

## **Griffith Park Advisory Board Regular Meeting**

October 23, 2025, at 6:30pm

### *Final Minutes*

#### **1. Call to order**

Chair Crow called meeting to order at 6:33 pm

Present: Carlson, Crow, Chung, Gustincic, Greenwald, Hagans, Laib, Lann, Hamilton, Phillips

Excused:

Absent:

#### **2. Approval of Minutes**

Greenwald – shared two comments with Jane but will recount briefly. On Travel Town item, helpful to enumerate the vote. Second item, Board business, Emergency Management Department.

Hamilton motion to approve minutes with Greenwald's changes, Hagans second. Unanimous.

Abstain: Lann

#### **3. Board Announcements**

None

#### **4. Special Guests**

##### **CD4**

- Hannah Jaeger is new CD4 field deputy. Feel free to reach out, will attend all Board meetings.
- Fire Safety Issues – Zone Zero is a state bill regarding fire safety, focused on brush clearance and more oversight. City Council and CD4 signed onto letter.
- CD4 trying to push forward disaster preparedness initiatives. CD4 would like to take a more active role given large number of hillside communities.
  - o Hagans – Before Mehmet left there was a light out in an equestrian tunnel. Thanks to CD4 for fixing that.

##### **LAEC**

- Kayla Summer – Executive Director of property.
- Jenny Nevin – Executive Director of Communications. CRHA is going on right now, it's a large horseshow and you're all welcome to join us this weekend.

#### **5. Public Comment**

- Marion Dodge – Saturday is P22 day in park center. Activities, with National Park Service Rangers and National Wildlife foundation. Hours are 11:00-3:30.

Right below the Merry go Round.

- Chris - Home near cricket fields. Since new operator for LAEC it's been difficult to live nearby. Movie nights, music for workers setting up for events. Events are also a danger to equestrians and folks have been thrown from horses. Vehicles have been speeding. City of Burbank won't listen and LAEC say everything is within their rights. Curfew hours and location should be reconsidered.
- Miguel – Retired journalist. Reexamine who Griffith E Griffiths and his legacy. His wife never gets any recognition. He tried to kill his wife. No signage in park that reflects her contribution or his criminal past. Consider adding signage to explain full story. Enlightened Egomaniac is book.
- Ronny – Resident of Burbank, Burbank received notifications in May talking about redistricting of fire levels. Live along bridle trail by WB studios. Got a notice that there would be some fire abatement, they sent a bill for the inspection. They started trimming back along the embankment. LA came in and totally cleared the area and now the view and noise is terrible. Ask for more collaboration between LA and Burbank.
- Liz – Follow up on discussion about fire. In bicycle trail area, as unhoused people have moved up from Atwater Village and there have been a lot of small fires, many that cast embers into the park.
- Sabrina – Welcome Hannah, since you're new and here, there have been conflicts between stakeholder users of the trails. Some people don't know what the priority uses are and enforcement is important along with signage. More patrols.
- Christie – Resident of Burbank, here because I would like to ask about the bikes and electric bikes, which are becoming a problem. It's hard to ride at night and when you ask people to move some people won't listen or try to scare the horses. Rangers can no longer issue citations after pandemic. Look into enforcement and vandalism along trail.
- Alice – Mariposa trail is going to be looked at to share with bikes and horses. And the trails are just not big enough for a bike and a horse. Cyclists are ruining signs and cutting fences. The Rangers don't do anything.
- Chris – my bedroom is 150 ft from the LAEC stage and I understand monetizing the space and I don't know what the rules are but there are things they are getting away with that I could never as an stage manager. Also not notified as would do with filming.
- Member of the public – Would like to piggyback what Alice said that the park rangers not issuing citations. Had an incident last week where a cyclists spooked my horse and the rangers did nothing.
- Laib – Can we ask some follow up questions. For the noise, what are the rules on the hours? In LA, it's not supposed to be before 7am.
  - o Chris - City of Burbank says it's not them. To that point, are you going to have a follow-up to this group tonight?
  - o Crow – Email us directly, and if we need to agendize anything we will.

