring in employee/volunteer parking and increased tram options within the park.

Jon Richards, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation – 2 grant applications for the Balboa Park Masterplan update were submitted in the total amount of \$1.7 million. Tentative timeline includes grant being awarded in Fall, and end of July to provide a website to release goals, timelines and other information. House of Czech abatement was completed and working on a timeline for the additional repairs that are needed. Maintenance staff replanted Alcazar Garden, the Mall, the Plaza de Panama, and the Four Corners areas in the park. Municipal Gym has been hosting a basketball tournament for fire fighters and police officers from throughout California. Balboa Park Activity Center has been hosting badminton summer camps. More graduations at the Organ Pavilion to happen over the next couple of weeks. Summer Organ Festival to happen in July.

## **BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES**

Forever Balboa Park – Katy McDonald – Nancy Carol Carter and FBP will bring renaming of the palm grove on the West Mesa to BPC to recognize it as the Sessions-Brandegge Palm Grove. Brightview has been selected as the contractor for Phase 2 to work on the 9 gardens and historic pergola to go around the Botanical Building area. Expect the work to take 9 months. Sparks Awards was May 22nd, and 3 winners were awarded. National Carousel Day is July 25<sup>th</sup>. USA Today to do a piece on June 10<sup>th</sup> regarding carousels and Balboa Park Carousel will be recognized. Work for the fire suppression pipe for the Carousel has started and should be completed soon.

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. Identified 12 items necessary to implement functionality of Park Blvd. I am pleased with engagement from City Staff and Mayor's Office regarding paid parking. Disappointed with the push from the City Council for a start date for paid parking as it does not give enough time to take all considerations into account. Has received data from parking technology that was installed in Alcazar Parking Lot. Looking to utilize a camera type of technology for other lots.

Committee of 100 – Kevin Carpenter – Complimented FBP on the Sparks Awards event. First newsletter about to come out with a piece on pergolas. Main ornament fabrications for the Municipal Gym Façade has begun. Goal is to be done with the project prior to December Nights. Working on historic signage for the Palisades area. Projects Committee working on possible large and small projects for the park. Have an item regarding paid parking. Thanks to Jorge Campos for repairing the urn at the Persian Carpet Garden.

Save Starlight – Steve Stopper/Vincent Puma – Excited about movement on the SUP. Trying to activate the space more. Met with Councilmember Campillo about Park Blvd, who suggested converting the bus lane

into a bus/carpool lane. Working with SDPD about ongoing intrusions. Will have a PD store front at Starlight. Going to collaborate with the Twilight Concerts.

Village Arts & Education Foundation – Frank Casciani – Spring Potters show will be next weekend. Jurying will be done on July 25<sup>th</sup>. Arts camps have started and will go through the first week of August. New sculpture will be going up in the patio soon.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT**

Patty Riddle – Badminton summer camp at Balboa Park Activity Center is packed with kids. Staff is aware of issues with the restrooms at Morley Field on Saturday mornings. Tennis Club calendar is available. USTA National Open Hard Courts Championships will be in January.

Mandy Brown – Has concerns about paid parking and the affect it will have on volunteers and patrons with disabilities.

Kathy Vandenheuvel – Has concerns with paid parking impacts on Golden Hill community. Not a lot of transportation options being presented for outside the Central Mesa.

Tim Shields – Fraught times due to funding recessions. Losing lots of donations due to economic uncertainty. Not happy with the City stating they have a deficit and then looking to raise revenue with parking fees during this time.

Chris Eddy – Not sure of the issue with parking and if there is enough. Suggests the City looks into possible subsidies with ride sharing companies.

Jake Banfield-Weir – Suggests the City looks at what other cities have done regarding paid parking and use those as case studies.

David Baron – Disappointed the representative from the Mayor’s Office left before the end of the meeting.

#### **CONSENT ITEMS**

None

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

None

#### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

None

#### **WORKSHOP ITEMS**

None

#### **ADJOURNMENT** – 5:03 pm

**Notice of Next Balboa Park Meeting:**

July 10, 2025  
4:00 P.M.  
In-Person

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Canales  
District Manager