

MINUTES

City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board
BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE
November 5, 2020

Meeting Location:
Online Meeting

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

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present

William Aaron
Victoria Curran
Kenneth Davenport – Vice
Chair
Sarah Dawe
Vicki Granowitz
Katherine Johnston – Chair
Luanne Kanzawa
Don Liddell
Dang Nguyen
Micah Parzen
Johanna S. Schiavoni

Members Absent

Staff Present

Christina Chadwick
Charles Daniels
Mario Llanos
Susan Lowery-Mendoza

CALL TO ORDER

Mario Llanos read the statement listed on the agenda that this Committee meeting will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the California Executive Order 29-20 which suspends certain requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act.

Chairperson Johnston called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 1, 2020

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED MS. GRANOWITZ/ MS. KANZAWA

A motion was made by Ms. Granowitz and seconded by Ms. Kanzawa to approve the October 1, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried (9-0-1) with Mr. Aaron abstaining.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES – None

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Danielle Lamman – Impossible to report updates from the Safety and Security meeting when the meeting is held the same day at this committee. The San Diego Police Department reported in

October that the park is fully staffed now with seven-day coverage. Also, how can the public ask questions during the meeting instead of just watching the meeting?

David Lundin- The commercial, for profit restaurant expansion proposed for the central Plaza de Panama of our Balboa Park in the wrong thing in the wrong place. We believe dedication park lands should be used for free public purposes. A petition with almost 1,000 signatures is underway and concept is opposed by both Mayoral candidates and the current councilmember of D3.

Charles Kaminski –No to the proposed Cohn Ferris Wheel. The Cohn family has been long time supporters of various institutions and causes and I thank them for that; but this proposal? This doesn't belong in Balboa Park. Perhaps a better site would be Seaport Village, Liberty Stations or even at the Port of San Diego. The Plaza de Panama was redesigned to remove parking and create open plaza space.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - None

STAFF REPORT –

Assistant Deputy Director Christina Chadwick reported the following:

- Provided a framework for the future update. The Department had asked for help to identify the future priorities for investment in the park. Hundreds have participated and additional outreach is being sought from youth organizations and underserved communities. She asked that the link to the survey be shared.
- The Parks Masterplan will be heard by the City Council on Monday, November 9. It is item# 600 and the documents are online and you can participate in the meeting on the City Clerk's website.
- In October, the Cohn's presented an innovative idea to bring a temporary Sky Wheel to the park to help activate the park. The Committee requested formal outreach to stakeholders and a site plan. Parks' staff have requested that the Cohn's and Sky Wheel representatives seek approval from the Regional Airport Authority and the FAA before moving forward. The FAA has opined that this installation would not create a hazard.

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

- On October 29, recreation staff members from the Balboa Park Activity Center and Municipal Gym conducted a Halloween Drive Boo (drive through) for all to enjoy at Morley Field. It was a success with over 400 children receiving a craft kit and a bag full of treats. It was very well received.
- The Taste of December Nights event is set December 4- 6 from 11:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. This event will comply with public health orders while bringing a sense of December Nights to San Diegan's in a drive through experience. Approximately 20 food trucks and the House of Pacific Relations (on a limited schedule) will be participating. Additionally, the City is excited to include marketing materials from the Cultural Partnership along with tickets from participating museums.

Balboa Park District Manager Mario Llanos reported the following:

- The Palisades Plaza is open to pedestrians. Thanks to the Friends of Balboa Park who donated \$5,000.00 for plantings around the area.
- The Balboa Park Tram contract with Ace Parking will be presented for approval at the City Council meeting on November 10.

- Congratulated Claudia Glen, Grounds Maintenance Worker II who maintains the Marston House grounds. She has won both the employee of the quarter and employee of the year awards from our Department. She was also recognized by SOHO for her work.

BALBOA PARK NON-PROFIT PARTNER UPDATES

Balboa Park Conservancy – Jackie Higgins reported the following:

- The Visitor Center in the House of Hospitality is open daily and has seen an increase in visitors
- The Conservancy is working with Parks and Recreation on a number of projects in the Cactus Garden, Alcazar Garden, and Casa del Prado courtyard improvements. They are also providing support of volunteer initiatives such as the Rose Garden volunteers, Park Ambassadors who are helping close to 150 people per day, and Tree Stewards are attending tree maintenance workshops and are replacing some trees that didn't thrive on the West Mesa.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership – Peter Comiskey reported the following:

- They facilitated public candidate forums which can be viewed on their website and asked questions regarding support for Balboa Park infrastructure
- The Cultural Partnership in collaboration with the Parks and Recreation Department is facilitating park- wide messaging associated with personal safety. On Wednesday, the State identified that San Diego dropped into the purple tier which will be devastating for indoor museums and he implored all to follow safety guidelines.
- He thanked the Public Works Department and contractors for their exceptional work and responsiveness on the water and sewer project.

Committee of 100 – Roger Showley reported the following:

- The Pan American Plaza is looking fantastic and looks forward to more activation in the coming months
- The Committee of 100 passed a resolution regarding professional design review in the park and are reaching out to other stakeholder groups for input.

