

**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL OPEN SPACE PARK
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
Minutes of January 16, 2009**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dave Roberts - Chair
Pam Slater-Price Vice-Chair
Olga Diaz
Betty Rexford
Dianne Jacob
Sherri Lightner
Phil Pryde

REPRESENTING

City of Solana Beach
County of San Diego
City of Escondido
City of Poway
County of San Diego
City of San Diego
Citizens Advisory Committee

VISITORS/STAFF PRESENT

Wayne Brechtel	JPA Counsel
Dick Bobertz	San Dieguito River Park JPA
Susan Carter	San Dieguito River Park JPA
Shawna Anderson	San Dieguito River Park JPA
Jan Lines	San Dieguito River Park JPA
Frank Urtasun	Sempra Foundation
Bill Proffer	San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
Jacqueline Winterer	Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley
Bruce Liska	San Dieguito Planning Group
Kelly Sarber	Southern Calif. Edison/SDGE
Stephen Heverly	Councilmember Sherri Lightner representative
Freda Reid	San Dieguito Lagoon Committee
Cheryl Goddard	County of San Diego Parks & Rec.

Introduction and Announcements

Chair Roberts convened the meeting at 9:31 a.m. in the County Administration Building, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 302/303, San Diego, CA 92101. He introduced Sherri Lightner from the City of San Diego and Olga Diaz from Escondido who are attending the JPA Board for the first time. .

Chair Roberts said that this is his last time to chair the meeting even though he will continue to be on the JPA Board representing the City of Solana Beach.

Chair Roberts read the accomplishments for 2008 which included 32 grant awards totaling 3 million dollars. There were construction and trail projects along with two land acquisitions and a vehicle donation to the park. He reported on the wetlands restoration project and the Grand Avenue Bridge Overlook that are nearing completion. Mr. Roberts reported that our efforts paid off when the Sunrise Powerline was realigned due to the opposition of the River Park and their supporters. In 2007 the River Park offices and historical site were destroyed in the wildfires but with the help of our insurance company, FEMA and staff we quickly started the process of recovery. A donation to the River Park of 32.6 acres of habitat property was acquired in a mitigation transaction that adds valuable open space to the inventory. With the help of grants we have

eradicated unwanted plants and planted many sites with natural habitat to restore disturbed areas all over the park. Mr. Roberts was pleased to attend several CAC meetings to see how this advisory group reviews and discusses items of concern to the River Park. He said that the River Park is committed to restore the park and he appreciated the hard work of the Boardmembers and staff for their work during this last year. Chair Roberts said the accomplishments were many and he was proud to be Chair for this year. He asked that the list of accomplishments be included in the minutes.

At that point, Chair Roberts turned the meeting over to Boardmember Slater-Price, who was elected at the last meeting as the new Chair for this year. She commended Boardmember Roberts for the great job of chairing the board meetings and all his enthusiasm for the River Park. Chair Slater-Price presented Boardmember Roberts with a plaque for his commitment to the River Park, this year and always.

Approval of Minutes of December 12, 2008

Vice-Chair Rexford made a motion to approve the minutes of December 12, 2008 and Boardmember Pryde seconded the motion. All in favor.

Boardmember Pryde introduced the CAC members in attendance as, Bill Proffer, Jacqueline Winterer, Freda Reid, John Degenfelder and Craig Adams.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Bobertz said that in partnership with the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy, we applied to the Sempra Foundation for grant funds to prepare conceptual designs for the San Dieguito Lagoon Nature Center. Mr. Bobertz introduced Frank Urtasun, Executive Director of the Sempra Foundation. Mr. Urtasun said that the focus of the foundation is for environmental, educational projects including the 2007 fire victims. He said that we have been watching with interest the Wetland Restoration project and have granted \$60,000 for a feasibility study as requested. Mr. Urtasun said that they will follow the progress of the project and they look forward to a partnership with the River Park on this interpretive center.

Chair Slater-Price thanked Mr. Urtasun and the rest of his staff for their support.

Public Comment- Bruce Liska of the San Dieguito Planning Group stated that he wants to recruit the JPA to help with the overhead powerline undergrounding or power pole consolidation along Via De La Valle. The planning group reviewed the wetland project and watched the progress of the new power poles being installed in the area. Meetings with Edison, City of San Diego and developers proved futile even though Edison wanted to contribute three million dollars toward the costs to underground the lines because the City of San Diego did not want to participate in the undergrounding. Mr. Liska discussed the feasibility of transferring the current lines onto the new SDG&E power poles at a cost of two or three million dollars and improve the viewshed of this wetland lagoon. He urged the JPA to send a letter to SDG&E directing them to move the lines and remove the old poles.

