

**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL OPEN SPACE PARK
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
Minutes of February 19, 2010**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Earnest - Chair
Sherri Lightner - Vice Chair
Olga Diaz
Jim Cunningham
Dave Roberts
Dianne Jacob
Carl DeMaio
Phil Pryde
Becky Bartling

REPRESENTING

City of Del Mar
City of San Diego
City of Escondido
City of Poway
City of Solana Beach
County of San Diego
City of San Diego
Citizens Advisory Committee
22nd District Agricultural Association

VISITORS/STAFF PRESENT

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

Introduction and Announcements

Chair Earnest convened the meeting at 9:35 a.m. in the County Administration Building, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 302/303, San Diego, CA 92101.

Boardmember Golich introduced the CAC members in attendance as Freda Reid, Jacqueline Winterer, John Degenfelder, Phil Pryde.

Chair Earnest presented a plaque to Phil Pryde for 20 years of service to the CAC as chair and JPA Boardmember. Mr. Pryde acknowledged the gift of an engraved clock.

Approval of Minutes of January 15, 2010

Chair DeMaio stated that he was not present for agenda item #4, member agency contributions, and requested that it be reflected in the vote.

Boardmember Lightner made a motion to approve the minutes of January 15th, 2010 as amended and Boardmember Cunningham seconded the motion. All in favor

Executive Director's Report

Director Bobertz reported that we applied for a grant from State Resources in coordination with the 22nd Ag District to extend our trail through Horsepark. This grant will allow us to reconfigure two of the arenas at Horsepark to enable the trail to go through. This \$350,000 grant will be going before the California Transportation Commission next month for final action, with a recommendation for approval. Mr. Bobertz thanked Becky Bartling for her help with the grant.

Public Comment- None

ACTION AGENDA

1. **Budget Amendment for FY 09/10**

Recommendation: Amend FY 09/10 Operating Budget and Trails/Land Management Budget

Deputy Director Carter recommended that the Board adopt the changes to the budget on page 3 of the agenda. Ms. Carter outlined the 3 items, which included the agreement with Southern California Edison that began last June and adds another ranger to the coastal area effective January 1, 2010, as well as another ranger truck and other funds for operations. Ms. Carter reported that the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy added an additional \$10,000 to our budget from their endowment fund for additional work to be done at Bernardo Mountain. Due to a calculation error made on the employee benefits a deduction was made to the budget leaving a net \$28,000 revenue increase for current budget year.

Boardmember DeMaio asked about the furlough implementation requested at the last meeting. Ms. Carter said that one day a month furloughs for all staff were initiated February 1st.

Boardmember Roberts made a motion to approve the amended FY 09/10 budget and Boardmember Jacob seconded. Boardmember Jacob summarized the budget amendments and stated that these adjustments would allow the River Park operations to continue through the 4th quarter. All in favor.

2. **Budget Situation**

a. **Status Report**

Recommendation: Receive report- no action required.

Director Bobertz confirmed Boardmember Jacob's comment that we are now set up to continue through the 4th quarter with these adjustments. Mr. Bobertz said that at the last meeting Boardmember DeMaio raised a question about our figures in the Expenditure and Revenue Report and he asked Deputy Director Carter to explain the discrepancies.

Ms. Carter stated that Mr. DeMaio's report had been drawn from the Revenue/Expenditures/Accomplishments Report, which included all revenues in the budget but which only listed expenses in certain major categories and did not reflect the total expenditures. Mr. DeMaio was thanked for bringing this to the attention of the River Park so that future editions of the report will be more clear and complete.

Mr. Bobertz reminded the Board that at the last meeting, part of the motion was to stop providing services on city owned land when member assessment funds were stopped. Mr. Bobertz explained that this could cause problems for other member agencies because many residents in the other member agencies' jurisdictions are using the trails that are on City of San Diego property. All the hard work that we have done to complete the trails would eventually become overgrown and unusable. He also noted that part of the lease agreement for the David Kreitzer/Lake Hodges Bridge is to patrol the bridge three times a day which

takes the few remaining rangers' time and reduces their ability to carry out other duties on other trails.

Boardmember Diaz asked if the agreement stated that it had to be River Park rangers or could it be police officers or volunteers that could help with these duties. Mr. Bobertz stated that he was not sure if it is spelled out as to who was required to patrol the bridge. Ms. Diaz stated that it might be possible for the City of Escondido to share responsibility for the patrols since they have staff in the area.

Boardmember DeMaio stated that it could be an issue that the union contracts prohibit any volunteer doing work that an employee could be doing.

Boardmember Jacob suggested that we get other resources and be creative in next year's budget because people know about the trails and are going to use them so we have an obligation to see that they are maintained.

