

**WORK SESSION MINUTES OF THE  
SAN GABRIEL RIVER DISCOVERY CENTER AUTHORITY  
HELD AT THE**

**EL ENCANTO**

100 N. Old San Gabriel Canyon Road  
Azusa, CA

**May 22, 2017 – 9:00 A.M.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority Work Session was held at El Encanto, Azusa, CA on May 22, 2017 and was called to order at 9:18 a.m. by Chair Fellow.

**2. FLAG SALUTE**

**3. ROLL CALL**

Members Present:

John Wicker, LA County Dept. of Parks and Recreation  
Sam Pedroza, Stakeholder Committee  
Anthony Fellow, Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District  
Dan Arrighi, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy

Members Absent:

Robert Apodaca, Central Basin Municipal Water District

Staff Present:

Mark Stanley, Interim Executive Officer  
Dena Williams, Board Secretary  
Salian Garcia, Fiscal Manager  
Roxana Marashi, Project Manager

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Item 4 was unanimously approved on motion of Board Member Arrighi, seconded by Board Member Pedroza.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SAN GABRIEL RIVER DISCOVERY CENTER AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING HELD MARCH 9, 2017.**

Minutes were not presented or voted on.

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dr. Gary Stickel, representing the Kizh Tribe, gave a thorough explanation of why he was not in favor of the Discovery Center's planned location and how the tribe is determined to save the area. Dr. Stickel also mentioned that the concept was not the issue but that the location is. Bottom line was, to please relocate the museum and respect the people who have been there over 9000 years.

Mr. Odling opened up his comments with saying "the Discovery Center is an unreality." Mr. Odling went on to say that he recently met with the Army Corps and they stated that they are not going to approve the project, State Parks rejected the \$7 million grant back in 2011, in 2009 when the Community meeting was held at the high school, not one person spoke for this project. Mr. Odling also stated that he calls the Discovery Center an unreality due to the fact that County Parks & Recreation Department granted funds through the Proposition 1 fund and it was totally fabricated. The bottom line was that it is a huge waste of public land and a huge distraction to natural resources.

Chair Fellow acknowledged that Norma Garcia was in the audience and welcomed her.

## **REGULAR CALENDAR**

## **7. PROJECT STATUS**

Mr. Stanley stated that this was an open discussion for everyone to state their thoughts on the project and how they will move forward. Mr. Stanley also stated that it has been over 75 years since any structure in the area has received attention for programming and that staff has had an educational program since 2013.

Roxana Marashi gave an overview of the project and stated that the permitting is almost completed, we have Geotech & Fire, Electrical, Public Health, Plumbing, Grading, Regional Planning, Building & Landscaping permits are in hand and the Sewer plan check and the Army Corps of Engineers permit is still pending.

Board Member Pedroza asked how the permit from Army Corp was coming along. Mark answered that County received a letter after 2 years of no

response and is under evaluation at this time. Board Member Wicker reassured Mr. Pedroza that staff is evaluating the letter and will send a response as soon as everything is looked into.

Ms. Marashi went on to discuss the timeline of the project. Ms. Marashi also mentioned that the Landscaping Permit was issued winter of 2016 and the letter received from the Army Corp of Engineering was just a few weeks ago which puts the project behind a few weeks and hope to complete the bidding phase in August and receive approval from the Board sometime in September which would initially start the construction phase in November 2017 until August 2018. Mr. Stanley clarified that the construction phase would be for the construction of Stage One.

#### **8. STAGE ONE DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. Stanley stated that stage one of the project does not include the replacement of the building, but does include some major elements such as shifting the parking lot location which is where the wetlands will be located, new trail systems, an outdoor classroom and a large stage area that will overlook the wetlands.

#### **9. STAGE TWO DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. Stanley stated stage two involves replacement of the current nature center and adding a second classroom. Mr. Stanley mentioned that stage two has yet to receive funding.

Chair Fellow asked how much funding is needed for stage two. Mr. Stanley answered that \$10 to \$11 million dollars is needed and that is just an estimate. Chair Fellow asked how much of that amount do we have and Mr. Stanley stated that we do not have any funds for stage two.

#### **10. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR PROJECT COMPLETION**

##### **V. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING**

Mr. Stanley stated that the SGRDCA started the educational programming before securing funding for the project, there were funds pledged, but just not secured. Mr. Stanley also stated that there was a proposal presented to the authority from Los Angeles County regarding a new educational program called "Nature By Design" and is being considered at this time.

##### **VI. TEAM BUILDING AND STEWARDSHIP**

Mr. Stanley stated that several years ago the authority received a pledge from many groups in support of the project and we continue to provide

different types of outreach to keep them engaged in the process and make them aware that the project is moving forward.

## **VII. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES**

Mr. Stanley stated that staff is looking for more direction on how we move forward with stage two.

Chair Fellow asked how the authority is going to get money for stage two. Mr. Stanley answered that the authority is continuing to look into the private sector and continue to look at resources that have got us funding for stage one and not so much on the federal level but more on the state and local level.

Board Member Pedroza asked who would be the lead agency making the request. Would it be the Foundation or the Authority? Mr. Stanley answered by saying with the public funding sources the authority would be the lead agency and for the private sector, the Foundation would be the lead agency making the request.

Chair Fellow asked if the grading was part of stage one and Mr. Stanley answered yes that was part of stage one.

Vice Chair Wicker asked if at the end of stage one will there be a balance left. Mr. Stanley answered that we have funding until the end of stage one and the balance would more than likely be expended.

Chair Fellow stated that we don't know the future of the monument with the new Trump Administration but that should we consider moving the project up here meaning in the National Monument area because of more resources.

Board member Pedroza also suggested that the project be moved to a more centralized area and even consider utilizing the space at the Duck Farm or consolidating this project with another project and also suggested that staff move to looking into a different site location for the project.

Chair Fellow mentioned that maybe it should be considered that we change the project into a visitor center.

Vice Chair Wicker asked if what was being asked that to finish stage one and for stage two to consider moving it or drop stage one and everything. Board Member Pedroza answered that stage one is pretty much done but for stage two we should consider moving it to a different location.

It was suggested that these new ideas be discussed with County, WRD, RMC and other agencies involved to bring it back to the Board to vote on which direction they would like to move.

**11. STATEMENTS, RESPONSES, QUESTIONS OR DIRECTIONS TO STAFF PURSUANT TO SECTION 54954.2(A)(2) OF THE GOVERNMENT CODE.**

A request was made that the next meeting take place in August so that there was ample time to prepare.

**12. CLOSED SESSION**

**A. CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54956.9(D)(2) AND 54856.9(1)- CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL RE: POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO LITIGATION - ONE (1) MATTER.**

This item was heard in closed session. Board members gave Mr. Padilla direction on how to proceed.

**13. ADJOURNMENT UPON COMPLETION OF BUSINESS**

Chair Fellow adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:53 a.m.

X 

Anthony Fellow  
Board Chair

X 

Dena Williams  
Board Secretary