



City of Albuquerque
Department of Arts & Culture

**ABQ BioPark Advisory Group
MEETING AGENDA**

Tuesday, October 4, 2022 4:00 - 5:30 pm

BioPark Zoo Library / Hybrid

Board members present:

Jeremiah Gwin
Karl Horak
Rachel Hawkins
Tim McBride
Colin Barnett
Bruce Hinrichs
Jon Sanchez
Laura Harris
Kristina Chongsiriwatana
Angela Alderete (zoom)

Staff present:

Stephanie Stowell
Jourdan Vallejos

Guests:

Judith Philips
Sandra Barnett

- I. Call to Order- 4:05 PM**
- II. Approval of Agenda** – date change for minutes from July to August. B. Hinrichs moved, T. McBride seconded. All in favor.
- III. Approval of the Minutes from August 2nd meeting** – B. Hinrichs moved, K. Chongsiriwatana seconds, all in favor
- IV. Public Comment**
 - A. Sandra Barnett – Docent for 7 years

1. Read a statement regarding cottonwood gallery (Appendix 1)

B. Judith Phillips – Docent

1. Agrees with Sandra’s statement
2. Concerned master plans eliminate projects with native plant projects
3. Strongly suggest we use BioPark to educate and not ‘Disney does the Heritage Farm’

V. **Current/Old Business**

A. Subcommittee Reports and Discussion

a. Bylaws Subcommittee – T. McBride

- Reworked some wording about language reflecting the board and their backgrounds; identifying community diversity.
- Next step is figuring out process to update City Ordinance.
- Discussion on board composition vs members
- Motion to take language forward to get changes made to city ordinance; K. Chongsiriwatana moves, second from B. Hinrichs, all in favor

b. Annual Report Subcommittee (no report)

c. Public Outreach Subcommittee – J. Sanchez

- Met on August 22nd – central goal: plan and advise on external communication for Master Plan and Strategic Plan framework.
- How to get this info to the community? Which info do they want?
- How can we best convey GRT allocations?
- Is there a plan on how to digest communication thoughts? They’d like to help.
- Next step is to get with Stephanie to dive in.

d. Guest Experience Subcommittee (no report)

e. Master Plan/GRT Subcommittee (no report)

VI. **Announcements/Staff Updates**

A. Board Chair Announcements – J. Gwin

- a. Annual Report Subcommittee – Chair is still K. Horak (will ask for updated term list)

- b. New member Rachel Hawkins
 - i. Welcome! Introduction
- c. New name tags!

B. Board Announcements

- a. K. Chongsiriwatana – attended Harvest Festival; was great – wish I could buy a gallon of cider!

C. Project Updates (BioPark staff)

- a. S. Stowell
 - i. Harvest Festival – proud of the team and their collaboration (BioPark and Community Events in DAC department). Over 6,000 guests and \$45,000 in revenue.
 - ii. In your inbox soon – report on our conservation program.
 - iii. Master Plan – 10 meetings in 7 months. Aligning priority projects. 26 priority projects identified out of 50+. Final review happening now.
 - iv. Strategic Plan – we have four pillars workgroups. People pillar have developed some great tools and action plans for internal culture, internal communication and staff recognition (among other things). Other three workgroups starting to meet now. Will have more to share with public when those teams get started (plan to invite some subcommittee members from public outreach at some point).
 - 1. Communication plan regarding proactive external communication through firm PCI – work in progress
 - v. BioPark attendance – 45% outside of MSA. That’s a large number! We may look more into this data related to marketing. New ticketing software before the end of the year with better analytics.
 - vi. SNAP program – 4,000 recorded
 - vii. Sam the laughing gull is turning 26! We’re having a party for him.
 - viii. Mountain Lion update – can send follow up
- b. J. Gwin

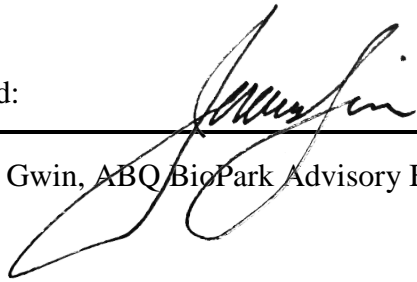
- i. Public input – discussion on the importance
 - 1. Heritage Farm – (plans shown to the group last time).
Could impact two specimens in the gallery and can affect the data that the nature’s notebook. Wealth of data could be interrupted. There should be a crossover with the public and their input. The reasons why are important.
 - 2. Discussion about placement of public comment on the agenda.
 - 3. Question about how to move forward regarding concerns about plans. Are they final?
 - a. Moving forward: Keeping people informed is the goal.

VII. New Business – none

VIII. Next Regular Meeting – December 6, 2022 4-5:30pm

IX. Adjourn - 5:18 PM – C. Barnett move to adjourn, second from K. Horak

Approved:



December 11, 2022

Jeremiah Gwin, ABQ BioPark Advisory Board Chair

Date

BioPark Advisory Board Meeting Minutes October 4, 2022 - APPENDIX 1

Statement from Sandy Barnett to the ABQ BioPark Advisory Board, October 4, 2022

My name is Sandy Barnett. I have been a docent at the Botanic Garden for seven years, with one of my greatest pleasures being to serve on the Nature's Notebook team that collects data on the phenology - or life - of vegetation in the Cottonwood Gallery. This data is uploaded into a national data bank and made available to the scientific community to better understand climate change, among many other issues. I believe this program is a feather in the cap of the BioPark.

But today I want to focus on the potential of the Cottonwood Gallery as a diamond in the rough, just waiting to be discovered by the BioPark as a unique living classroom for school groups to learn about and appreciate the wonders of our Bosque in a safe, easy to access setting. Yes, the Cottonwood Gallery is far from the main entrance to the Botanic Garden, but it's just a short, interesting walk from the parking lot at the Heritage Farm; why not use it. The experience of seeing a Great Horned Owl, as I did several weeks ago in the Cottonwood Gallery, or seeing porcupines high in trees where they naturally roost, not just on the arched frame of the Ceremonial Garden, is truly a thrill, even of me. Imagine how it could excite the mind of a child to inquire about the ways of these animals and to appreciate the wild world they are associated with.

I think that less manicured nature is better at eliciting a sense of wonder and desire to explore than a well-groomed environment; the Cottonwood Gallery is *unique* within the BioPark in offering this opportunity.

While many people enjoy strolling through the Cottonwood Gallery, I see so much potential in the property that has been needlessly lost. A number of young cottonwoods have been planted only to die when the irrigation lines serving them while they send down deep roots are not maintained. We had a lovely marsh thick with cattails and croaking bullfrogs that dried up when the liner leaked. The liner wasn't repaired or replaced, so the marsh, along with the flora and fauna associated with it disappeared. Surrounding vegetation has continued to suffer.

I would urge the BioPark to look at the Cottonwood Gallery with fresh eyes and not abandon it as the backwater of the Botanic Garden, but see if for what it can be – an opportunity to bring the wonder of nature to our local community and give a glimpse of the Bosque to out-of-towners who stroll the area to experience a bit of wild New Mexico before catching their flight at the Sunport. Develop the pathway, add signage, perhaps install a catwalk to show children the cool reproductive cycle of our native cottonwoods, reinstate the marsh, and add more young cottonwoods to this aging gallery. Make it an exciting destination!