

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FEBRUARY 12, 2015 MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK TASK FORCE

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Mission Trails Regional Park Task Force was held on Thursday, February 12 at the Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor and Interpretive Center.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present

Councilmember Scott Sherman, City of San Diego
Councilmember Chris Cate, City of San Diego
Kristine Alessio, Vice-Mayor City of La Mesa
Councilmember Ronn Hall, City of Santee
Dorothy Leonard, Chair of MTRP Citizens Advisory Committee
Supervisor Diane Jacob, County of San Diego

Members Absent

Supervisor Dave Roberts, County of San Diego

City of San Diego

Andy Quinn, Senior Park Ranger, Mission Trails Regional Park
Steve Haupt, District Manager, Open Space Division
Chris Zirkle, Deputy Director, Open Space Division
Jeff Harkness, City of San Diego Planning

City of Santee

Susan Richardson, Recreation Services Manager, City of Santee

Guests

Rich Thesing

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Councilmember Sherman at 2:02 P.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: It was moved and seconded (LEONARD/ALESSIO) to approve the minutes of the meeting on September 18, 2014. Motion carried with Cate abstaining.

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCES – NONE

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Scott Sherman introduced new Task Force member, City of San Diego Councilmember Chris Cate who represents District 6.

MTRP CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Dorothy Leonard reported the following for the CAC meeting held on January 6, 2015:

- Recommend support of items 101, 103 and 104 on today's meeting agenda.
- EFSA Administration building – At the January meeting we had a workshop presentation on the status of the current phase of the project which is to define current staff needs and potential community uses prior to moving forward with the construction drawings. Appointed an ad hoc CAC subcommittee to work with City staff and make recommendations to the CAC and Task Force. The committee will be chaired by Frank Bathrick who represents the City of Santee on the CAC and has spent 40 year in the construction industry.
- Report on Cowles Mountain communications facility – MTRP Antenna Fund leases and revenue for the facility at the top of Cowles Mountain – Learned that the City READ is working with the County Sheriff's Dept. and the City Wireless Communications Division to have the FBI lease one rack space on the City Vault and install two small microwave dishes. The City currently collects approximately \$9,953.04 per month or \$119,436 per year from the lessee's at this facility. The FBI addition would increase rental income to \$127,836.48 per annum. Since the MTRP CAC and Task Force normally review any changes to the Cowles Mountain facility the CAC has requested that a presentation be made at the March meeting. All funds collected from the facility are used for Capital Improvement Projects in Mission Trails.
- Report on status of East Elliott land acquisition – Utilizing \$1.3 million in the Habitat Acquisition Fund, READ is negotiating to purchase an additional three parcels which include the existing access road. At the time of the CAC meeting two parcels were in escrow and one was in negotiations.

MTRP FOUNDATION REPORT

Dorothy Leonard reported the following:

- Submitted grant applications to the City and County for FY2016 TOT funding - \$45,000 from the City Special Promotional Program fund and \$5,000 from the County Community Enhancement fund. This is the same dollar amount received in FY2015.
- With approval from City staff, the Foundation is purchasing and installing a ceiling mounted digital projector for use in the Visitor Center meeting rooms.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Water Department's Lake Murray Report

Andy Quinn reported for Gayle Havens:

- Department of Fish and Game has been stocking the lake with Rainbow Trout for the last couple of months, not a lot being caught. Some decent bass, bluegill and catfish have been reported as caught.
- County Water Authority is in the process of a pipeline realignment project, so our lake level will be going down for the next two months.
- Our staff is continuing to clear the lake road brush to provide a safe clearing around blind corners and narrow portions of the service road.
- Speeding bicycles are still a constant problem and we receive many complaints on this issue from the public. Our new speed limit signs have been posted, but seem to be ignored. We are discussing our options and different solutions for this issue.

- The homeless camps in the canyon behind the dam has been a constant issue since the occupants move their camps weekly after being confronted by the San Diego Police. We are working on posting a 72 hour notice and then will have Environmental Services remove the debris.

