



Parks and Recreation Department
Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Meeting

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department Parks Board was held on Tuesday, February 26, 2008 at the Boards and Commissions Conference Room, 301 West 2nd St. Room 1101.

Board Members Present: Board Chair, Linda Guerrero, Secretary/Parliamentarian Mark Vane, Hector Ortiz, Clint Small, Danette Chimenti, Jeff Francell and Marilyn Bostick.

Board Members Absent: Board Vice-Chair Jeb Boyt, Stephen Shang.

Staff Members Present: Stuart Strong, Cora Wright, Ricardo Soliz, Randy Scott and Tino Garcia.

A. Meeting called to order

Board Chair Guerrero called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m.

B. Approval of Minutes

Board Member Small moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Board Member Ortiz. Motion passed 5-0, with Board Member Francell abstaining.

C. Citizen Communication:

Jim Von Wolske, President, Lakeshore Neighborhood Association, expressed concern over the possibility of Lake Lady Bird becoming a carp sanctuary. He said the City should protect the lake for the citizens of Austin and not some outside entity, and that it should address the carp problem before it becomes too late. He purposed that the City should acquire the property at the HWY 360 boat ramp to improve boater safety and improve access. He said he has two engineering firms that are willing to do the work for free.

Charlie McCabe, Executive Director, Austin Parks Foundation, announced two upcoming days for It's My Park Day. The two will occur on April 12th and May 15th. The Foundation is looking for volunteers.

Terry Barnes asked the Board to consider revisiting the 1981 Lake Austin Corridor Recreation Study along with the Lake Austin Growth Management Plan conducted in 1976. He indicated that both plans call for conservation efforts and that we should continue these efforts on the lake now.

Arthur Assadourian, resident of Austin, wanted to know the status of the Walnut Creek Hike and Bike trail.

Scott Johnson, expressed concern over dogs in the park and erosion on the south shore of Lake Lady Bird. He would like the Board and the department to consider making the area from South 1st Street to the railroad track an on lease area.

D. Other Business

1. Briefing on an awareness kick-off campaign regarding the source of high bacteria levels in Bull Creek Park.

Nancy McClintock, Assistant Director, Watershed Protection Department, talked to the Board regarding an awareness campaign being initiated. She introduced Mateo Scoggins, Biologist for the Watershed Protection Department, to talk about the high bacteria levels in Bull Creek. Mr. Scoggins talked about the off-lease dog area on the creek and their subsequent investigation of a sewage spill. During the investigation, the Health Department was alerted to reports of illnesses, perhaps due to the spill. The Health Department investigated the off-lease area and found much higher levels of bacteria; more than the previous 15 years of data collection. After determining that the high levels of bacteria were not due to the spill or suspected septic tank problems near the creek, they pinpointed that dog excrement and dog feces were contributing to the high bacteria count on the creek. In an effort to address the high bacteria count on the creek, an awareness campaign will be soon initiated. Ms. McClintock explained the Scoop the Poop program (dispensers that have been placed in about 50 % of the parks). They have targeted the campaign to be held at the park and information will be disseminated with posted signs, press conferences and pet waste cleanups. She added that more mutt dispensers will be placed along the creek. Animal control will give warnings to people that do not participate in picking up their dog feces. The Health Department will continue water quality monitoring.

2. Briefing on the Parks and Recreation Department's Long Range Plan process.

Ricardo Soliz, Division Manager, reported on the department's long range plans. The department is updating the 1998 Land and Facilities master plan. He provided a schedule of the meetings that have occurred throughout the city. Data is being collected from the meetings from the five different geographic areas throughout the City. Public input will

hopefully be completed by April 2008. Mr. Soliz indicated that the long range plan targets land acquisition and facilities as well as recreation center priorities.

E. Discussion and Action Items

3. Adoption of Standard City Board and Commissions Bylaws.

Acting Director Strong explained that Council adopted the new ordinance pertaining to boards and commissions. The ordinance mandates every board adopt a standard set of bylaws. Board Member Chimenti moved to approve the bylaws, seconded by Board Member Bostick. Motion passed 7-0.

4. Election of Parks and Recreation Department Interim Officers.

Acting Director Strong reminded the Board that this election is for interim officers only (chair and vice-chair). A second election of the Board officers will occur in August 2008. For the election of interim chair of the Board, Board Member Chimenti moved to nominate Linda Guerrero as Chair, seconded by Board Member Bostick. Motion carried 7-0. For the election of vice-chair of the Board, Board Member Ortiz moved to nominate Danette Chimenti, seconded by Board Member Bostick. Motion carried 7-0.

