

# MINUTES

**City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board  
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE  
August 6, 2020**

**Meeting Location:**

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

**Mailing Address:**

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

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members Present**

Victoria Curran  
Vicki Granowitz  
Katherine Johnston - Chair  
Luanne Kanzawa  
Don Liddell  
Dang Nguyen (6:12 p.m.)  
Micah Parzen  
Johanna S. Schiavoni

**Members Absent**

William Aaron  
Sarah Dawe  
Kenneth Davenport - Vice Chair

**Staff Present**

Christina Chadwick  
Mario Llanos  
Susan Lowery-Mendoza

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Johnston called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 4, 2020**

**MOTION:      MOVED/SECONDED   MS. GRANOWITZ/MR. LIDDELL**

A motion was made by Ms. Granowitz and seconded by Mr. Liddell to approve the June 4, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried (7-0-1) with Ms. Curran abstaining.

**REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES** – None

**NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bruce Dammann commented on the West Mesa restrooms which were developed without public input or approved by neighborhood planning groups. He requested an update on the project, scheduling and public outreach.

Daniele Laman thanked Parks and Recreation for painting the oldest HPR cottages and hope that the trim can be painted too. She asked about the status of their Special Use Permit and December Nights.

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

No report

**STAFF REPORT**

**City Council Third District**

No report

**Assistant Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation Christina Chadwick reported the following:**

Ms. Chadwick stated that she is excited to work with staff at Balboa Park, Presidio Park and Mission Bay Park. She noted that her position prior to this assignment was Senior Press Secretary in the Mayor’s office. She is currently meeting with stakeholders and will be reaching out to discuss their priorities.

**Balboa Park District Manager – Susan Lowery-Mendoza reported the following:**

Parks & Recreation and Special Events & Filming Departments have brainstormed to come up with two options that could provide a holiday feeling and a sense of December Nights to San Diegans while keeping San Diegans safe and adhering to the County and State Public Health Orders.

In order to spread out the holiday cheer and hopefully the crowds, we are considering having the events occur on Saturdays, and Sundays over the course of three weekends, starting with December 5, and running through the weekend of December 20. The events need to be cost-neutral and we are working through various funding options, including cost recovery and sponsorship.

The first option is a “Taste of December Nights” program which could have some of our favorite food vendors and food trucks in a drive thru setting in the Inspiration Point parking lot. There would be a limited menu, possibly a pre-ordering option, with customers staying in their cars. The proposed hours of operation would likely be from 11 AM – 7 PM.

We are also considering the possibility of having a drive-in movie in the Organ Pavilion parking lot. We would show family holiday movies and could provide movie snack food packages that could be pre-ordered, all while practicing social distancing. As people are parking for the movie, we may have the opportunity to show video footage, highlight museums and utilize social media to capture photos from previous years’ events. The movie times would be early evening (i.e. 6 pm-9pm).

In addition, due to the fact that the free visits to the Museums will be not be possible in 2020, the City will be exploring opportunities with Balboa Park organizations to highlight Museums through these events along with any additional media/advertising that would promote visits to Museums in 2021 and other elements as developed.

**Committee Comments:**

- Great start under the circumstances and please keep the Committee updated

**Balboa Park Operations District Manager – Mario Llanos**

No report

**BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES**

Balboa Park Conservancy – Jaqueline Higgins, Director of Planning, Design and Programs reported the following:

- Restoration of Alcazar Garden was completed in July. She thanked all of the partners involved.
- The inner courtyard work at the Casa del Prado is continuing
- The RFP for the Botanical Building will be out in September/October
- Working with the Rose Garden leadership team so that they can continue to do work in the garden under the Conservancy's agreement

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – Mr. Comiskey reported the following:

Recognized and congratulated Micah and the Board of Museum of Us for their clever and progressive renaming.

The Parkwide IDEA Working Group, an initiative led by Balboa Park cultural organizations to deep dive into equity and diversity issues within their organizations, officially launched their first joint project to design and implement a survey that will measure internal understanding of IDEA in the workplace.

In addition, the Parkwide IDEA group will participate in Lunch and Learns hosted by RISE San Diego. These sessions will focus on conversations and engagement around issues of race, equity, and diversity within organizations.

Staff across the Cultural Partnership have responded dynamically to the closures in the park, with shifting duties to support the priority of public communication. This includes managing status update content online, operating a LiveChat for visitors, and providing channels for promoting digital content from many cultural venues. We created and deployed consistent safety signage in the Central Mesa to ensure uniform messaging and guest expectations both inside and outside venues, and managed news media for crisis communications during our all-too brief park-wide reopen period. It is important to thank the organizations in the park and other key stakeholders for collaborating and maintaining connection through all of the communications efforts, specifically recognizing BPOC, the Conservancy, and the Tourism Authority as our major communications partners during the past several months.

Finally the Cultural Partnership has been heading an effort to run informal virtual coffees and more formal virtual forums for the City of San Diego Council elections. While these forums cover many topics in Arts and Culture, there is at least one question about deferred maintenance and infrastructure in Balboa Park.