## 6. Information Reports and Presentations

Courtney McCammon – Urban Ecologist from RAP

- We also have a junior ecologist named Ryan. Ryan has started a mailing list for outreach and education. He has started an Instagram page. Encourages people to attend hikes. He has been hosting guided nature hikes. Reviewing film requests within the park on ecological parks. LA Nature Quest, formally bioblitz, for folks to log species that they see. We host nature works to introduce people to the app and the Quest, there will be 4 hikes in October.
- Speaking on LAEC, been working with Kayla and Jo on outreach to educate boarders and public on human/wildlife interactions and how to make those better, things like why to not feed wildlife.
- Continue to work with forestry division on tree trimming for birds. Several replantings occurred. Installed interpretive signs because they were popular at Runyon. Attending a conference on invasive plants and relation to fire, importance of natives. Training of maintenance division on this. Griffith Parks Visitor Center, working on two ecology slides and provided images of animals, and worked with taxidermist to increase amount of taxidermy in Center. Really want to program the visitor center, we want it to be a space that offers educational materials, leads hikes, scavenger hunts, etc.
- Smith – Huge thank you to the board for bringing in an ecologist and thank you to Courtney and the junior ecologist for their work.
- Crow – What is the update on the Pipeline Trail?
- McCommon – Plants were purchased and installed, monitored by Ryan, later determined that additional security fencing and signage needs to be installed to keep people from trampling the plants. Ryan has reported the plants have not survived. He recommends additional planting should not commence until additional fencing is in.
- Smith – We have had a lot less rescues, but whether vandalism or just a few people going off trail, the plants have not survived. But the fencing has improved safety.
- Crow – I saw Klechner by the fence writing a ticket.
- Laib – What about this issue with brush clearance brought up earlier.
- Smith – That is not park property. That may be Army Corp. But that is not how we perform brush clearance in the park.
- Greenwald – What's your sense about how we're doing with invasives and removal?
- McCommon – Most of the invasive clearance happens because of FOGP every Wednesday. During brush clearance, some invasives are cleared, but it's an ongoing issue. What I can say is that invasives are catalogued. We hope that we can use that data to apply for a grant or something to help with invasive removal.

### **Public Comment**

- Marion – FOGP has been attacking castor bean, which is dangerous for horses.

- Member of the Public - Is there evidence that the failure of the plants on Pipeline trail is due to trampling or maybe there were some other issues.
- McCammon – I've done a lot of restoration, and most of the times fencing is used to keep people out of the area. So, I think we still need the fencing.
- Catherine – FOGP – to the point about invasives, any time maintenance comes through to do any clearance we notice the castor bean.

### **Update on Haunted Hayride Event with Alcohol**

- Crow – Several years ago the Commissioners changed the restrictions from one event per park to unlimited. And we were hoping for an update in relation to alcohol served at the Haunted Hayride event.
- Smith – there was one alcohol event at Haunted Hayride and one at Shakespeare Stage. Both were fundraising events and no issues were reported from the rangers. Over the past year, those are the only two events.
- Laib – My understanding was that the Superintendent can make the decisions.
- Smith – I think executives can overrule.
- Laib – I think this is a very bad PR move and I would love to know how much we made from that event to see whether it is worth it.
- Greenwald – For context for those not on the board two years ago, we reviewed the RAP Board policies and prepared a letter, which many of you may have read. We wrote a thoughtful letter and when the policy was announced several months later, our recommendation was ignored. And part of our recommendation was that RAP ought to consult stakeholders such as our Board before setting its new alcohol policy — which never happened. And it may make sense to remind the Board of our reasonable requests.
- Phillips – If we knew that you as Superintendent had final say, I would be less concerned, but it may be worth going back on record as saying as the pilot period comes to an end in 2026, should we consider rolling back to the old model. But I don't want senior management at RAP and the Board to think we're obstructionist.
- Crow – At what point do they bring these events to you as Superintendent?
- Smith – I can raise concerns I have, but executive leadership can make ultimate decisions. The events still need ABC licenses, but that is all the sign off.
- Greenwald – Was the urban ecologist consulted? I assume she was not.
  - o Emmy – I don't think the only issue is fire. People drive to the events and there are people walking and it's an accident waiting to happen.
  - o Member of the Public - When any events like Shakespeare in the Park, I have never seen enforcement monitoring. It's a very sensitive area and I hope this Board is going to address this.

**Motion:** Greenwald motion to write a letter to RAP Commissioners, reminding them we made recommendations, which are not being followed, and we express our continued concerns, especially in light of the Haunted Hayride event. And considering it was a two-year pilot, now is a good time to reconsider our recommendations and the policy.

- Gustincic – I would like to revisit what is in the original letter. And I for one, think it's a good sign that there have only been two this year. I wonder if we should move writing a letter to next year, when the pilot ends in March 2026.
- Greenwald – I respectfully disagree. I think this is an urgent matter and for the most recent event, the fact that the Superintendent was not informed is a red flag. I think RAP management has a blank check to have as many events as they want between now and March. I think reminding them of our recommendations now is good timing.
- Gustincic – Maybe it's two letters. Now it's expressing concern about how things occurred and no one being notified and then next year it's in relation to what we would like to see included in a policy.
- Laib – What was the role of the ecologist? Was she supposed to check the condition of the brush? It seems very dangerous to have these events without Courtney and Stefanie weighing in.

