

Parks and Recreation Department Board Minutes

Tuesday, May 25, 2004
Meeting

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department was held on Tuesday, May 25, 2004 at the Parks and Recreation Department Main Office, 200 S. Lamar, Board Room.

Board Members Present: Linda Guerrero, Leonard Lyons, Hector Ortiz, Rosemary Castleberry, Jeff Francell, Joseph Hughes, Clint Small and Marilyn Bostick.

Board Members Absent: Jeb Boyt

City staff present: Warren Struss, Jay Stone, Randy Scott, Stuart Strong, Rick Ramirez and Tino Garcia.

A. The meeting called to order:

Rosemary Castleberry, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

B. Approval of the Minutes:

The Chair requested that the approval of the minutes be tabled until the wording on the amended resolution regarding the utility check off is confirmed.

C. Citizen Communication

Steve Beers, addressed the board about a design workshop that is being considered for the Southwest area of the City. The focus of the workshop is on four large tracts that are currently being developed. The four existing city greenbelts can be linked through the four parcels if land is dedicated by the current developers. The connecting greenbelts are located along Barton Creek, Williamson and Slaughter Creek. The design workshop is to ensure neighborhood compatibility. The Save Barton Creek Association is asking the Sierra Club along with other groups to join a common effort to create a new vision for the southwest area. The proposed workshop (called a charette) will create a comprehensive neighborhood plan. Residents, environmentalists, swimmers, parks and open space advocates, parks users, existing commercial business and area landowners will be asked to participate. It is anticipated that the outcome of the design charette be the area's official adopted neighborhood plan, guiding city zoning decisions. Mr. Beers asked the board to endorse the concept of the planning workshop. Board member Castleberry requested that Mr. Beers meet with members of the Land and Facilities committee for review and recommendation to the full board. Board member Small asked if a resolution in support of linking the existing trails was helpful and if the timing was right due to the current development. Mr. Beers responded that board resolution would indeed be helpful and that the time was right for the design charette. Board member Guerrero inquired about his presentation to the Environmental Board and recommended a collaborative resolution be initiated between both boards to strengthen the support for the workshop. Mr. Beers will address the Land and Facilities Committee for review.

D. ITEMS FOR ACTION

Board member Castleberry introduced Joseph Hughes as the newest member of the board. Board member Hughes introduced himself as an active user of the parks and trails system and was glad to be a member.

1. Request for Parkland Use Agreement for Barton Creek Lift Station Relief Main – Austin Clean Water Program (ACWP)

Stan Evans, Project Manager, Public Works Department and Reynaldo Cantu, Assistant Director, Austin Water Utility addressed the board regarding a request for a permanent and temporary use agreement for the construction, operation and maintenance of a proposed 33-inch wastewater line to be installed in two tunnel construction projects as part of the Barton Springs Lift Station Relief Tunnels 1 and 2. Plans call for addressing the need for the downtown redevelopment and the relief of the lift station. The proposed alignment through Zilker Park will be from the existing Barton Creek Lift Station to a proposed work shaft/permanent manhole near the pedestrian bridge over Barton Creek. The alignment then proceeds east to a permanent manhole west of the PARD building parking lot, then to a temporary lift station located near the intersection of Dawson and Riverside. Impact to Zilker Park will be limited to the single temporary work site needed to construct the two tunnels. There will be no impact to the adjacent ballfields or existing parking. Mr. Evans reiterated that impetus is to take the Barton Springs Lift Station off-line by 2006. Bids for the construction of the tunnels will occur this year. Also, mitigation will provide for the construction of a maintenance barn near the existing pistol range and the dismantling of the existing barn in the heart of the park. Board member Small asked how long the construction of the tunnel at Zilker Park would be and whether it would affect the stage of the Austin City Limits Event. The tunnel will be dug in January and February will be located outside the access road that goes into the park. The actual hole will be between 20-25 ft in diameter. Board member Small moved to approve a parkland use agreement for the relief of the Barton Creek Lift station for the construction, operation and maintenance of relief tunnels 1 and 2. Motion was seconded by Board member Bostick. Motion was approved by a 8-0 vote.