Balboa Park Online Collaboration – No report

Committee of 100 – No report

Friends of Balboa Park – John Bolthouse reported the following:

- Welcomed Christina Chadwick
- Thanked all Parks and Recreation staff for their work
- Getting a lot of work done – Palm Canyon Bridge, Cabrillo Bridge painting, restoration of 23 sconces in California Plaza, update on Morton Bay Fig Tree project – on schedule for late August or September

- Annual awards celebration will be a virtual event on Friday, October 16, recognizing the Japanese Friendship Garden, Ranger Kim Duclo, and the excellent volunteers. The Annual Betty Peabody Award will be presented to Kristen Mihalko of the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership.

Save Starlight – No report

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Consent**

101. None

#### **Adoption**

201. Sewer and Storm Drain 828. Presenters: Sabeen Cochinwala, Project Manager, City of San Diego and Patrick Mulvey, Project Manager, City of San Diego

Ms. Cochinwala reviewed a location map for the sewer and storm drain project which will replace 1.7 miles of pipeline that is 75 years old and install .07 miles of new storm drain pipes, bringing it to current standards. The project will abandon 3,800 linear feet of existing sewer mains, install new curb ramps, and resurface streets impacted by construction. The project is scheduled to start September 2021. The work on the Golf Course will take about four months and the project budget of \$11.7 million. No service interruptions are expected. Trenchless technology will be used to minimize impacts to the canyon.

Patrick Mulvey noted the storm drain locations to be replaced. Open trench technology will be used and native plants will be used for restoration. Residents will receive door hangers as notice. Approval of the Committee is needed to proceed with environmental clearance and construction.

#### Committee Comments:

- Clarified that the Committee is being asked only vote on the portion of the project within Balboa Park to start the work of mitigation.

#### **MOTION      MOVED/SECONDED (MS. GRANOWITZ/MR. NGUYEN)**

A motion was made by Ms. Granowitz and seconded by Mr. Nguyen to approve the portion of the Sewer and Storm Drain Group 828 project that pertains to the Balboa Park Golf Course only. The motion carried (8-0-0)

#### **Special Events**

301. None

### **WORKSHOP ITEMS**

401. None

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

501. San Diego Zoo Sign Refresh. Presenters: Andrea Caldwell, Government and Community Relations Manager, San Diego Zoo Global and John Helminski, Director of Facilities, San Diego Zoo

Ms. Caldwell stated that they are refreshing their San Diego Zoo signs on Park Blvd. and the entrance gates. Mr. Helminski provided a presentation that included photos of the existing signage at both locations and the newly updated, refreshed signs. The new signage will have a day and night effect with some adjustable LED lighting and will be installed in September.

Committee Comments:

- Thank you for opening and all you are doing to keep visitors safe
- See a bird shape in the logo
- Don't see the lion

502. Mingei Renovation Update: Presenter: Rob Sidner, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Sidner noted they have been under construction since 2018 and are six months away from completion. They are glad to provide this substantial investment in the park. The mechanical and electrical systems are now installed, and the shape is now becoming apparent. The City is about to repair the leaks in the tower. Reopening is planned for May or June 2021.

Committee Comments:

- Looks gorgeous, a dynamic transformation
- Congratulations, really exciting
- Inquired about the design of railing which was resolved
- Juxtaposition of new and old is very interesting, contemporary
- This institution is a hybrid being largely open air with outdoor spaces

503. House of Pacific Relations Cottages Addition Project Update. Presenter: Art Castor, House of Pacific Relations Construction Chairperson.

Mr. Castro stated that it all started in 2009 when a collaboration took shape and resources were combined. The project is now at 83% completion should be completed in January, 2021. He reviewed all of the locations of each of the new houses and their construction status. Three of the five houses will have a basement for storage. Of the 33 member houses, only three will not have a cottage as there will be no further cottages constructed.

Committee Comment:

- Congratulations on the project

504. Balboa Park Project Updates: Presenter: Parks and Recreation Staff

Mr. Llanos noted the challenges of working in current conditions, and noted that staff and stakeholder groups have made significant progress on many park projects such as:

- Installation of drip irrigation
- Landscape renovation at the Marston House
- Brush clearing at various park locations
- Clean up of the Bridle Trail
- Painting of the arcades at the Casa del Prado, interior and exterior painting at the War Memorial Building, and the older HPR cottages
- Repainting of the Cabrillo Bridge roadway wall and the light sconces in the California Plaza
- Refinishing of vinyl tile floors and carpet cleaning in the facilities
- Review of the Palisades project components and tram stop

- Palm Canyon Bridge repairs
- Alcazar Garden restoration
- Moreton Bay Fig viewing deck
- Palm Weevil Canary Island Pine removals
- Trail and Canyon clean-up
- 26<sup>th</sup> Street Trail restoration
- Bud Kearns Aquatic Complex improvements (requesting any old photos of the facility which is approaching 90 years)
- West Mesa Comfort Stations
- Water and Sewer line replacement starting in September

Committee Comments:

- Asked if the bike lane will be improved with along 26<sup>th</sup> Street (not included in the trail restoration)

**SUB-COMMMTTEE REPORTS**

601. Land-Use and Policy – No report

602. West Mesa Subcommittee – No report

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS' REPORTS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: Thursday, September 3, 2020  
6:00 P.M.  
Balboa Park Club  
2150 Pan American Road West  
San Diego, CA 92101

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowery-Mendoza  
District Manager