Friends of Balboa Park – John Bolthouse reported the following:

- Annual awards celebration was held virtually in the Japanese Friendship Garden
- Partnered with the Conservancy on a mayoral candidate forum
- Provided an update on projects: Removal of the chain link fence at the Golden Hill Park Morton Bay Fig tree (thanked Victoria Curran for leadership in the community on this project); restoring and retrofitting of the 23 sconces in the Plaza de California (thanks to Marie Wiggins, Parks and Recreation); completion of the Morton Bay Fig Tree deck project by the end of the month
- Provided a Carousel update which has not been allowed to re-open due to the State's restrictions, however preservation enhancements and restorations are continuing
- Received a grant from SDG&E to assist Parks and Recreation start to address the palm weevil infestation in the park

Save Starlight – Daniel Woodard reported the following:

- In the process of reconstructing the Starlight Bowl in order to have performances
- Have the ability to bring audio and stage equipment out to the Plaza area if desired

- Expect to have their projects complete by year end and open in some capacity
- Delighted with the Plan American Plaza outcome

ACTION ITEMS

Consent

101. None

Adoption

201. None

Special Events

301. None

WORKSHOP ITEMS

401. Botanical Building Naming Opportunities. Presenters: Jackie Higgins, Director of Planning, Design and Programs, Balboa Park Conservancy

Jackie Higgins provided a presentation to get thoughts and feedback on proposed naming opportunities. The City asset naming policy process was approved in 2017 with input from the Parks and Recreation Department, Historical Resources Staff, RSM Design and the Conservancy. What you currently see in the park will be similar to existing donor recognition in and around the Botanical Building. A capital campaign is identifying opportunities in 14 areas for donor recognition. A timeline was presented aligning with City Policy 900-20 process steps. In January, this item will be presented to the Committee as an action item.

Public Comment:

- John Bolthouse and the Friends of Balboa Park are in support of the vision and goals.

Committee Comments:

- Asked about public input on the item. Mario Llanos replied that the webform should be used in addition to sending his email. Staff will inquire as to how it is inputted in the minutes.
- This item is set to be before the Committee twice to provide opportunities for input
- Supportive of the process that Historic Resources staff are reviewing. What is the vision for the Lily Pond? (name on grade or by an engraved plaque and be included in the construction documents)
- No examples of donor recognition or locations are provided to help with context and what is being approved. Need more information as 14 in a small area may be too much.
- Individual names or corporate names (Director will work the Mayor's Office to vet the names before approval, difference between donor recognition and naming)
- Would like examples brought back in January, take the time to understand what the Committee is being asked to approve
- Do not like naming rights for the Lily Pond, remove from naming consideration
- Suggest coming back in December and have the policy language which is guiding the decision

INFORMATION ITEMS

501. Balboa Park Pipeline Replacement Phase II. Presenters: Sabeen Cochinwala, Project Manager, City of San Diego and Alex Sleiman, Senior Civil Engineer, City of San Diego.

Ms. Cochinwala provided information regarding Phase II of the Pipeline Project which will be scheduled to start in January 2021. The project will replace 1.88 miles of water mains and .32 miles of sewer mains which will bring the mains up to modern standards and accommodate community growth. Curb ramps and resurfacing of streets are also part of the project. A detailed location map was reviewed. The work in Spanish Village will be trenchless with the exception of the sewer clean out installation. Outreach and coordination to affected organizations is being done and most of the work for this two-year project is being scheduled at night. Total project budget is \$9.8 million.

Charles Daniels, Park Designer noted that this is just one of the four phases of water and sewer projects in Balboa Park being completed by Public Utilities who are investing a lot of resources in the park.

Committee Comments:

- Thanks to Sabeen for collaboration with park stakeholders for this project

502. Botanical Building Restoration and Donor Acknowledgement Update. Christina Chadwick, Assistant Deputy Director, City of San Diego and Jackie Higgins, Director of Planning, Designs and Programs, Balboa Park Conservancy

Jackie Higgins shared a presentation and noted the history of the Botanical Building, past uses and restorations which has lost some of its grandeur due to budget shortfalls. The desire is to provide a world class visitor experience which started years ago as a public process. In 2016, a competitive bid process was undertaken by the Conservancy for architectural restoration of the building and gardens.

Christina Chadwick thanked the Conservancy for their work on the project. She noted that Phase I is the City CIP project and described the scope of work. Phase II will be completed by the Conservancy via a Right of Entry Permit. She provided a restoration project timeline. This month, the City will release the Request for Proposals and the awarding bid will be announced in approximately seven months. In 2017, the donor acknowledgement program was approved. Historical Resources staff and RSM further developed and refined the program to ensure that Department of Interior standards are adhered to. The Conservancy will be asking for input later in the meeting as to which City assets should be considered for naming opportunities. Our Department supports the Conservancy's effort to secure private funding for the restoration of the Botanical Building and Gardens through the donor recognition policy.

Committee Comments:

- Pavers make sense, but need more information as to what recognition would look like in the rotunda for example
- Excited about the project and thanked all

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

601. Land-Use and Policy – No report

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602. West Mesa Subcommittee – No report

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' REPORTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: Thursday, January 7, 2021
6:00 P.M.
Online Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowery-Mendoza
District Manager