

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee
Minutes - April 24, 2007

Glenn Bailey chaired the meeting. The other voting members attending: Snowdy Dodson, Sharon Ford, Muriel Kotin and Robert Munsey. Non-voting members, alternates and guests: Sharon Brewer, Tessa Charnofsky, Joyce MacKinnon, Jaime Morales, Katie Parks, Abel Perez, and Michael Shanto. After self introductions, a quorum was established: 5 organizations represented. The chair requested all voting members to let him know ahead if your organization will not be represented at a committee meeting.

Minutes of the meeting March 27, 2007 were approved as distributed.

Announcements:

- Glenn announced there was a fire in the LA River that started above Balboa Blvd. on 4/1. Fire trucks could not access the river bank because of illegally parked cars at Balboa Sports Center from the special event at Lake Balboa. The cars were subsequently cited.
- The West Van Nuys/Lake Balboa Neighborhood Council has suggested enlarging the boundaries of Lake Balboa neighborhood.

REPORTS FROM GUESTS:

Mayor's Office:

- Tessa Charnofsky (tessa.charnofsky@lacity.org) distributed materials for Big Sunday 4/28 and 4/29. She is seeking volunteers for that event.
- Tessa will attend these meetings only upon special request.
- The mayor's office is currently emphasizing a gang initiative. An environmental initiative is coming up! The mayor will be looking for ideas and Tessa will share information with this committee. Send her your ideas.
- Glenn expressed concern that the million trees initiative is not always sensitive to using appropriate, native trees in Sepulveda Basin and other sensitive areas.

Lifeguards:

- Lifeguard Mike Shanto said we're not doing enough to tell people to not feed the birds at Lake Balboa. They don't have adequate staffing to talk to everyone feeding the birds. He asked to what extent the city wants to enforce these rules.
- Tessa suggested a group of concerned citizens get together and write a strong letter and get lots of signatures, including what we want. Send to the mayor via Tessa. Perhaps weekly classes there for children about taking

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care of birds and wildlife. Joyce suggested relocating the domestic waterfowl there to farms. Abel suggested looking outside the box to solve this and other problems.

Public Comment: None.

Previously Recommended Items - Update: Glenn submitted a list from meetings earlier this year.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Creation of a Lake Balboa (Beilenson) Park Oversight Group:

- Abel advised that there needs to be a group interested in creating another advisory board.
- Sharon Brewer commented that a Park Advisory Board (PAB) would cover additional issues and possibly be a 501(c)(3) and be able to raise funds for the parks. She feels we would complement a PAB and we would no longer be the only group with minutes and accountability. PAB members would not necessarily represent organizations as we do.
- Glenn's impression, after his conversation with Monica Resendez, volunteer coordinator for R&P, is that Lake Balboa Park is unique with many entities playing a role there. Glenn said that 40-50 very interested people used to attend the Friends of Lake Balboa meetings a few years ago. He would like to see a Lake Balboa PAB.
- Sharon B. suggested the city make and post a flyer at Lake Balboa with a phone number to call if you're interested in being on a L. Balboa PAB.

Motion passed unanimously: That the Steering Committee recommends to the Department of Recreation and Parks that a Park Advisory Board be formed for Lake Balboa (Beilenson) Park.

- The committee will send a letter with the recommendation to Ron Berkowitz.
- Glenn reported that the board of directors of the RCD-SMM voted to recommend formation of such a PAB and recommended developing an educational program for behavior at L. Balboa.

LA River Revitalization Master Plan: Katie Parks, Army Corps of Engineers said the ACOE met with Michael Tou on this recently; they're still in the planning stages. Carry this item over to next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Advanced Review of Tree Plantings Proposed within Wildlife Areas:

- Muriel discussed recent planting in the Wildlife Reserve by TreePeople that we learned about after the fact.
- Abel explained that Steve Moe had authorized the planting of cottonwoods and had not let Abel know. Steve M will do so in the future.
- Glenn will call his contact at TreePeople who has taken over Tom Person's role to see if they will re-join this committee and remind them that within the Wildlife Reserve they should contact us, possibly through Abel Perez, prior to any plantings.
- Snowy added that it is crucial that all plantings along the LAR must be California natives. Abel assured us that will be the case on his watch.
- California Conservation Corps should get a letter on planting only Cal. native plants in Sepulveda Basin.

REPORTS:

US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE):

- Katie Parks reported Carvel Bass is moving forward with a vireo survey at Hansen Dam and Sepulveda Basin. A brown-headed cowbird trap will be set up south of Burbank Blvd.
- Katie is an outdoor recreation planner. She does land use planning and new proposals for the basin. She is working with a team on the Bull Creek project.
- They're trying to get funding for updating of the SB Master Plan.
- They're waiting for the DEIR on the Caltrans proposal to possibly put a freeway on and off ramp in the Wildlife Reserve.

Dept. of Recreation and Parks (R&P):

- Abel Perez reported the sports center is being worked on, as is the new play area at L. Balboa. L. Balboa stop signs are in.
- Abel will remind Albert Torres about the Wildlife Way street sign when they meet next week.
- Park Ranger Jaime Morales said he also will remind Albert about the street sign.
- Albert Torres will attend next month's meeting.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

California Native Plant Society:

- Snowdy Dodson reported they attended the dedication of the Rio de Los Angeles, as did Melanie Winter and many other organizations. About 500 people attended this dedication at the old Taylor Railroad Yard.
- In June their meeting will be at the Sepulveda Garden Center on the LAR restoration.

Goose Project: On behalf of Rosemarie White who could not attend this meeting, Glenn asked that we please phone her if interested in helping with a booth at the Sepulveda Garden Festival.

Los Angeles Audubon Society: Bob Munsey reported he contacted Dept. of Fish & Game about a fishing education program at L. Balboa. He continues to follow up on that. He has had no success in contacting the Isaac Walton League.

Resource Conservation Dist. - Sta. Monica Mts. (RCD-SMM): Glenn announced they will have an Open House evening garden party at their new headquarters, the Peter Strauss Ranch on June 21.

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society: Muriel reported on the SFVAS cleanup April 14. Over 50 volunteers participated. The stretch of Haskell Creek from Burbank Blvd. north to the Reserve access road is vastly improved. However, even 50+ volunteers could not remove trash from all parts of this stretch. Ranger Pat Aceves was very helpful.

Sierra Club: Sharon Ford had no news relevant to the Basin. She and Muriel will work on getting publicity to the Valley Group.

Southwestern Herpetology Society: The organization again was not represented. Muriel will phone John Holmes.

NEXT MEETING WILL BE MAY 22. Please submit agenda items to Glenn Bailey by May 5, before he goes out of town.

Submitted by

Muriel S. Kotin, Member Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee