City of
Santa Monica®

MINUTES
SANTA MONICA PIER CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 19, 2017
KEN EDWARDS CENTER, 1527 FOURTH ST., SANTA MONICA
6:30 PM

Call to Order

Chair Judy Abdo called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

Roll Call

The following persons were recorded in attendance by the Recording Secretary:

Present: Chair Judy Abdo, Secretary/Treasurer Abby Arnold, Board Member Christopher Foster, Board Member Misti Kerns, Board Member Allan Lipsky and Board Member Barbara Stinchfield

Absent: Vice Chair Susan McCarthy

Also present: SMPC Pier Administrator Jay Farrand, SMPC Deputy Director Jim Harris, City of Santa Monica Pier Manager Rod Merl, City of Santa Monica Office of Pier Management Administrator Michael Barboza, City of Santa Monica Economic Development Manager Jason Harris, City of Santa Monica Economic Development Senior Development Analyst Elana Buegoff, Santa Monica Pier Lessees Association Representative Randi Parent.

1. **Special Agenda Items** – None.

2. **Reports of Staff/Members**

A. Staff and Programming Update

Jay Farrand announced to the Board that the recent Santa Monica Pier Paddleboard & Ocean Festival was a success and that staff is busily preparing for the upcoming Twilight Concert Series opening night. He further highlighted this year's preparations for the concert series, including extensive work with City departments regarding traffic, communication and public safety. Staff recently

learned of the City's new policy regarding parking rates in the 1550 PCH Parking Lot and has expressed concerns to the City Parking Office. Parallel efforts have been made by the Office of Pier Management and the Santa Monica Pier Lessees Association.

Rod Merl provided updates on the status of upcoming City projects including the clearing of the Deauville site, the additional of new lighting fixtures on the Municipal Pier, the replacement electrical switch-gear and the restoration of the central-eastern section of the Pier Parking Deck.

The following members of the public addressed the Board: Nathan Smithson, Cindy Pfeiffer, Greg Morena and Chris Volaski.

B. May Budget and Financials

Jay Farrand summarized the written financial report as distributed in the Board Packet, highlighting the income generated by the recent Heal the Bay Annual Dinner event and the HUSH LA Silent Dance Parties.

Board Member Kerns inquired about the trending drop in Merry Go-Round rental income. Jim Harris responded that the trend appears to be due to prospective customers' concerns about local traffic issues and lack of parking, noting that Pacific Park recently discontinued offering children's birthday parties in part due to those same concerns.

C. Santa Monica Pier Lessees Association

Randi Parent informed the Board that the SMPLA recently met and expressed great concern about the announcement of the new parking rate hikes for this year's Twilight Concert Series. The association is collectively upset about the new high rate of $25 per vehicle, about the timing of that rate being applied to the entire day of each concert date and about the general lack of communication between the City and the SMPLA about the rate hike. She added that a recent meeting with City Parking Staff seems to have been heard to a degree and that the timing of the rate hike may be moved to a 12:00 noon start time instead of the entire day.

D. Landmarks Commission - No report.

3. **Public Input:** - None.

4. **Consent Calendar**

A. May 15, 2017 and April 17, 2017 Regular Pier Corporation Meeting Minutes
Recommended Action: Approve the May 15 and April 17, 2017 Regular Pier Corporation meeting minutes.

MOTION

Board Member Kerns moved and Board Member Foster seconded a motion to approve both the April 17, 2017 and May 15, 2017 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously

5. **New Business**

A. 250 Santa Monica Pier Change of Concept Presentation
Recommended Action: Receive presentation from Romana Pier LLC regarding concept change and provide feedback or approve.

Chair Abdo informed the Board that the City Council recently approved a motion which granted the Santa Monica Pier Corporation Board of Directors the authority to approve new leases on the Pier. The modifications to the lease for 250 Santa Monica Pier now fall under the Board's purview and are being presented to the Board at this meeting.

Jason Harris and Elana Buegoff addressed the Board, first summarizing the recently approved changes to the leasing guidelines in which the Board was delegated the authority to approve leases on the Pier, then summarizing the changes that Romana Pier LLC, (current lessees of 250 Santa Monica Pier) wish to have made to their lease. These changes include the change of the restaurant's name to Earl's Seaside Tavern along with a complete change in the style of cuisine. Staff advised that the name change should not be unreasonably upheld, but the change in style of cuisine does require a lease modification, hence the need for this to be reviewed and approved by the Board.

Mr. Harris and Ms. Buegoff then fielded questions and comments from the Board regarding both the change in concept and what procedural process the Board needs to execute the review and approval of new or amended leases.

The following members of the public addressed the Board: Dennis Hawk (owner's representative), Tony Hernandez (owner's representative), Francis Engler and Greg Morena.

The Board asked questions directly of the Mr. Hawk and Mr. Hernandez pertaining to details of the new concept.

Board Member Foster commented that he has never been presented a copy of the current lease. Mr. Harris replied that he will send a copy of the lease to each Board Member.

Chair Abdo announced that the Board will not make a decision about the proposed lease changes at this meeting, but will decide upon the process that the Board will need to follow for such modifications. She proposed the creation of a working group dedicated to determining the process.

MOTION

Board Member Arnold moved and Board Member Foster seconded a motion to establish an ad hoc working group composed of three Board Members to work with City Staff on the procedures for the Board to review and approve new leases and changes to existing leases. This group is to meet as soon as possible and to report back to the Board at the July Regular Board Meeting with their recommendations about the currently proposed lease change as well as the structure of how to address future leases. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Abdo appointed the following members to the ad hoc working group: Abby Arnold, Chris Foster and Misti Kerns, with Susan McCarthy listed as an alternate member.

6. **Continued Items** – None.

7. **Public Hearings** – None.

8. **Written Communication** – None.

9. **Future Agenda Items** – The Board asked City Staff to return in the near future with an updated list detailing status of leases of Pier businesses.

The Board wished Rod Merl gratitude and a fond farewell in acknowledgement of his upcoming retirement and announced that the corporation is creating a plaque in his honor to be placed at the west end of the Pier.

Chair Abdo will also be writing a farewll letter on behalf of the Board to retiring Assistant City Manager Elaine Polachek.

Adjournment

Chair Abdo adjourned the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

ATTEST:

Board Secretary

APPROVED:

Board Chair