5. Resolution to request public input on the selection of the Parks and Recreation Department Director.

After considerable discussion whether to send the resolution to the Mayor and Council and City Manager, Board Member Vane moved to approve the resolution striking out the last paragraph (a paragraph that directs City Council to tell the City Manager to ensure that the Austin community be provided input into the selection process). The motion was seconded by Board Member Bostick. During the discussion, Danette Chimenti requested that the last paragraph remain as is, but eliminate the wording regarding community involvement and insert the Parks Board involvement. This motion was seconded by Board Member Small. Motion carried 6-0 with Board Member Small abstaining. Then Board Member Bostick moved to adopt the resolution as had been amended, seconded by Board Member Vane. Motion carried 4-2.

Steve Butler, announced that he would like the City to expedite the selection process and that Stuart Strong be selected as Director.

6. Make a recommendation to the Board regarding the naming of the 21-acre park located west of Palmer Events Center between Riverside Drive and Barton Springs Road.

Steve Butler, spoke to the Board regarding the naming of the 21-acre park and requested that first priority be given to name the entire park Butler Park, and as an alternate use the current recommendation of the subcommittee. He detailed the history of the Butler family with the park and provided additional correspondence to supplement the earlier

application with names of supporters that support the entire renovated park, with the foundation and observation hill being named “Butler Park”.

Brian Hunt thanked the Board for their efforts but also reiterated support for naming the entire area Butler Park.

Meta Carson, also a member of the Butler family, thanked the Board for their efforts in the naming process. She will continue to work to ensure that the history of the Butler family as it relates to the park be continued.

James Retherford, Bouldin Creek Neighborhood resident, asked the Board to recognize Willie Wells, a baseball player from the neighborhood, who is in the Cooperstown Baseball Hall of Fame, the Mexican League Hall of Fame and the Cuban League Hall of Fame. He would like to have Mr. Well’s name attached to the park.

Board Member Vane moved to approve the subcommittee naming recommendation, seconded by Board Member Small. (the recommendation is to name the park Town Lake Park., with the fountain to be named the Butler Fountain; the hill be named Doug Sahn Hill. Discussion ensued including discussing the reason why the Doug Sahn name should be considered. Board Member Ortiz thanked the Butler Family for providing a history of Butler contribution to the City. Board Chair Guerrero proposed a friendly amendment to the main motion and requested that the children’s garden area be name Liz Carpenter Gardens and that the great lawn area be named after Willie Wells Field. Also she requested that the pond adjacent to the fountain be named after the Butler Family. She wants a plaque commemorating the Butler family history. After additional discussion, it was agreed that the friendly amendment be changed as follows:

- The pond to be named after Liz Carpenter.
- The great lawn area to be named Willie Wells Field.
- The fountain and the children’s garden be named after the Butler Family.

Note: the entire park is to be named Town Lake Park.

The motion to change the friendly amendment to the above was passed 7-0, thus approving the entire main motion.

7. Consider approval of adding a danger buoy to the Navigation Control Zone map. Board Member Small moved to approve the motion, seconded by Board Member Francell. Motion passed 5-0.

8. Consider approval of the Westwood Country Club Marina.

Board Member Francell moved to approve the recommendation, seconded by Board Member Chimenti. Motion carried 4-0 with Board Member Vane abstaining.

F. Director’s Report

Acting Director Strong reminded the Board about the Barton Spring Pool Master Plan and indicated that the plan is on line now. He also reminded them of their requirement to

complete the annual report and work plan by the end of March 2008. Director Strong announced that Jason Mauer will be joining the department as the new Sales and Events Manager. Mr. Strong also reminded the Board of the opening ceremonies for the Johnson Creek Trail which will be held on Friday, March 7, 2008.

G. Items from the Board

- Board Member Vane thinks that an idea of a merry-go round in one of our parks is a really good idea. (this is a merry-go-round that has corporate sponsorships identified with different animal types). It was suggested that maybe it could be done as a concession.
- Board Member Small spoke about the possibility of different concession types.
- Board Member Francell spoke about an ACWP project in the middle of the channel and when the project would be completed. He also added that runners need a clear route(pathway) for added safety during the construction of the expansion of Cesar Chavez. He also requested a briefing on Shoal Creek, especially along the downtown area around the Austin Music Hall.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.