



Parks and Recreation Department
Tuesday, January 22, 2008

Meeting

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department Parks Board was held on Tuesday, January 22, 2008 at the Parks and Recreation Department Board Room, 200 South Lamar Blvd.

Board Members Present: Board Chair, Linda Guerrero, Board Vice-Chair, Jeb Boyt, Secretary/Parliamentarian Mark Vane, Hector Ortiz, Clint Small, Stephen Shang, Danette Chimenti and Marilyn Bostick.

Board Members Absent: Jeff Francell

Staff Members Present: Stuart Strong, Cora Wright, Farhad Madani and Tino Garcia.

A. Meeting called to order

Board Chair Guerrero called the meeting to order at 5:17 p.m.

B. Approval of Minutes

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

C. Citizen Communications:

Paul Addington, Friends of the Norwood Estate Dog Park, requested that the Board support the approval of Austin Parks Foundation grant funds to be used for safety improvements to the Norwood Estate Dog Park.

D. Other Business

1. Briefing of the final artwork designs for the Art in Public Places “Legends of Tejano Trail” project – Connie Arismendi, Artist and Megan Crigger, Arts in Public Places.

Ms. Arismendi, could not attend due to illness. However, Ms Crigger briefed the Board on the five east side facilities that have been renamed in honor of several major figures in Austin's Tejano and Hispanic communities. All five projects will involve park enhancements with integrated design elements. The projects include:

- ? The Central Plaza at the Mexican American Cultural Center, to be named the Perez Ramos Central Plaza.
- ? Festival Beach Road located just north of Town Lake to be named in honor of Nash Hernandez, the leader of Austin's longest running big band.
- ? The Fiesta Gardens East Meeting Hall to be re-named Manual "Cowboy" Donley Park, for the Tejano pioneer and leader of Las Estrellas.
- ? The Fiesta Gardens Pavilion to be renamed Johnny Degollado Pavilion, for the Tejano Music Hall of Fame inductee and Coordinator of the Austin Conjunto Festival.
- ? The Town Lake Scenic Overlook to be renamed Roy Montelongo Scenic Overlook for the Tejano legend.

Three of the projects have been designated to receive artwork – The Roy Montelongo Scenic Overlook, the Nash Hernandez Road and the Perez Ramos Plaza at the Mexican American Culture Center. Three renderings were displayed of the projects and Ms. Crigger spoke individually about all three, detailing goals and explaining the proposed design elements.

2. Briefing on the Waller Creek Tunnel project – Kimberly Springer, Project Manager

Ms. Springer provided a 14-page slide presentation on the Waller Creek Tunnel. She discussed the historical significance of the creek along with other issues such as flooding problems, pollution, and environmental issues. Included in the discussion were the benefits of the tunnel. They are as follows: 1) reducing the size of the 100-year flood plain; 2) improving the creek environment; 3) allowing for greater amenity opportunities; 4) connectivity to Sixth Street and the convention center; and 5) increasing the uses in parks and trails. She indicated that the construction of the tunnel would allow for the development of a Waller Creek District. Additionally, the consultant will create a master plan that will include the community's vision plus other challenges and opportunities. The tunnel's design should be completed by late 2010, and construction should be completed by late 2014.

E. Discussion and Action Items

3. Make a recommendation to the Board regarding a Bridge Expansion project requesting a temporary and permanent use agreement at the Onion Creek Greenbelt.

Lora Teed, Public Works Department, announced that the Austin Water Utility is seeking a permanent and temporary use agreement for access to the parcel along Onion Creek at

William Cannon Drive. The tract is to be used for the construction of a boring pit to place water lines beneath Onion Creek. Also, a small portion of the parcel will be used as temporary workspace for the construction of a twin bridge to the existing structure of Onion Creek. The project has the potential to impact several trees.

A mitigation plan is in place in which the Utility would provide PARD \$3000 for the use of the land and an additional \$17,000 for the purchase, installation and maintenance of trees at a location to be determined by the Parks and Recreation Department. Board Member Small moved to approve the recommendation, seconded by Board Member Bostick. Motion carried 6-0.

F. Director's Report:

Acting Director Strong reported on the following items:

- ? New City Manager, Marc Ott, has met with city staff and will report in mid-February. Acting Director Strong has extended an invitation to Mr. Ott to visit with the Board.
- ? The Department has been given 3 initiatives from the City Council: The first is to come up with a carbon neutral plan for the Trail of Lights. The second is to extend the Country Club Creek Trail to Oltorf Street, and the third is to work with the Austin Parks Foundation for the development of Gus Garcia Park.
- ? Acting Director Strong displayed an award presented to the department from the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) designating the department as an accredited agency.

G. Items from the Board.

There was some discussion regarding the search for the new parks director. Board Member Boyt suggested a dialog with the new City Manager regarding how the search is going to be conducted. Board Member Bostick asked if the Board would have input in the nation-wide search. Board Chair Guerrero asked that a letter of recommendation be submitted to the Council requesting a public process be considered similar to the one for the previous director.

Board Chair Guerrero also appointed a subcommittee to work with members of the Environmental Board to mutually work on the Barton Springs Pool Master Plan. The three Parks Board committee members are Board Chair Guerrero, Board Member Chimenti, and Board Member Small.

It was also agreed that the Board must adopt the new Boards and Commission Bylaws and elect interim officers at the next meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.