

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE May 19, 2016 MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK TASK FORCE

TIME AND PLACE

The meeting of the Mission Trails Regional Park Task Force was held on Thursday, May 19, 2016 at the Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor and Interpretive Center.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present

Councilmember Scott Sherman, City of San Diego
Councilmember Kristine Alessio, City of La Mesa
Councilmember Ronn Hall, City of Santee
Councilmember Lorie Zapf, City of San Diego
Dorothy Leonard, Chair of MTRP Citizens Advisory Committee

Members Absent

Supervisor Dianne Jacob, County of San Diego
Supervisor Dave Roberts, County of San Diego

City of San Diego

Andy Quinn, Sr. Park Ranger, Mission Trails Regional Park
Steve Haupt, District Manager, Open Space Division
Chris Zirkle, Deputy Director, Open Space Division
Liz Saidkhanian, Office of Councilmember Sherman

County of San Diego

Evan Bollinger, office of Supervisor Dave Roberts
Maryanne Vancio, Park and Recreation Department

Guests

Rich Thesing, Tierrasanta
Jeff Kahn, Save Mission Trails
Patricia Murphy, Save Mission Trails
Mickey Zechick, San Carlos Area Council
Brian Elliott, Representative of Congressman Scott Peters
Jack Zarour, East Elliott property owner

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Councilmember Sherman at 10:02 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the March 17, 2016 was approved by unanimous consent.

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCES – NONE

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Scott Sherman reported John Pilch passed away a few weeks ago. A moment of silence followed.

MTRP CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Dorothy Leonard reported the following:

At the May 3, 2016 meeting the CAC took the following actions:

- Supported a request from Dirt Devil Racing for a 15k and 21k run on August 13th. This is the 9th annual event for this group in Mission Trails.
- Had an excellent public turnout for the MTRP Master Plan Update report presented by Jeff Harkness, City of San Diego Planning Dept., and Mark Carpenter, project consultant with KTU+A.

MTRP FOUNDATION REPORT

Dorothy Leonard reported the following:

- The new Wildfire exhibit is finished with the exception of the video which should be launched by mid-June. New exhibit handouts created include The Fire Environment brochure, Fire Safety rack card for children, and a Flying Embers The Hidden Threat! flyer. In addition, with the newly created handouts we have Ready, Set, Go! and City of San Diego Brush Management Regulations published by the City of San Diego Fire-Rescue Department.
- Working with park staff for Saturday's 14th annual Explore Mission Trails Day.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Water Department's Lake Murray Report – *Andy Quinn reported for Gayle Havens:*

- Water is staying at a good operating level.
- Bass fishing is great/spawn this year strong with lots of fry in the water.
- Great Blue Heron have two nests in a tree by the main lawn. Each nest has 2 to 3 babies stretching their wings.
- Have several Canadian Geese that produced goslings this year.
- Working on diversion ditches, weed abatement, and will start working on fire breaks in coming months.
- Lots of reports of rattlesnakes this season.
- Continuously working on the homeless issues.

B. City of Santee Community Services Department – *No report*

C. Park Staff/ Sr. Ranger's Report – *Sr. Ranger Quinn reported:*

- Trail Guide graduation was held on March 26, 2016. Thank you to the MTRP Foundation for their support.
- New solar panels were installed at the Kumeyaay Lake Campground West Comfort Station.

- Children for Children 5K event was a success.
- Preparing for Explore Mission Trails Day.
- New signage in the following sections of the park have been completed: Cowles Mountain, Grasslands, Mission Gorge, Climber's Loop, Deerfield, Father Junipero Serra Trail road, Kwaay Paay and Oak Grove. East Fortuna is next followed by West Fortuna.

D. Open Space Division Staff Report – *Chris Zirkle reported:*

- We have a permit from the San Diego Unified School District to have legitimate public access through their property off of Calle De Vida. Thanks to the MTRP Foundation for providing the funding to do the trail improvements that they requested in exchange for the public access.

COMMUNICATIONS

Brian Elliott, a representative with Congressman Scott Peter's office introduced himself. Congressman Peter's has been the voice in congress on energy security in the military. He has been leading the charge on a lot of the military budget making sure that renewable options are available at Camp Pendleton and Miramar and is working on getting more preparedness funds for wildfires.

Jeff Kahn acknowledged the effort to get people off of Cowles Mountain. He regularly hikes Kwaay Paay and noticed many more hikers than before. Jeff requested support from the Task Force to paint the new development near Bushy Hill Drive in the City of Santee from a white to an earthy taupe color.

Sandy Kuntz, a former trail guide and park user spoke in favor of not painting the new development near Bushy Hill Drive in the City of Santee white. Using earth tones with tans would be great.

Patricia Murphy spoke about Lake Murray safety concerns caused by bicyclists. There are many who speed and it has become very dangerous.

