

Griffith Park Advisory Board
Minutes
September 23, 2021
Meeting began at 6:32pm
via zoom

1. Call to Order Roll Call: Greenwald, Crammes, Chung, Deutsch, Gilbert, Phillips, Thornton, Ashouri, Laib called in late.
2. Announcements by Chair (none recorded)
3. Minutes Approved by all present. Ashouri abstained, due to not being on board at last meeting.
4. General Public Comments Gerry Hans announced the new FOGP raptor section on website and that FOGP supports alternative 1 for LA ZOO expansion; Marian Dodge advised that P-22 Day is 10/23 at park central. FOGP will also have activities at Fern Dell; Sarah Lann advises that the GP 125th anniversary celebration is on 11/13. More details to come.
Special Guests Helene Rotolo, Council District 4 deputy. The smoke in LA is from Northern CA .4 fires; sign up to *Notify LA* to keep up on fires and all urgent happenings in LA; 9/27 will be the map review from *Los Angeles City Council Redistricting Commission 2021*. For more info go to LACCRC2021.org for more information; the Deronda temporary gate has been installed. CD4 is working on a permanent solution.

Board Comment: Deutsch asked if there are remaining gate issues. Rotolo clarified boundary issues are still being scrutinized. Deutsch reminded that GPAB has previously supported the gate being left open for park access at that location (during park regular hours).

5. Informational Reports and Presentations a) Rotolo from CD4 advises that RAP can use city right of way and stipulate maintenance of temporary fencing along Mulholland Highway. More community conversations to come; traffic issues still exist, previous foliage plantings are not working; Tracy James advises that there is a large public outcry on this issue and that more investigation is necessary; Rotolo states that CD4 is not driving any particular solution, but simply identifying issues. CD4 will return in early 2022 with feasibility/budget for any proposed solutions.

Board comments: Greenwald reminded all of the safety aspects in this area; Deutsch asks how a 6 month traffic study became 2 years; Phillips issues caution about one loud voice overtaking the real community issues and needs.

Public comments: Kristina O' Neill mentioned two accidents at the site as soon as the fence came down; Sara Jane Schwartz stated that the Hollywoodland HOA is following the process closely.

b) Matthew Rudnick, Acting AGM, RAP, discussed the Observatory parking revenue distribution; that there is progress on the urban ecologist/biologist position, including scope of work and local group input, that the position will be financed by parking revenue. The process targets will be for mid October submission to (Rec and Parks board), end of November applicant reviews, and hiring by January/February 2022; Parkline Shuttle reactivation is being held up by a shortage of drivers, that higher wages are being considered; Observatory parking revenue/distribution will be identified in a budget being prepared by acting park superintendent Smith and that there will be biannual reporting and transparency. Smith will return in October or November meeting to obtain GPAB input on the draft budget for the upcoming year.

Board Comments: Greenwald applauded the ecologist progress and that this was a need identified 12 years ago; Phillips thanked Rudnick for shepherding the hire; Crammes asked the salary range, to which Rudnick replied \$60,000-120,000; Thornton inquired as to whether the position would be system wide or dedicated to GP, to which Rudnick replied primarily GP, but some time will be spent on other parks in the system; Greenwald applauded Rudnick for the transparency on the parking revenue; Deutsch asked Rudnick what he felt was equitable distribution and if it could be a percentage allocation for GP. Rudnick replied that is in progress, and that December 2021 is target date for delivery of budget; Phillips acknowledged the tough revenue issues in the city and also that transparency on this (and all) issues is very important; Crammes seconded that comment from Phillips and that community support is critical; Rudnick

replied that there are many RAP revenue and expense streams and that the department must weigh numerous interests, including tourists and residents.

Public comment: Marian Dodge states hooray for the ecologist!

6. Superintendent Updates Acting Superintendent Smith. Vaccine mandates for all new department hires; in person board meetings still not allowed, due to covid; new managers for *Haunted Hayride* have been very cooperative, there will be reserved parking spaces for evening hikers; November 13th GP 125 anniversary planning going well, with multiple participating groups; Condor and Skyline encampment cleanups going well.

Board Comments: Thornton states *Haunted Hayride* is impacting Atwater horse ingress to park; Crames asked if there is additional money for brush clearance in park; Laib states that brush clearance is needed behind Old Zoo. Smith states she will look into it.

Public Comments: Steve Alpers appreciates the gate lock on Deronda; Stefanie Vendig wanted to talk about LA Shares and the GPAC permanent site and was advised by Greenwald that it has to be agendized.

7. Committee Reports

-*Executive Committee*: LA Zoo EIR review results in new Zoo Director reaching out regarding transportation; the committee would like to add an ad hoc transit committee; the committee is also advocating a sustainability ad hoc committee.

-*Public Safety ad hoc Committee*: Phillips reported; the Old Zoo illicit and illegal activity is creating an unsustainable amount of calls, clean up and a dangerous public safety hazard. Ranger incident reports are significantly higher than any other site in park. Phillips outlines the problems in detail and the four committee mitigation recommendations-replacement of existing, decayed upper fencing, towing of cars in parking lots 1,2 and Old Zoo lot after hours, addition of night-time/graveyard ranger staffing, regular after-hour LAPD drivebys.

The committee is also resourcing the more desirable LAFD no smoking sign costs and availability, and will report back.

Board Comment: Deutsch reminds all of the considerable investment being made in the GP Outdoor Performance Stage and that it too has been vandalized; Thornton emphasizes that the recommendations should be enacted with haste, as fire season is imminent; Crames asked who we are suggesting be 'kept out of park'. Laib acknowledges the sensitivity of that point, but that, in fact this is primarily an after-park-closure problem and no one should be in park then; Crames asks about night vision cameras, Thornton replies that was considered but presents a problem of monitoring them; Chung suggests that the Old Zoo structures be demolished and Laib replies that they are historic and the HCM status of park disallows that; Acting superintendent Smith states she has walked the site with CD4 and agrees with the recommended solutions from committee; Park Ranger Brewster testifies that some bad actors know the rangers leave the park at 8pm and enter the site then. Crames thanks the ranger for his work and his comments.

Public Comment: Gerry Hans agrees with the seriousness of the problem and that FOGP has abandoned trying to keep up with the clean up, it is so voluminous. Also, he believes that the *Haunted Hayride* may be attracting bad actors to the site; Marian Dodge told of her experiences and how bad it is at Old Zoo; Steve Alpers agrees with after hour closure

Motion to adopt committee recommendations: Laib first, Phillips second. Passes unanimously. Chair Greenwald assigns letter to Laib and Phillips

-*Community Engagement ad hoc Committee*: Chair Crames reports that Phillips' work on social networking is "making us famous". The committee has been discussing and reviewing the micro forest project and volunteer efforts now that covid is diminishing.

-*Bylaw, Mission and Vision Plan Action-Item Review ad hoc Committee*: Chair Greenwald reports that this committee will go dormant for the time being, as its work is largely completed.

-*Equestrian ad hoc Committee*: Chair Thornton reports on a *Pony Ride* PETA complaint, a change was requested and implemented immediately by the concessionaire.

8. Board Business Topics for next meeting; Deutsch suggested the Mulholland fence issue;

Ashouri suggested night lighting at Commonwealth Nursery being too bright be discussed

9. Adjournment Adjournment at 9:15pm. Next meeting is October 28, 2021 at 6:30pm.