**Motion:** Greenwald motion to send a letter to RAP Commissioners, reminding them we made previously made recommendations on alcohol policy, which are not currently being followed, and expressing our continued concerns, especially in light of the Haunted Hayride event.

- Gustincic – What are the points we would call out that were troubling about the event?
- Greenwald – Management not involved, no notification process, being approved without on the ground supervisors being involved, or community input.

Phillips Second. Unanimous. Greenwald and Phillips to write letter.

#### **Council File 25-1034**

*Crow reads council file*

- This is proposed for CD10. Do we want to write a letter preemptively expressing our opinions on this.
- Hagans – I would like to call out the urban wilderness aspect of the park. And digital signage is not in line with the nature of the park.
- Smith – Maybe writing a letter regarding Griffith Park only. It's not appropriate for this park.
- Hamilton – CD10 is likely considering this because of the travelled corridors. And given the 5 freeway, Caltrans will have the final say and has removed other signs elsewhere. I think about the corridor right here, and the potential for that to

happen here. And I think it's good to go on record as having a position on those signs.

- Emme – I think it's obscene to have digital signs and light pollution throughout the park. And I think it's important to support other alternatives, like the bond measure.
- Marion Dodge – as a Board member for Coalition for Beautiful Los Angeles, there have been campaigns to wrap every park item in ads. There was a large outcry. And once you let them in, it's hard to change course.
- Member of the Public - Griffith Park is unique and we should do whatever we can to keep it the way it is.

**Motion:** Crow motion to write a letter acknowledging that generating revenue for public parks is important, but per City-Adopted The vision for Griffith park, digital signage is not appropriate for this park. Phillips second. Unanimous. Laib to write letter.

### **Fire Safety Ad Hoc Report**

- Greenwald – following January fires, CD4 introduced red flag motion to understand what departments are doing on red flag days. Month long report back from departments. EMD released a descriptive report but does not include policy recommendations or next steps. That should be the trigger for more substantive discussion at the City Council level. RAP is now working on a park closure policy. Ad Hoc agreed it would be a good idea to remind RAP commission and executive team that we endorsed a thoughtful park closure policy and offered guidance and principles and commend RAP for considering a policy.

**Motion:** Greenwald motion to send a letter to RAP Commissioners, commending them for considering a policy for park closures, and reminding them we weighed in in our previous letter. Hagan second. Unanimous. Jason to draft and share with Ad Hoc Committee.

### **Pony Ride Area**

- The consultant finished a year ago and the report went to the Commissioners, and we expected to see an RFP by now. General Manager promised an update at September meeting, which was cancelled. I suggest this Board write a letter requesting the item be agendized at the November 20th meeting.
- Sabrina – Submitted material regarding the rides and we support the action to request agendizing the item.
- Member of the Public – I know a lot of people will be at the Balboa meeting regarding artificial turf and it will be a big agenda.

**Motion:** Phillips motion to write a letter highlighting that an update is long overdue and request they agendize as soon as possible. Note there are meetings on November 20th and December 18th and suggest they add it to one. Greenwald second. Unanimous. Phillips to write it letter.

## **Officer Elections**

*[Exec committee members made statements]*

- Vote for Jane Carlson for Secretary – Vote unanimous
- Vote for Alex Phillips for Vice-Chair – Vote unanimous
- Vote for Alex Crow for Chair – Vote unanimous

## **7. Superintendent updates**

### **Stefanie Smith**

- Crystal Springs ATP – Final plans completed and signed off. Commercial Paving continues to be approved to do the work. No new BID process. Work should start this year or next year.
- P22 Day is this Saturday. Cal Poly will be collecting surveys. Courtney and Ryan will have a booth. And then Ranger Tom and Courtney and Ryan will host Spooky Hike.
- Tracy – Carousel – Commissioners approved proposal to buy the merry go round. Nonprofit partners will fundraise for the effort. Updates to come in New Year.

## **8. Committee and ad hoc reports**

### **Visitor's Center**

- Gustincic - Update from tracy working on displays and wall coverings, RAP plumbers are upgrading bathrooms, CD4 providing 4-year maintenance package. Opening end of November.

### **Vision for Griffith Park**

- Laib - Winding through Exec Summary. DWP may soon allow field trip to Headworks. Intend to give report ASAP.

### **Fire Safety**

- Greenwald - Already given report. Ad Hoc suspended until Department report.

### **Executive Committee**

- Crow: We met and had a good meeting.

## **9. Business Board**

- Laib – Can we discuss Griffith's wife.
- Gustincic - Maybe it can be part of the visitor center.
- Lann – Opportunity to amend the history on record to include women.

## **10. Adjournment**

Motion: Greenwald motion to adjourn. Hamilton second. Unanimous at 8:53pm.