B. City of Santee Community Services Department – *Susan Richardson reported the following:*

- Introduced the new City of Santee Task Force representative Ronn Hall. His appointment was approved at last evening's City Council meeting.
- We're under construction on the San Diego River Trail at the Walker Preserve, which is east of Magnolia to connect to the Lakeside trail of the Lakeside ball fields at the City limits. It's moving ahead very quickly and the Grand Opening is on April 23.
- We currently have requests for proposals open for mural artists to do some utility boxes along the river and in our parks. We did get approval for \$10,000 for murals from the San Diego River Conservancy and we have an application to the County for neighborhood improvement projects.
- Our sherriff's are working on a homeless taskforce to target the river area with El Cajon Police, MTS, and Health and Human Services agencies to include a social worker.

Park Staff/ Sr. Ranger's Report – *Andy Quinn reported the following:*

- Waste Water Control Division will be fixing ruts in the road and improving drainage at Cowles Mountain Barker's service road from February 11 to March 1. Barker's service road will be closed Mon - Sat from 7am to 5pm, but hikers can still use Barker's trail to access the summit.
- On December 17th we had our official red ribbon cutting ceremony at West Sycamore. That area of the park is now officially open.
- Last Saturday, here at the Visitor Center, we held our annual Volunteer Recognition Event. Thanks to the Foundation for awarding volunteers with nice gift cards and dinner.
- On Sunday, January 5, at approximately 3:50 p.m., a 15 year old male was bitten by a snake while hiking with a group of 8 towards the south end of North Fortuna. He was bit on the lower ankle with his foot swelling. We're assuming it was a rattlesnake, but still don't know for sure. He was airlifted out by copter 1.
- Our first group of Americorp members completed their stay, departing Mission Trails on Friday, December 20. Ranger staff set up a dinner/slide show for them with Councilmember Sherman providing certificates of appreciation for each member.
- We're currently working with a second group from Americorp which began January 15 and will be working until March 20 (10 weeks). Eleven members will be assisting park rangers and volunteers to restore/maintain Cowles Mountain and Pyles Peak.

- C. Open Space Division Staff Report – *Chris Zirkle reported the following:*
The San Diego Unified School District is currently reviewing our legal agreement in regards to using the Kumeyaay Lake Campground on Thursdays only.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

ACTION ITEMS

101. MTRP FY2015/2016 Project Funding Priorities and Future Needs List – *CAC Chair Dorothy Leonard*

MOTION: It was moved/seconded (Leonard/Alessio) to approve the MTRP FY2015/2016 Project Funding Priorities and Future Needs List. Motion carried unanimously.

Chris Zirkle shared an idea with the Task Force with regard to funding for the periodic grading of Barker’s Service road. As Real Estate Assets re-negotiates the antenna leases on Cowles Mountain, ask them to incorporate an obligation for the lessee’s to maintain the access road rather than the City. They would still be obliged to pay fair market rent for their space, but instead of paying it all to the antenna fund, a portion of it would be services in lieu of the road.

102. MTRP Task Force 2015 meeting schedule – *Chairman Sherman*

MOTION: It was moved/seconded (Cate/Jacob) to approve the MTRP Task Force 2015 meeting schedule. Motion carried unanimously.

103. Request from MTRP Foundation Board of Directors to amend the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc. and City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department Visitor & Interpretive Center Special Event Rules and Regulations by eliminating the restriction prohibiting rental of the Visitor and Interpretive Center for “private parties (e.g., birthday parties, bar mitzvahs, weddings, baptism, memorial services)”. – *Park and Recreation Department staff recommendation*

Chris Zirkle read an email to Foundation Executive Director Jay Wilson from October 29, 2014:

- The Department supports the proposed changes pending the benefits of hearing this body’s recommendations.
- Our only suggestion would be to perhaps review whether or not the ratio of security guards to attendees where alcohol is permitted is adequate.

MOTION: It was moved/seconded (Leonard/Cate) to approve the amendment of the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc. and City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department Visitor & Interpretive Center Special Event Rules and Regulations by eliminating the restriction prohibiting rental of the Visitor and Interpretive Center for “private parties (e.g., birthday parties, bar mitzvahs, weddings, baptism, memorial services)” subject to a review in 12 months.

