

Griffith Park Advisory Board Special Meeting

February 28, 2025 at 6:30pm

Final Minutes

1. Call to order

Chair Crow called meeting to order at 6:31 pm

Present: Crow, Carlson, Chung, Greenwald, Griffin, Gustincic, Hagans, Hamilton, Laib, Lann

Excused:

Absent:

2. Board Announcements

New members Hamilton and Lann introduced themselves.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Greenwald motion to approve minutes. Approved.

4. Public Comment

- Gavin – I'm here to promote cycling in the park. Any updates on safety measures?
- Marion – FOGP is continuing to do volunteer cleanup of debris from the fire.
- Karen – Here to talk about A Bridge Home. The ambassador program that was promised never happened. And people in the shelter were supposed to get permanent housing and going on two years they are still there. Many people on both sides want the shelter decommissioned.
- Hull – We do have an ambassador program that is run by SELA.

5. Information Reports and Presentations

Craig Raines – Head of planning and design for RAP, discussed Measure A project, a multi-use accessible travel/bike path connecting an existing external path to the park and Riverside Dr.

- Laib – Some of these pathways are treacherous and at a 90-degree angle.
- Craig – Yes, that will all be corrected and paved in some places.
- Gustincic – Is a bike node a transition points?
- Craig – Yeah, it's designed to slow a biker down
- Greenwald – Can you say anything about lighting and safety features?

- Craig – Measure A did not include lighting, but maybe we can find funding for it in the future.
- Greenwald – A “multipurpose path”, does that mean it will have a bike lane and pedestrian lane? And is it only open for bikes now?
- Craig – Yes, that’s what it means, and now it’s potholed so not friendly to bikers.
- Laib – What is the significance of red and yellow paths?
- Craig – Red is wider and a higher quality trail.
- Crow – What is the timing of this?
- Craig – Construction should start soon

Public Comment

- Gavin – Seems like it would need to be wider than 10’ for the turning radius.
- Craig – We have addressed it but would have to look at the plans.
- Greenwald – Any opportunity to find funding for lighting would be appropriate and appreciated by the community.
- Craig – Yes, I definitely agree. We can have our engineer do a light study.
- Smith – There are several areas around there that have lighting.

Anthony Gallo – Provided a revenue and expenditure update. [A summary is attached to the minutes]. We are on the right path and the meters are working. There have been some issues with the fires, but we’re trying to address it.

- Phillips – We have a balance of \$1.7M?
- Greenwald – Is the \$3.3M just for 6 months? Seems like we’re looking at a pretty healthy year. Is the general fund draw still \$2.2M?
- Smith – As far as I know
- Greenwald – so perhaps we’ll be able to put some money aside to invest in the park.
- Gallo – For the meters, we will receive new power cables next week, which should reduce power draw by 50%. We can also try shutting off the motherboard during off hours.
- Smith – It’s getting better but we want 100%.
- Gallo – Connectivity is always going to be a bit of an issue. I would like to see 17/22 always working. Even in 2016 when they were brand new, they were never at 22.
- Phillips – Thank you for all the hard work on this. The revenues seem higher than they were even at higher points.
- Greenwald – Can we have a written report for the minutes?
- Gallo – Yes
- Laib – How much will stay in the park? Will there be any left over?
- Smith – We pay a lot of staff from that balance. But we may have a little left.

Chris Laib - Explained the origin of the Vision for Griffith Park. The Vision document has different goals. For the 1–5-year goals:

- The first goal was to staff an ecologist, which we've done.
 - Then, there was the addition of two baseball diamonds to Pote Field - this didn't happen.
 - More maintenance staff – that hasn't happened.
 - Begin repair of watersheds – some of this has happened
 - Restoration of degraded historic structures – there will be some conversation about that tonight in regard to the adobe.
 - Implement a remote parking system with the shuttle – we had that going but it was a victim of covid
 - Increase public transportation – we're not leading on that in Los Angeles, and many of us aspire to get a lot of cars out of the park
 - Reclaim as much of central yard as possible – this has not happened
 - Connection bridge between Atwater and the park – the bridge is there but not everyone loves it. There will be another bridge coming over Glendale narrows.
 - Many things have happened, but we can help find more money and advocate for them.
- Gustincic – Is it time to do a new vision to update the goals?
 - Laib – Yes, we are looking into that.
 - Lann – Do we mention this vision at every meeting?
 - Laib – With newer members there is less awareness of it.
 - Greenwald – When I started on the board it was discussed often, but now there is an uneven level of understanding.
 - Hagans – what stands out to me is that it reinforces the goal of preserving the urban wilderness nature of the park
 - Hamilton – It's nice to see a pragmatic approach to coming up with a vision.

Jason Greenwald - CD4 convened a working group a little over a year ago with representatives from neighborhoods on the western side around the park, to look at issues specific to visitation to the western part of the park. We've put together a year one recap with recommendations around parking, smoking, and other mitigation issues. Chris and I have been focused on the systemic issue of, there is a sign that everyone wants to see and there are not a lot of ways to view it. What can be done to create a focal point outside the park? Some working group members take the view that there is a sign that people want to view and how to balance that against resident needs and some people are more focused on how it impacts their neighborhood. Some of the ideas are big ideas like creating a shuttle that will take a long time but there are also smaller things that can be done.

- Crow - How long will the group keep meeting?

- Greenwald - CD4 has put a lot of resources into the process and are committed to keeping it going.
- Lann – how many people are on the group?
- Greenwald – I think it's 18.

Public Comment

- Ken – the impacts are far reaching, if you move people from one area they move into another area. If you've been there on a Sunday, it's a mess. No simple answers.
- Public – how do you identify tourists vs residents visiting on their day off?
- Laib – CD4 has done some traffic studies, and we know how many people are coming but not who they are.