Director Bobertz said that the JPA sent a letter to the Mayor of San Diego last August asking for the City to require SDGE to consolidate the power poles, but never received a response.

Boardmember Pryde asked that this item be docketed for the next meeting.

ACTION

1. Ad Hoc Committee Assignments for 2009

Recommendation: Discuss and approve a new Ad Hoc Committee roster for 2009

Boardmember Pryde made a motion to approve the committee assignment list (included in the agenda) for 2009. Boardmember Roberts seconded. All in favor

2. Poway Heritage Connector Trail

Recommendation: Approve attached Resolution for Heritage Connector Trail adopting an Addendum to the previous adopted Mule Hill/San Pasqual Mitigated Negative Declaration to extend the trail to connect to the Poway Heritage Trail.

Shawna Anderson said that this addendum to a previously adopted MND will allow us to build the 200-foot-long Heritage trail link that will connect the Coast to Crest trail (Mule Hill segment) to the Poway Heritage trail in Poway. Ms. Anderson showed a few slides of the staging area and trail segment. Ms. Anderson reported that the alignment will follow an existing agricultural road and will actually cross the road at Highland Valley into a small portion of disturbed wetland area ending up at the Mule Hill trail.

Boardmember Rexford made a motion to adopt the resolution per the staff recommendation. Boardmember Pryde seconded. All in favor.

3. Office Reconstruction Plans, Permitting and Funding

Recommendation: Authorize Executive Director to take all necessary action to process and complete replacement of the office, using additional resources available from insurance proceeds for the Lake Sutherland East cabin.

Deputy Director Carter said that a year ago after our offices burned down the Board authorized staff to hire the architectural firm of Rinehart Herbst to survey the site and design some alternative plans for the new offices. Ms. Carter showed a few slides of the new concept for the office with solar panels and environmental features. Ms. Carter explained that the insurance company has designated \$509,000 for replacement of our offices that were lost; she said this was a fair settlement for our old office, but is not sufficient to pay for the somewhat larger size of the new office, nor upgraded features such as a metal roof or solar panels. Our recommendation to the Board is to use the monies that were offered for the Lake Sutherland cabin, that was rarely used and difficult to access, that burned down and combine all the insurance money for the River Park offices. The insurance will provide \$124,000 for the cabin if the funds are put into building another new structure such as the replacement office, or \$88,000 if we just took a cash settlement.

Boardmember Pryde reminded staff that there has to be a 100 ft clearing for habitat around the offices for a fire break and Boardmember Jacob suggested investigating a product called "Cool Roof" which the County has used to increase insulation capacity of metal roofs.

Boardmember Roberts made a motion to approve the Executive Director to take all necessary action to reconstruct our offices, including authorization to proceed to obtain a building permit from the City of

Poway, and to utilize the full amount of insurance proceeds from the Lake Sutherland cabin that will not be rebuilt. Boardmember Rexford seconded. All in favor.

4. Prospective donation for Lake Hodges Bike/ Ped Bridge Shortfall

Recommend: Accept offer of \$400,000 donation and \$275,000 one-year loan to be applied to the Lake Hodges Bridge \$675,000 funding shortfall and direct the Executive Director to take all actions necessary to execute an agreement.

Director Bobertz said that the Lake Hodges Bridge is progressing very well. We have been struggling over the year about the shortfall of \$675,000 needed to finish the bridge. These funds have been difficult to identify but we did have a few options through mitigation on some newly acquired property. An anonymous donor has offered the River Park a donation of \$400,000 to honor a family member who is a long-time supporter and who will be identified with a plaque when the bridge is opened. The same donor has generously offered to loan the River Park the balance of \$275,000 on a one year loan.

Boardmember Diaz made a motion to accept the offer and loan and Boardmember Roberts seconded. All in favor.

