



**Parks and Recreation Department
Tuesday, September 26, 2006**

Meeting

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department Parks Board was held on Tuesday, September 26, 2006 at the Boards and Commissions Conference Room, 301 W. 2nd. St. Room 1101.

Board Members Present: Board Chair, Linda Guerrero, Board Vice-Chair Jeb Boyt, Jeff Francell, Hector Ortiz and Clint Small.

Board Members Absent: Mark Vane, Marilyn Bostick

Staff Members Present: Warren Struss, Stuart Strong, Cora Wright, Randy Scott and Tino Garcia.

A. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Linda Guerrero at 6: 12 p.m.

B. Approval of Minutes

Board Member Boyt moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Board Member Francell. Motion passed.

C. Citizen Communication

Barbara Epstein, President, Eastwoods Neighborhood Association, is proposing placing a statue of a donkey in Eastwoods Park to commemorate the beginning of Austin's annual Eeyore's Birthday Party. The association is sponsoring a fundraiser and donations raised will be used to place the sculpture of Eeyore in the park. She and Bob Coffey are spearheading the fundraiser. The statue was built by Mr. Coffey in 1979.

Charlie McCabe, Executive Director, Austin Parks Foundation, provided handouts on propositions 2 & 3 regarding the Nov. 7th Bond Election. He urged everyone to vote "yes" for both propositions which, address parks, water quality and flood control.

Additionally, he provided information on the Neighborhood Parks Grants Program. Six grants were awarded to the following groups.

- Austin Ridge Riders
- Canine Social Club
- Friends of Convict Hill Quarry Park
- Walnut Creek Neighborhood Association
- Waterloo Disc Club
- Windsor Park Neighborhood Association

D. Discussion and Action Items

1. Briefing on the Hyatt Regency Redevelopment

Paul Johnston is seeking Board approval of a Planned Development District (PUD) that will allow the redevelopment of the Town Lake Hyatt Property. Substantial upgrades of the rooms and interior of the hotel are already under construction. Fairfield Properties has committed over \$7 million to the effort. The project consists of the construction of two new buildings located on the two existing surface parking lots on the west and south side of the existing Hyatt hotel. Some of the cited benefits regarding the proposed rezoning are; 1) integration of new development with existing development; 2) conformance with adopted plans; 3) reduction of impervious cover; 4) enhancement of environment; 5) environmental maintenance commitment; 6) enhancement of public access to trail and waterfront; 7) efficient infrastructure plan; 8) new structures setback from Town lake; 9) and Great Streets program. Formal action will be taken at a special called Parks Board meeting on the 5th of October.

Kathie Tovo, President of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association, recommended against the variance to the Waterfront Overlay Ordinance and requested that the developers pursue other options already presented to the neighborhood.

2. Inter-local Cooperation Agreement between the City of Austin and the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) regarding buoys and enhanced boater safety measures to be implemented at Tom Miller Dam.

Cora Wright, Assistant Director, briefed the Board on the inter-local agreement regarding the maintenance and installation of buoys on Tom Miller Dam. Under the agreement, LCRA would install and maintain the buoys and the City of Austin would reimburse them for the installation and labor. She also indicated that enhanced boater safety measures have been implemented as a result of meetings between the individual agencies.

3. City of Austin Special Operations Plan – Waterway Restriction Guide.

Cora Wright, Assistant Director, briefed the Board on the Austin waterway restrictions. Chief Evans will be briefing the Navigation Subcommittee as well as the full Board in October 2006.

4. Cesar Chavez Two-Way Conversion Capital Improvement Project

Gordon Derr reported that on July 29, 2004, the City Council passed a resolution that directed the City Manager to determine the best way to convert the five-block long one-way segment of Cesar Chavez to a two-way segment, and to determine the cost. A consultant team developed the scope of the work identifying urban design enhancement opportunities and collected extensive data. Meetings were held with city Boards and Commissions, neighborhood associations, and the general public (including property owners) to brief them on the scope of the study. In the summer of 2005, staff and consultants presented the results of the study on the best way to convert traffic flow. Mr. Derr also talked about the merits of the Urban Design improvements, which are consistent with both the Great Streets Master Plan and the Town Lake Master Plan. The next steps are: 1) to brief to the Land and Facilities subcommittee on October 17th; 2) recommendation to the City Council on October 24th and 3) to set a public hearing on Chapter 26.

5. ACWP Barton Creek Greenbelt at Skyway Wastewater Improvements

Karen Poff, Engineer, briefed the Board on the project located at Spyglass Drive. The work will consist of a 300 foot sewer line (bored), which will create no disturbance to the creek bottom. This is part of a larger project that will be completed in the future. Signs alerting the public will be posted along the neighborhood and meetings will be held within the community. Next steps are a briefing to the Land and Facilities subcommittee and full Board action at the next Parks Board meeting.

6. Walnut Creek Trail Expansion

Butch Smith, Parks and Recreation Department Planner, showed a video which was produced by the National Parks Service in 1996 highlighting Walnut Creek. He talked about the proposed trail additions to the Walnut Creek Trail, which will occur in two phases. Currently the total acreage to the trail system is over 1,000 acres. Six hundred seventy-five (675) acres have been acquired since 1996. He outlined the Trail projects which include: 1) N. Walnut Phase I (3.2 miles); 2) N. Walnut Phase II (1.7) miles; 3) Southern Walnut (7.3 miles).

7. Walnut Creek Trail Expansion

Charlie McCabe, Executive Director, Austin Parks Foundation, addressed the Board on the skateholder process regarding the Trail. He indicated that meetings with stakeholders have been going on since April 2006. The trail is a joint use trail with issues regarding people and dogs. The task force came up with 7 possible recommendations for potential alignments, each with individual pros and cons. The seven were reduced to 3 recommendations which are as follows: 1) keep the existing trail with improvements; 2)

the Dave Anderson trail (named after a task force member)- this trail has enhancements combining elements of several other options and 3) a variation of number 2 without the existing trail. The task force used criteria such as access, habitat, design, and resources along with other criteria to select the three final options. The next step is to look at the pros and cons of each alternative and decide which is the best one.

E. Director's Report

Director Struss reported on the following: 1) ACL festival was very successful and the department received good comments, especially about the children's playground; 2) The Rolling Stones Concert will be held at Zilker Park on October 22nd. Board Member Boyt commented that people were upset with the volleyball court closures. Director Struss commented that the department plans to revamp the courts at Pease Park so players can go there as an alternative. The courts at Zilker will be completely repaired; 3) possible locations for Cancer Survivor's Park are still being reviewed and 4) the ground breaking for the Gus Garcia Recreation Center is scheduled for Saturday, October 28th.

F. Items from Board Members

Board Member Ortiz asked for staff assistance regarding honoring of war veterans. Director Struss commented that perhaps we could honor our war veterans by honoring them with a ceremony during the tree planting season. Board Chair Guerrero wants the Board to initiate outreach efforts with the community utilizing community forums.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.