Director Bobertz said that cutting the two existing rangers would also affect the County areas of the River Park and maintaining the many acres owned by the park. Ms. Jacobs stated that the underlying jurisdictions would be liable for the property in their area in the event of elimination of rangers to do patrolling.

Boardmember Golich asked about the practicality of not having the attorney in attendance and his reluctance to discuss legal matters without representation. Ms. Jacob said that we will be able to get through the JPA meetings and ask legal questions to counsel after the meeting.

Boardmember DeMaio requested that the JPA put its budget online.

b. Report and Recommendation from Budget Committee

Recommendation: 1) Direct that a letter from the Mayors of the JPA member agencies and the County Board chairwoman be sent to Mayor Sanders requesting a meeting to discuss options for SDRP support; and 2) Direct that the Executive Director and JPA Board members that sit on SANDAG meet with the SANDAG Executive Director to discuss SDRP funding options.

Director Bobertz said that two recommendations were suggested by the Budget Committee (Boardmembers Earnest, Lightner, Diaz and Cunningham). First, a letter be sent to Mayor Sanders from all the member agency mayors along with County Chairwoman Slater-Price requesting a meeting to discuss options for River Park support. Second, direct the Executive Director and Boardmembers who sit on SANDAG Board to meet with Director Gary Gallegos to explore funding options.

Chair Earnest said that is imperative that we explain to Mayor Sanders the ramifications of the decisions made about the River Park. Boardmember Diaz said that the Mayor of Escondido will be supportive.

Boardmember Roberts asked about the Quality of Life initiative and Deputy Director Carter said that Crystal Crawford is the chair of the working group of this initiative. Ms. Carter said that this initiative presently covers habitat conservation, water quality, shoreline preservation and public transit.

Director Bobertz said that the budget committee suggestions also included ways to find substitute funding for the long run with a volunteer former City Attorney, Wayne Dernetz, who is exploring special options.

Carl DeMaio said that the City of San Diego attorney has not finished the review of the issues that we have raised. Mr. DeMaio discussed that fact that the Parks and Recreation Department has made the final payment to the River Park from their budget and are no longer involved in the discussion. Mr. DeMaio was concerned that the request made to the City of San Diego for a permission letter to accompany a River Park grant was denied. It was suggested that a letter to the Mayor Sanders be sent reminding him that we are trying to find alternative funding in an effort to keep operations running at the park. He said that the Mayor's office had suggested that the City of San Diego might have overpaid in previous years. Three suggestions were made regarding member contributions, zero based budgeting and a private funding plan and where we want to be in 18 months. One idea would be if the City could provide transitional bridge financing for 18 months and then that would be replaced at the end of the 18 months with an alternative source.

Boardmember Lightner said that the City Attorney's opinion is in Jan Goldsmith's office for review, and should be released shortly.

Boardmember Cunningham asked about the budget committee meeting and the time frame to reconvene and work on this budget. Mr. Bobertz said that this is the time of year that the Budget Committee normally meets and works out the finances for the next fiscal year. He said we will schedule a meeting promptly.

Boardmember Jacob made a suggestion for the budget committee to carefully review the largest part of the budget which is the salary and the total compensation package for each employee. It was also suggested that the JPA Board not meet every month to save money. Ms. Jacob felt that the City and County of San Diego could share responsibility for certain duties in the park.

Chair Earnest stated that we have our work cut out for us and requested that each Boardmember get this letter signed by their mayor and Director Bobertz will pick them up.

c. Recommendations from Citizens Advisory Committee-

i. Motion re CAC Status in Event of Layoffs-

Recommendation: Consider and direct staff accordingly.

Deputy Director Carter discussed the actual motion that was made by the CAC from their meeting on February 5th, 2010. The CAC voted to strike "at least minimally" from the first paragraph last line.

- ii. Letter re Environmental Planner Status in Event of Layoffs- Deputy Director Carter stated that the PRC has composed a letter to the JPA Board regarding the critical function of the Environmental Planner and all the duties she does that keep the River Park and the PRC running smoothly. Boardmember Golich stated that the CAC as a group is passionate about the River Park and the PRC feels that there will be drastic effects. The PRC reviews the proposed plans for any project in the FPA and serve an advisory function that has prevented San Diego from becoming another Orange County.

