

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

March 27, 2025, at 6:30pm

### *Final Minutes*

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

Chair Crow called meeting to order at 6:32 pm

Present: Crow, Carlson, Chung, Griffin, Gustincic, Hagans, Hamilton, Laib

Excused: Greenwald, Lann

Absent:

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

Motion: Crow motion to approve minutes, Phillips second. Unanimous.

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

None

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

##### **Mehmet Berker**

- We've all seen the budget shortfall and it's not going to be a good year. We have to present the budget by April 20th. Then the budget will be debated in budget commission April 25<sup>th</sup> through May 16<sup>th</sup>, which is a good opportunity to advocate for anything you're interested in. May 22<sup>nd</sup> is rack up day. Then, the budget process could end in June, theoretically.
- Crystal Springs Active Transportation Plan – The funding is already set aside for this project and the work has been contracted; we're just trying to get the plans correct.
- South Griffith Park - Contractor has been brought on for the pool, we're still working on the RFP for the master plan.

##### **Public Comment**

- Gerry – Any appetite for a two-year budget?
- Berker - Yes, we support that and there are conversations happening about that.

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

- Gerry – The RAP park needs assessment program is currently going on.

- The Los Feliz Ledger is coming back as a newsletter.

## **6. Information Reports and Presentations**

### **Mehmet Berker - LA River Bike Path Phase IV**

- Expansion from the current terminus on Riverside Dr. to Forest Lawn Dr. We are working on something similar to a grant from Caltrans. We need to adopt environmental documents by May 31<sup>st</sup>. Comments are open until March 31<sup>st</sup>. If you want to draft a letter, send it to Christopher Adams at BOE. The bridge path is now 10ft wide and there is a strong fence between horses and pedestrians and bikers. CD4 applied for and won a grant to study all the freeway and river intersections. Would like to consolidate river maintenance with River Ranger program.
- Hagans – Removal of mature trees concerns me because saplings wouldn't serve the same purpose. Horses do need a certain amount of room to maneuver and I'm concerned about the pinch points. Also concerned about the overlap with the work on Zoo Dr. And concerned about the cumulative impact of these projects and maintaining the wilderness aspects of the park. What is the price on it now?
- Berker - \$9M right now but not our money.
- Hamilton – Going back to the trees, am I correct that the mitigation would be more trees?
- Berker – Yes, that is generally the rule
- Smith – There are different rules for different trees.
- Phillips – Is the eventual plan to connect up to the striping on Forest Lawn Drive?
- Carlson – And the due date for comments on the environmental is March 31<sup>st</sup>?
- Berker – I can see if you can have a little more time.

### **Public Comment**

- Gerry – Why don't we wait until the forest lawn dr planning is done so we can understand how they connect.

### **Billy Griffin and Jason Sugars – Jazz Festival**

- Griffin – I suggested the jazz festival about a year ago as a way to bring in people from all over the city, to offer something for black people. I brought a producer, Jason Sugars, here and Crystal from the Griffith Park Foundation. We wanted a headliner and that is just too expensive, they want too much, but we could bring some second-tier entertainers for less, but we need money.