Tracy James – Here to discuss updates to the Visitor Center and Adobe. We want to take control of some of the rogue park tours. We want to have a vendor here that offers opportunities for tours. We are in the middle of a draft RFP to have vendors bid on the opportunity to provide tours. We are also thinking of adding a sign and satellite office near the Greek Theatre. Then we want to make this area a hub. This is where the Parkline may come to when started again, there will be a café nearby, merry go round. The historic adobe would be the future Griffith Park Museum.

- Smith – We have thought about creating a Hollywood sign experience on this side of the park. There would be an immersive sign experience and pictures and artifacts
- James - The visitor center would have an interactive map and there would be an interactive display. We have a budget to do the visitor center and then offer merchandise to help with revenue. When we're thinking of an ad hoc, we think there is going to be a lot of writing, fund raising, research.
- **Crow – I would like to go ahead and convene an ad hoc. Would any board members like to join the ad hoc?**
 - o **Lann, Hamilton, Gustincic, and Chung volunteer for the ad hoc.**
- Hamilton – My husband is Hawaiian, and this reminds me of Kilauea, and this is how they dealt with it. They started offsite visit centers.
- Gustincic– Would we lose this room as a meeting space?
- Smith – We may have to scale down the hours, but it's an important space for city business.
- Chung – What is the timing for this project?
- James – What we need is money to move it forward.
- Chung – Will any part be complete by the Olympics?
- Smith – Yes, likely this room and the nature center will be.
- Laib – Is the model to have relationships with tour companies?

- Tracy – We would like tour operators to be licensed and get a permit and follow the rules.
- Laib – How will you deal with parking? Is this an opportunity to restart the Parkline?
- Tracy – Parking is limited in the park, and we would love to start transit again.

Public Comment

- Gavin – I think jazzing up the nature center is a great idea.
- Marion – How can you regulate the tours operating in the park?
- Tracy – We're going to work with the city attorney and law enforcement.

6. Committee and Ad Hoc Reports

Fire Safety ad hoc team report out

- Greenwald - Our ad hoc held three meetings during the last three weeks (Amy, Jason, Aaron, T). The report was a collaborative effort and I'm proud of the outcome. There are four key points – year-round fire prevention is the first. We understand the source of fire, smoking and camping can cause fires. The next section gets into the red flag days. We now know that the National Weather Service can declare a red flag warning and the fire dept can declare a red flag alert. These are a big deal, and we need to take them seriously. Across the board we agree these items should be funded. The cost of a major fire is so significant, it is worth the cost. We then talked about park closures, we believe it should be a last resort but sometimes it is necessary. And underscoring point number four is the funding commitment. If city departments are going to ask RAP to do more, they need to pay for it. We believe the risk is so great that they should pay for it.
- Gustincic – The previous meeting set us up well to prepare this. One thing we learned about was how many stakeholders are impacted by this.
- Hagans – Red flag warnings happen and then fires don't occur, and people become desensitized. I think public awareness is key to this process.
- Chung – I want to emphasize we are not trying to set the criteria for closing the park, we will leave that to experts. But the criteria should be known to the public. If a closure is going to happen, the public should know about it and understand why.
- Crow – you deserve a lot of credit for turning this around so quickly and it's very thorough. I get a little nervous when uniformed officers are relied upon to fix everything. And I like how this report approaches education and public

knowledge. I appreciate the high threshold for closing the park. I appreciate the thoughtfulness around paying employees during closures. Really great job.

- Hamilton – I know many entities that couldn't have done this good of a job in this timeframe.
- Gustincic – Part of the need for urgency is that CD4/5 asked for input in 30 days.
- Greenwald – If it is the intent for the board to adopt this report, but it can be shared with council staffers.
- Laib – This is a great time to take a stronger stance on smoking in the park.
- Gustincic – Maybe it's a separate letter?
- Laib – I think we heard from a lot of stakeholders about the financial impacts of closing the park. Maybe we need to push to form an impartial entity to close the park.
- Smith – The general manager can close the park at any time.
- Laib – But what is the metric you are recommending for closing the park?
- Amy – We are not saying what the standard should be but that there should be a set threshold that everyone knows about. We should define the metric.

Public Comment

- Marion – I would love to read your report. How many of you were here in 2007 for the fire in the park? That was a normal day, it was caused by someone smoking.
- Kevin – What does it mean that areas on the western side of the park should be evaluated?
- Greenwald – Just that special attention should be paid to that side of the park.

Motion: Carlson moves to accept the ad hoc committee's report. Phillips second.
Unanimous.

- Gustincic – Do we disband the ad hoc at this moment?
- Greenwald – I suggest we suspend for now and wait for potential comments from the council members.

Crow: The Executive Committee met and discussed the agenda for this meeting.

7. Superintendent Updates

- The date for jazz festival is Sunday, June 9th. We gathered folks together in the park to discuss layout and set up and it's going really well. Council office has already received a 25k donation.
 - o Griffin - I'm trying to get a headliner and some known names, but the pricing is steep. But we hope the price will come down and negotiate.

- James – This will be a fundraiser for the visitor center. We plan to have vendors and sponsors. If you know anyone interested, then let me know.
 - Laib – There are other successful events where they honor someone. Can we consider that?
 - Griffin – yes, that's what we're thinking.
- On the Active Transportation Plan, Planning will be sending out a task order for an engineering consultant. They will complete the drawings for DOT approval.
- The performing arts stage is held up in building permits.

8. Board Business

- Laib – I would like this Board to consider a motion to write a letter banning smoking.

9. Adjournment

Motion: Greenwald moves to adjourn. Griffin second. Unanimous at 8:58pm.
Next meeting Thursday, March 27, 2024.