2. Approve the Clifton Boat Dock, 3117 ½ Brass Buttons Trail, Case number SP-04-0081DS

Board member Small reported on the Clifton Boat Dock which requested approval at 14 ft. 8 in. Since this exceeds the boat dock standards of the Regulations for the Construction Boat Docks of the Land Development Code, Board member Small moved to approve the boat dock at the standard 14 ft. The motion was seconded by Board member Francell. Motion was approved by a 8-0 vote.

E. DIRECTORS REPORT

Acting Director Struss reported that Council will discuss the approving the Southeast Soccer Complex which when completed will relieve the pressure on the existing soccer fields at Zilker Park. The department will be working closely with the William Cannon

expansion project to build the 9 fields. Construction will hopefully be completed by the beginning of summer in 2005. The cost of the project will be approximately \$850,000. This amount is considerable less due to collaborating with the construction project. Director Struss met with the City Manager regarding the budget. The proposed reductions of 5, 7 and 10 percent may not be that deep. Further information regarding the proposed budget will be forthcoming. The City Managers policy budget will be released the end of July, 2004. Special events forthcoming include the American Triathlon at Auditorium Shores including Home Town Heroes, Veterans and F-16's fly overs. This is all part of the Memorial Day celebrations. Discussions continue at the City Manager's office regarding St. Tropez. As developments/debate continues the board will be appraised. Discussions continue regarding the Decker Lake proposal and the possible use of park land at Walter E. Long. Land and Facilities committee will be addressed when more information on the site plan is available. Other special events include the 4th of July celebrations at Auditorium Shores and at Zilker, Pat Green concert, two Juneteenth celebrations at Rosewood and at Auditorium shores.

Acting Assistant Director Jay Stone reported on the kick-off of WI-FI. Within the next two weeks, Auditorium Shores will be ready for free wireless Internet Access followed by Wooldridge and Brush parks within the following two months. Other sites may be possible including Plaza Saltillo and Festival Beach.

Acting Assistant Director Rick Ramirez reported that the opening ceremonies for the summer playground program will be held on June 9, 2004 and all park board member are invited. Email will be sent as reminders. The A.B. Cantu Pan American Center will be reopening on June 5th. Invitations will be forthcoming.

Farmers Market has been extremely successful. The Department is considering adding another day of the week downtown at Republic Square. The department is working with the Comal Health Clinic to pilot several booths at Plaza Saltillo in an effort to develop some interest there too.

Wednesday night concerts have started at Waterloo Park and Blues on the Green will start at Zilker Park in several weeks. The Summer Jam series will start a 5 week program soon. All swimming pools will be opened by the 2nd week in June.

F. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Programs Committee – Board Member Guerrero reported on the pool openings and the summer playground program. She informed the board on the Statesman Swim-Safe for Austin Kids program, an nonprofit program addressing the critical need for accessible swimming instruction for at-risk kids and Pool Cool a Sun-Safety educational program. Also, the salamander population has increased at Eliza Springs due to the addition of plants placed at the bottom of the springs.

Land and Facilities – no report

Navigation Committee – no report

G. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Board member Ortiz inquired about the grass at Civitan Park and the maintenance schedule there. Acting Director Struss reported that due to past budget reductions our mowing schedule is now on a three week cycle which includes medians and triangles.

Board member Francell inquired about the charging on the weekends on the south side of Barton Springs and why this issue was not brought up to the board. Acting Director Struss indicated that it was not brought up to the board because the department had already started charging on the weekends a year earlier. People are now entering on the south side to avoid the charges. This has resulted in an overwhelming use of the southside creating a problem for emergency vehicles entering the park. Board member Lyons asked whether remote parking was a possibility. It was reported that bus routes are already going to Barton Springs and off site parking still remains a dilemma. A presentation on this issue will be brought to the Land and Facilities committee.

Board member Guerrero reported that the BCP has formed a subcommittee to look at public access to the BCP and how to accommodate the bikers and the riders. It is anticipated that the language of Tier I may have to be change. Further information will be forthcoming.

Council member Small reported that the AISD bond package has been set and urged the board to support it.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.