

**WORKSHOP NOTES**  
City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board  
**Balboa Park Committee**  
**September 18, 2008**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members Present**

Jennifer Ayala  
Laurie Burgett  
Jereilyn Dilno  
Vicki Granowitz  
David Kinney

**Members Absent**

Mick Hager  
Andrew Kahng  
Mike McDowell  
Michael Singleton  
Donald Steele

**Staff Present**

Kathleen Hasenauer  
Susan Lowery-Mendoza  
Bruce Martinez

**Call to Order-**

Chairperson Granowitz called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

**Chair's Report -**

Chairperson Granowitz informed that she gave an update to the Park and Recreation Board. A formal presentation will be given to them once the report is completed.

**Organizational Chart Overview**

Bruce Martinez brought some organizational charts that Chairperson Granowitz had asked him to bring. The charts reflect what the staffing levels have been for two different working units in Balboa Park between FY 2007 and FY 2009. The two different working units are "Cultural and Recreational Programs" and "Balboa Park Operations".

These charts reflect staffing reductions.

These charts do not reflect all city staff/Departments that work within Balboa Park.

**401. Review of Organizational Charts of Urban Parks**

**Great Park in Irvine**

Chair was asked to present information on how the Great Park was funded and organized.

It is set up as a redevelopment area which has no practical carry over to helping us understand how we might use the State of CA Redevelopment law to assist Balboa Park. Balboa Park does not meet the requirements to become a Redevelopment Area

This area was the where the former El Toro Air Force Space used to be People of Orange County voted on what they wanted it to be; most wanted open space rather than a new airport

They have made little progress towards creating the park or the residential area that would generate the funds for building the public amenities including the park. With the problems currently affecting the real estate market it is unlikely there will be any funds generated for sometime to come.

The one thing that may be relevant to Balboa Park is how they did their Master Plan Process

### Forest Park

Most of their documents are pretty vague  
When they made changes, they made them through the by-laws  
What was helpful was section that clearly delineated the responsibilities of the Park and Rec Dept. of the City of St. Louis and the conservancy.

### Central Park Conservancy

Had a lot of relevant things (in the documents) that Balboa Park could use  
Their organization chart makes sense

### Overview of all three

There are effective working examples, we are not creating something from scratch  
They all started out very small with a land use doc, doing a master plan  
The cities retain ultimate control and conservancies do the fundraising

## **402. Reports from Sub-Committee-**

### **Question #1 - Can the City of San Diego provide the necessary financial support for Balboa Park in the future? Don Liddell reported:**

Don Liddell clarified that although he is reporting on behalf of his subcommittee (Mike Singleton, Mike McDowell, Andrew Kahng, Don Steele), these are not necessarily his opinions. The sub-committee put together 8 principles and three assumptions that underpin those principles.

#### Principles:

- 1 - Park should remain public
- 2 - Funding of the park should relate to the users of the park
- 3 - Average funding over the period of years should set a baseline and then that should be paid for over time in some sort of allocation process that would include tourism, corporate sponsorships, and individual philanthropy and all various sources to provide the necessary support.
- 4 - Property Tax
- 5 - Collect use fees
- 6 - Management should be in the form of a partnership.
- 7 - Too many departments currently running the park
- 8 - The many interest groups overlap in their goals and objectives

#### Assumptions:

- 1 - There is no total cost; it is important to have that.
- 2 - The city can contribute it's share; but the part it gathers for the Park should be trace marked.
- 3 - The political and public interest in the city would support the level of investment that is implicit in all that this sub-committee has talked about.

Don Liddell disagreed with:

*-Reaching out regionally. I don't think it is reasonable to do a pay as you go by reaching into people's pockets. Each of the models involve and entity. A conservancy is the best one, but I'm not sure if we even need a new entity, I'd rather have a simple governance.*

Public Speaker #2 - Ramona Kiltz - Downtown resident

*When you said partnership, and you had said previously no private ownership, but you said a form a partnership management in proportion to funding sources, what is an example of these partners?*

Chairperson Granowitz- *We will probably respond to that as we respond to the three questions.*

There was disagreement within the committee regarding the possible governance of the park. The city cannot, at it's current management style, support the park. However, if it does fix the management and allocates funding properly to Balboa Park, it should be able to support the Park. It is possible that the city may correct their management style and allocation of funds in the future, but it may be too late by then for Balboa Park. In addition to that, the people of San Diego don't trust the city. But if there is an entity that the public trusts, things would get done.

**Question #2 - If it can, should the city take care of the park on its own? David Kinney reported:**

This subcommittee worked on an outline to get feedback on whether they were headed in the right direction (Michael Hager, Jerelyn Dilno, David Kinney). They re-wrote question #2 so that they could respond to it in the absence of the answer to question #1. The question they responded to was "Should the City of San Diego act on its own in operating and funding Balboa Park, even if they can afford to do that?"

Currently the city does not run the park on it's own

Cultural institutions help

Affiliated Institutions help

Group of Foundations help

Although there is help, it is not enough

County residents represent 45% of users, therefore, financial support from the County of San Diego is warranted and justified. But a City/County partnership at the level of a Joint Powers Authority probably isn't feasible at this time.

County participation at the Second Phase of this discussion is recommended.

City should not act alone. Not only financially, but it can also use some help with the efficiency of running the park.

Regarding Public/Private Partnership in the Park, the public has to be educated on the current situation and how it can be expanded.

**Question #3 - If it can, should the city take care of the park on its own? Laurie**

Burgett reported answer is divided into an outline in the following:

Observations

City Organization, Decision Making Process, Operations, Finance

The Park and Recreation Department does an excellent job of running Balboa Park, especially considering their limited resources and expanding responsibilities.

Discovery Management Models

Define Pro/Cons

General Comments & Observations

Recommendations

- City should maintain ultimate authority over the Park including Park Policies.

- The Park should never be privatized.
- The City of San Diego should maintain at a minimum the current level of funding for the Park.
- Management should be expanded, more focused and partially depoliticized in Balboa Park.
- Change should be done incrementally as success is demonstrated.
- Since the JPAs and Park Districts all need to have CAC or 501c3 and are fairly onerous to set up it would seem best not to start with the most complicated and least flexible options.

Public Speaker #3 - Betty Peabody - Friends of Balboa Park

*I want to compliment all of you, this is the first time we feel there is something with substance coming from all the preliminary work you have done. Now we have some meat to work on.*

Public Speaker #4 - Taylor Hess - new resident of San Diego on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue-

*Have you gotten any information on Golden Gate National Recreation Conservancy? They have been very successful. I sat on that board. That conservancy has been very successful.*

Chairperson Granowitz - *Yes.*

Public Speaker #5 - Virginia Silverman -

*When I first read the Legler Benbough report it was premised on \$2.38 Million unfunded "must have" "must do" needs/liabilities. When I went through the actual list of projects I found that a lot of projects were not emergencies. I think the seismic retrofit is the only qualifying one in my view. I wondered about the Arizona Landfill which was budgeted at \$88 million dollars. It is my understanding that that landfill is still decomposing. There has never been any discussion of the actual needs. In my view as a retired city employee, I think changing the governance of the park is a bad idea.*

Chairperson Granowitz - *As I understood the study, it was not about emergency projects, but deferred maintenance.*

David K. - *We don't want any organization that will act on its own.*

Chairperson Granowitz asked the sub-committees to take back the feedback received on their drafts and refine their reports. There also seems to be a little bit of overlap between the reports and a separate entity may have to come in to create a unified document.

### **Adjournment -**

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Notes submitted by Vanessa Nieves.