Motion carried unanimously.

104. Recommendation to rename the North Perimeter Trail to North Fortuna Perimeter Trail with the adoption of the MTRP Master Plan Update – *CAC Chair Dorothy Leonard*
MOTION: It was moved/seconded (Leonard/Alessio) to rename the North Perimeter Trail to North Fortuna Perimeter Trail with the adoption of the MTRP Master Plan Update. Motion carried unanimously.
105. MTRP CAC appointments/reappointments – *Chairman Sherman*
- At-large – Nancy Acevedo
 - MCAS Miramar – David Boyer
 - SDSU – Dr. Paul Ganster
 - Tierrasanta Community Council
 - San Carlos Area Council
- Chairman Sherman nominated Nancy Acevedo as an At-large member and a letter was received from SDSU nominating Dr. Paul Ganster as their representative. Nominations from MCAS Miramar, Tierrasanta Community Council and San Carlos Area Council are pending.
- MOTION:** It was moved/seconded (Leonard/Cate) to reappoint Nancy Acevedo as a MTRP member At-large and Dr. Paul Ganster as the SDSU representative for the MTRP CAC. Motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

301. Old Mission Dam Dredging/Maintenance project update – *Steve Haupt reported for Jeannette DeAngelis, City of San Diego Public Works Department*
The only update is that we made it through the Army Corps of Engineers Chief of the South Coast Branch of the Los Angeles District. The alternative compliance measures developed have been accepted. We are now waiting for the final review and approval of the Chief of the Regulatory Division in Los Angeles.
302. East Fortuna Staging Area Administration Building (Community Support Facility) – *Steve Haupt reported for Jason Grani, Project Manager, Public Works, Engineering and Capital Projects Dept.*
We are currently routing paperwork to award the contract to Davy Architecture. We anticipate getting the Notice to Proceed by early March.
303. East Elliott trail restoration and closures – *Chris Zirkle, Open Space Division, P&R Dept.*
- Mr. Jack Zarour, private property owner, has made numerous presentations to the City Council, submitted at least three damage claims, and continued to claim that the Department is responsible for controlling access to his property. Mr. Zarour had built and placed a cross on his property in honor of his deceased father and on October 8, 2014, the cross was desecrated and the snow fencing he installed had been taken down several times.

- On October 16, there was a confrontation between Mr. Zarour and a park user reported by another park user.
- On October 23, a Right of Entry Permit was sent to Mr. Zarour by the City Attorney.
- On November 5, Gregory Blair Northrup was arrested at the Zarour property. I'm not sure if it was for trespassing, vandalism and/or resisting arrest.
- On November 10, Ranger staff discovered over 600 feet of new illegal trail construction mostly on City property. That trail was brushed and closed by Rangers.
- On November 30, there was a confrontation between Mr. Zarour and two alleged teenage trespassers with the police department involved.
- On January 6, 2015, Mr. Zarour installed wired fencing to his perimeter fencing.
- On January 13 and February 10, Mr. Zarour presented cease and desist orders to the City Council.
- During this entire time period, staff has received several inquiries as to the status of East Elliott and Mr. Zarour's property.
- Ranger Staff has continued to re-brush a number of illegal trails that people have torn brush out of and have noticed some usage of illegal trails. Signage has been replaced throughout the area.

304. MTRP Master Plan and Resource Management Plan – *Jeff Harkness, City of San Diego Planning, Neighborhood and Economic Development Dept.*

Just finished our last site visit with the agencies. They are not in complete support of the trails we are recommending for Mission Trails Regional Park. In the next couple of weeks, we anticipate the consultant will come back with a couple of re-routes that hopefully will satisfy the agencies. There are a couple of spots that we're still not seeing eye to eye on. We plan to meet with the agencies again in March with our final plan and addressing their comments on the natural resource management plan and master plan update.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:49 PM.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, March 26, 2015 at 1:00 pm.