Speaker Jacqueline Winterer who is the President of The Friends of the River Valley and a PRC committee member wanted to discuss two items 1) limits of volunteers and 2) regional solidarity. Before the River Park was established, volunteers with different degrees of knowledge from different areas monitored the region for 10 years before the River Park was established. When the Environmental Planner position was added to the River Park the volunteers worked alongside the planner supporting ideas and making suggestions. If you eliminate the Environmental Planner position you will lose the volunteers because the volunteers no longer feel that they will have the effectiveness that River Park staff has with proponents of projects. Ms. Winterer stressed that this position can't be replaced by volunteers. Ms. Winterer said that the member agency solidarity has always insured participation and with the impending withdrawal of funding by the City of San Diego they are not accepting responsibility in the JPA. Ms. Winterer said that the City of San Diego should pay at least \$1 to show that they are involved in this operation.

Boardmember Golich stated that the Budget Committee is being asked to take this information into consideration when planning next years budget.

Boardmember DeMaio felt that some of the services that may be cut from the budget could be outsourced.

Boardmember Jacob felt that a option for saving the organization might possibly be to have all the employees be private contractors. We will need to do the zero budget review and start from the beginning cutting costs and stressed that we all need to think smarter and save this organization.

INFORMATION

3. Presentation on Alternative Fairground Expansion Plan Concept by Bill Lewis- Mr. Lewis is a retired architect from Del Mar, who has put together a team of members who have reviewed the Fairgrounds EIR. Mr. Lewis stated that the Ag District has a goal to implement the Fairgrounds expansion plan and wants this started soon so his team worked out an alternative plan to eliminate some of the massive traffic issues that the original plan would cause. Mr. Lewis is part of an ad hoc committee in Del Mar that has looked at the EIR along with the Caltrans proposed expansion of I-5, rail system to the fairgrounds and the greenbelt proposed by Senator Kehoe. The alternative suggests that some of the traffic problems could be addressed with the rerouting of Hwy 101 that would allow for a clear drive around the fairgrounds. Mr. Lewis said that this area is in a flood zone and this issue needs to be addressed before any work starts. His team suggests a buffer be installed

to eliminate this potential hazard along with a greenway section. They rearranged the configurations of the hotel, convention center and parking structure which they feel would allow a project like this to fit into a pristine area like this. Mr. Lewis said that the area would be much more like Balboa Park when completed.

Ms. Bartling from the Ag District thanked Mr. Lewis for his suggestion and his team's hard work on this alternative plan.

Boardmember Roberts asked Mr. Lewis to make this presentation to the Solana Beach City Council.

Boardmember Golich who lives in Solana Beach felt that the noise impact was a concern in any project in this area and would like further information on this issue.

Recommendation: Information Item- No action required

4. Coordination Reports

- a. San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy- Craig Adams stated that the Conservancy is continuing work on the acquisition of property on Volcan Mountain and they will be giving tours in May to people who would like to see the area . He said that the Conservancy has raised \$70,000 so far. Regarding the JPA's budget crisis, Mr. Adams said that the Conservancy is taking the stance that the JPA is facing a short-term crisis, not one that should jeopardize the survival of the agency. He pointed out that when the JPA was created, it was a very deliberate decision in order to retain local control over the Park. He remarked that the Conservancy also commented on the fairgrounds EIR and submitted an alternative plan which is on their website (www.sdrvc.com). Their proposed plan was reviewed by professional consultants and the alternative addressed the hotel, conference center and modernized exhibit spaces.
- b. Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley- None
- c. Volcan Mountain Preserve Foundation- None
- d. San Dieguito Lagoon Committee- Jan McMillan said that she is the alternate. She wanted to thank the boardmembers for their efforts. Ms. McMillan said that she has been a JPA Boardmember in the past and knows how difficult this current situation is. She reminded the boardmembers that the Conservancy is a fundraising organization and hopes that funds can be raised to help the River Park.

5. Status Reports

- a. River Park Projects- Deputy Director Carter said that the largest project underway is the West Bernardo bike path. Unfortunately the discovery of a Redtail Hawk nest in a eucalyptus tree next to the project may cause a delay. If we find that the hawk is sitting on eggs we will have to stop for about 60 days which will take us into the regular bird nesting season . It is possible that we might be shut down until September 2010.

Ms. Carter said that Sikes Adobe construction is going well and we are looking forward to a grand opening on June 26th, 2010. A letter will be going out to our member agencies about the grand opening and asking for Board members to speak at the event.

Director Bobertz discussed the progress of the office reconstruction and how we hope to be in our new offices before the next rainy season because the office space that we rent from the City of San Diego has had problems with a leaking roof which has caused problems for staff.

6. Jurisdictional Status Reports- Boardmember Roberts said that the City of Solana Beach responded to the Ag District EIR and spent \$75,000 for a consultant to review and comment on the proposed plan. Boardmember Diaz said that the City of Escondido does not have any plans at this time to cut the budget for the River Park.

Chair Earnest adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

These minutes approved by Board Action

Date

Executive Director

DRAFT