INFORMATION

5. Presentation on the Grand Avenue Bridge Overlook Project- Shawna Anderson said that the Grand Avenue Bridge Overlook has been a project a long time in the making. This project was envisioned by the Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley mainly Jacqueline Winterer in order to save the historic integrity of the bridge. Ms. Anderson acknowledged Chair Slater -Price for the funding of this project. A few slides were shown of the bridge overlook and some of the history was discussed including the former use as a dirigible airfield. There will be a celebration on January 25th for the grand opening.
6. State Budget Impacts on SDRP
Deputy Director Carter said the budget impacts for the River Park have been minimal so far but that we have received letters from state agencies warning us not to sign any new contracts and to stop construction on the projects being done using those grant funds. Ms. Carter stated that we have other federal and SANDAG funds that are not subject to the State budget constraints.
7. Potential Federal Stimulus Bill Opportunities for SDRP- Deputy Director Carter said that Boardmember Jacob recommended adding some of the upcoming projects to the stimulus package list and as a result of that suggestion and with the help of County Parks staff, we identified the person at SANDAG who was preparing the regional stimulus list. We were able to have Phase Two of the Lake Hodges Bikeway Access Project (the West Bernardo Drive Bike Path and Cantilever) added to the regional stimulus list. We also subsequently submitted information for funding for 3 potential visitors centers for consideration to add to the list. Boardmember Jacob thanked the River Park for quick action in getting the projects on the stimulus list, and to try to get other projects shovel ready if possible because it is necessary to have future projects ready as opportunities arise.

8. Coordination Reports-

- a. San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy- Craig Adams introduced the VP of the Conservancy, Bill Proffer. He said that the Conservancy works hand in hand with the River Park trying to identify funding for projects as in the case of the Heritage Trail segment that was partially funded by Dr Human of Escondido. Mr. Adams spoke about an advertisement that the Conservancy put in the coastal newspaper that has generated calls and raised visibility for the River Park. As far as Land acquisition is concerned, the Conservancy is partnering with the County of San Diego on a parcel across from the Del Dios Highlands on Del Dios Highway. Part of the decisions that are made by the River Park and the Conservancy on property acquisition have to do with maintenance issues and if the property is being considered for development. Mr. Adams noted that the Sempra Foundation grant is being issued to the Conservancy for the feasibility study because they wanted to go through a non-profit organization and the Conservancy wants to make sure that this nature center is done to the best of its ability with environmentally friendly construction and input from the community as to what would make it a more educational facility.
- b. Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley- No report.
- c. Volcan Mountain Preserve Foundation- No report
- d. San Dieguito Lagoon Committee Freda Reid reported that the Lagoon Committee had been helping with the Grand Ave Bridge ceremony and they will be organizing Lagoon Day in the near future.

9. Status Reports

- a. Fire Recovery Deputy Director Carter said that the projects that the Board awarded contracts for – Santa Fe Valley bridge replacement, Highland Valley bridge replacement and Green Valley Creek bridge replacement are all on track to be completed by February 15th, which is a required condition of the resource agencies due to bird nesting season.
- b. River Park Projects- Deputy Director Carter reported on an article in the newspaper that shows the Lake Hodges Bike Ped Bridge construction under the category of infrastructure projects. Ms. Carter said that the contractors had a very eventful day pouring one continuous line of concrete to unite all the panels on the decking. We are planning a dedication in March or April 2009.

- 10. Jurisdictional Status Reports-** Chair Slater-Price reminded everyone about the Grand Avenue Bridge Overlook celebration on January 25 and reported that the San Elijo Lagoon Interpretive Center will have a grand opening from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on January 31. Ms. Slater-Price said that the San Elijo County Park has a conservancy and are doing preservation work along with environmental and educational programs in conjunction with Mira Costa College. Boardmember Rexford said that the Big Stone Lodge in Poway was purchased by the City of Poway for its historic value. After the purchase the city realized that the maintenance was very costly and proposed demolition. An organization called the Continental Trail Group proposed taking over the historic building and renovating it for the City of Poway. Boardmember Pryde said that he participated in the Christmas Bird Count on January 4th 2009 for the newly opened areas of the San Dieguito Lagoon. The information the bird count acquires is very instrumental in keeping track of the species and is very important information for the Audubon Society. Shawna Anderson said that the California Coastal Conservancy staff is recommending a \$317,000 grant to the River Park for alignment study on the trail segment from Jimmy Durante Blvd. to the beach along with several viewing platforms in the area and construction of Mesa Loop off El Camino Real.

Chair Slater-Price adjourned the meeting at 11:30.

These minutes approved by Board Action

Date

Executive Director