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- Jason Sugars – I have a long history of being involved with music in Los Angeles. I have organized the Venice Jazz festival as a way to combine arts and DEI in Venice, which used to be 40% black. So, I got to be producer of the Central Avenue Jazz Festival. Griffith Park is important to me. My father used to live in Roger Young village for two years. And we've already seen some support for the Griffith Park Jazz Festival, some from CD4, The Council for Cultural Affairs, and the County Supervisors offices. We want to have a beautiful family friendly event that is not a cluster and not have too many people in the first year. We've engaged LACSA and Music Institute, the jazz departments at CSUN and UCLA to get young and emerging artists involved. I want people to see LA as a jazz town.
- Laib – Do you have any sense, if there was enough parking, of how many people would join?
- Smith – The festival would be at park center, and we would shuttle people in and park nearby.
- Sugars - Probably 3,500 people. Comfortable, safe, and fun. Not inundate the park with a ton of people.
- Crow – So we're looking at June 29<sup>th</sup> of this year?
- Sugars – Yeah, we can pull this off with appropriate funding.
- Griffin – We decided if we couldn't get close to execution by April 15<sup>th</sup>, we would pull the plug.
- Crow – Pull the plug or postpone?
- Sugars – Just postpone. But we have options, tiers of scale of events. But if we did a smaller event, we could raise money for next year. Ideally, earlier next year, like around May to avoid competition for bookings. But I think we can pull something high quality off this year.
- Hamilton – I'm from the Autry, we've done events all the time, with up to 5,000 people per day. Some of the costs can creep up on you, production, fencing, everything. Just a word a caution because it sounds like a great event.
- Sugars – Because Venice is on RAP property, I already know who to talk to. I've already been in conversation with some folks.
- Hamilton – Can I ask what the budget is?
- Sugars – Without talent, it's about \$50k. with talent, maybe \$75k to do it, but really \$150k to really do it.
- Crystal – it's an ambitious project but it's not that much money to pull it off. I think it will be a great win for the city after a tough start to the year. It's a big goal but if you digest into smaller bits, it's manageable.
- Gustincic – I don't know much about jazz. But aren't there big jazz people in LA that want to help?
- Sugars – We've already had some interest, yes.

- Laib – Do people bring picnics? What about what people do at Barnsdall?
- Sugars – We’ve been in touch with Black Vines, and this would be for next year, but they would probably love to come and sell wines and beer.
- Tracy James – If we’re able to raise money for a festival this year, we’re able to raise more money for next year. We’re looking to do some projects for historic and cultural assets, and we have to raise money for these projects. So the support of anyone with connections or names, we would love it.
- Phillips – Where are we now?
- Sugars - \$5k from the City in kind, stage from RAP. Dept. of Cultural Affairs has offered \$25k for marketing.
- Phillips – If someone wanted to run a fundraising campaign for smaller amounts, will the money be earmarked if given to the Foundation?
- Crystal – Yes, they can earmark.

#### **Public comment**

- Are you going to reach out to areas of LA with jazz clubs and market to them?
  - o Sugars - In the work I do I try to get representation from all walks of life, inclusion for all.

#### **Friends of Griffith Park - Griffith Park Explorer**

- Gerry – Shawn came to us with a great idea to bring together 50 hikes that if you took all of them you would cover all of the park.
- Shawn – [Presented Griffith Park Explorer website]

#### **Chris Laib – Vision for Griffith Park**

- I’m curious for those who have read it, what is your favorite part?
- Hagans – Favorite part of the Vision is the urban wilderness identity
- Phillips – Item at the bottom of the page, it’s within the rangers and RAP’s purview to close trails or restore them. When you look at this section though, there’s a lot that has been done. Bringing Courtney on means invasive species are being addressed.

### **7. Superintendent updates**

- Season of Greek Theater opening soon.
- Crystal Springs project we’re hoping to get going by late spring.
- Performing Arts Stage groundbreaking ceremony on April 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Earth Day planned event near here with native planting and bringing in boulders to put signs.

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

- **Visitor Center Ad Hoc** - Amy Gustincic was chosen as chair for the Visitor Center Ad hoc.
  - o Gustincic – We established weekly standing meetings on Thursday afternoons. There are three components: visitor center revamp, Hollywood sign experience, historic adobe renovation. Helping Tracy organize and we all have skills that help.
- **Crow** – The Executive committee met and put together the agenda for today's meeting
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## **9. Business Board**

### **LA River Bike Path Phase IV**

- Hagans – I'm concerned about the trees and think that would rise to a significant issue.
- Laib – Also concerned about bikers stopping at a major freeway off ramp.
- Phillips – I think we could write a letter that says we cannot support the project at this time unless other studies have been completed, or issues have been addressed. I don't think saying we should do it just because we have the money is the right approach.
- Smith – The commissioners will ultimately have to approve this project so if you have your letter on file now then it will carry weight.

Motion: Phillips moves to write a letter saying we're apprehensive given the trees and the upcoming Caltrans study. Hagans second. Unanimous. Alex Phillips to write the letter.

### **New business**

- Laib – I would like to discuss smoking cutouts in the park.

## **10. Adjournment**

Motion: Phillips moves to adjourn. Griffin second. Unanimous at 8:56pm.