ACTION ITEMS

101. MTRP CAC Appointments/Reappointments - Chairman Sherman

- City of Santee - Frank Bathrick
- Navajo Community Planners - Marilyn Reed
- Scripps Ranch Civic Association - Barbara Perkins
- County of San Diego Parks and Recreation Committee - Roger Utt
- San Carlos Area Council - pending
- City of San Diego Park and Recreation Board - pending

MOTION: It was moved/seconded (LEONARD/HALL) to approve the reappointments of Frank Bathrick, Marilyn Reed, Barbara Perkins and Roger Utt. Motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

301. Mission Trails Field Station project update – *Steve Haupt reported for Jorge Acevedo, City of San Diego Public Works, Engineering and Capital Projects Dept.*

The project is on schedule. We're coordinating with Cal-Trans with the trenching of some dry utilities at Mast Blvd and under the freeway overpass. The construction drawings are scheduled to be completed in October of 2016. Once completed, the City will start advertising the project for construction.

302. Kumeyaay Lake Campground update – Plans to permit overnight camping on Sunday night before a Monday holiday, and status of second camp host and new Center Director. – *Steve Haupt, City of San Diego Park and Recreation.*

Starting with the July 4th weekend the campground will be open on Sunday night before a Monday holiday. The Department has approval to hire a second camp host. The Open Space Division is in the process of background checks in regards to the Center Director I position.

303. City of San Diego Proposed FY 2017 Budget for Open Space Division of Park and Recreation Department (General Fund and CIP) – *Chris Zirkle, City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department.*

Have been to the budget review committee and had positive feedback with the proposal to increase the Department's budget by a little over 2 million dollars to about \$107.6 million. For the Open Space Division, the primary additions are in the form of personnel. Two Park Rangers, a Ground's Maintenance Manager and a Pesticide Applicator. The Council supports achieving the goal of about one Ranger per 648 acres. The two new ranger positions would bring us up to 25 total rangers which is about 1,000 acres per ranger.

304. MTRP Master Plan Update and Natural Resource Management Plan presentation – *Jeff Harkness, City of San Diego Planning Dept. /Mark Carpenter, KTU + A*

Jeff Harkness reported KTU+A was hired in 2010 to complete the Master Plan Update and Natural Resource Management plan that was supposed to be done in 2015. We've had to extend the contract to July 2017. Since we started, we've gone through three public workshops in 2011, produced a draft master plan update and natural resource management plan in 2013 and did a notice of preparation of an environmental document in 2014. The majority of the comments received through the planning efforts and the notice of preparation were through mountain bike and rock climbing user groups, property owners in East Elliott, and property owners adjacent to the park. Since 2013, we've been working with the State and Federal agencies on our plan and issues with the

Multiple Habitat Planning area, Multiple Species Conservation Program, conservation, desired recreation and preservation. We had approximately 10 meetings with the agencies. To date, we feel that the Master Plan has adequately addressed their concerns. We have now produced a draft Master Plan that addresses the agencies issues. Our schedule for completing the Master Plan is to get City Council and County Board of Supervisors approval by June of 2017, putting out the draft environmental document in mid to late October 2016 for public review, then come back to the MTRP Citizens' Advisory Committee and MTRP Task Force as action items that will be publicly noticed in January 2017. Today is an information item, and we'll be taking more comments when we go through the actual recommendations and approval process.

Mark Carpenter reported the last two years have been an interesting series of meetings and discussions trying to get ourselves to a point that, as we move the environmental process forward, we're not having substantial comments from the regulatory agencies that we cannot overcome through the process. It was an important delay that we worked ourselves through, and come up with something we felt as a group we could move through the process and get successfully approved. Right now, we don't have a good viable master plan to really hang a lot of the new recommended projects on.

The original park boundary was south of the 52. As part of this update, we're now expanding the footprint of the Master Plan to include East Elliott and West Sycamore.

The East Elliott area, which still has a lot of private inholdings, is not an area that the City has full control over. As land is acquired, what's likely to be a level of development from a recreation base, could be supported within that area of the park in the future.

Mr. Carpenter presented slides for each of the areas of the park. In Chapter 6, the implementation section, there is a future conditions map for each of the areas that is color coded based on usage.

A few questions and comments were then presented by community members and the general public:

Jack Zarour, land owner north of the SR 52 and just west of the landfill commented there are no designated trails north of the 52. For two years he has been asking for those to be closed and a gate to prevent people from trespassing and vandalism. The mountain bikers are illegitimate users of the private land. In 2014, Mr. Zarour gave a plan to the City of San Diego and nothing has been done.

Council Member Scott Sherman asked if there were any changes to the trails near highway 8 at Lake Murray. Mark Carpenter responded no changes are being planned. The riparian corridor below the dam is being untouched. The existing utility access road that cuts across the northwest side of the canyon will be utilized for trail purposes, but no additional proposals.

Council Member Ron Hall asked who owns the property east of the landfill. Mark Carpenter responded mainly private ownership throughout. This doesn't preclude the ability to be able to develop any of the private parcels under the current legal system for

project planning. If all those are acquired and became part of the park, what scale of public access and recreation would be recommended?

In closing, Mr. Carpenter reported, we are in EIR mode, working through technical studies for the different elements and trying to work through all the impact analysis. In regards to the Natural Resource Management Plan, there weren't any major changes. There was more refinement on some of the approaches for managing some of the species under the MSCP. We're closely working with City staff, getting through review cycles, with the goal that in October 2016 we'll have a document to put out for public review.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, July 21, 10:00 a.m.