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**MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
November 25, 1997**

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board was held on Tuesday, November 25, 1997, at 200 South Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas. Board members present: Elaine Carter, Secretary, Dewayne Naumann, Rosemary Castleberry, Chair, Jeff Francell, Mary K. Isaacs and Louise Nivison, Member Emeritus.

Staff members present: Jesus M. Olivares, Director, Warren Struss, Peter Marsh, Kim Jamail Mitchell, Mary Ybarbo.

A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Rosemary Castleberry.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of October 28, 1997, were approved.

C. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Kim Edwards, 5007 Westview Drive approached the board and requested funding for the Caswell Tennis Center in the proposed bond process.

Sheryl Behne, Tennis Pro at South Austin Tennis Center, approached the board and requested support for the construction of the building of 8 to 10 more tennis courts at South Austin Tennis Center. Ms. Behne stated it was originally designed for 18 courts and there are presently 10 courts.

The Chair read a letter from Beverly Dunn, 607 Patterson Avenue, requesting an upgrading of the Caswell Tennis Courts.

D. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

1998 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Bond Election Process

Paul A. Hofmann, with the Public Works and Transportation Department, invited the board to participate in the upcoming bond process. The City Council is expected to name a citizens bond committee to assist with the election in the fall of 1998. Mr. Hofmann will return to the next board meeting with a list of projects identified by the various city departments. Jesus M. Olivares, Director, announced that the Parks Board has been involved with a series of public hearings and the board will give input to the process.

Mr. Greg Canally was introduced at the budget analyst for the Parks and Recreation Department.

E. ITEMS FOR ACTION

Make a Recommendation to Council for Approval of the Robert E. Lee Road Interceptor Schematic Plan

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Mary K. Isaacs informed the board the Land and Facilities Committee recommendation was that the board approve the Robert E. Lee Road Interceptor Schematic Plan with the understanding that the specifics of the plan will be brought back to the Parks Board later and that the plan will be put together with the idea to minimize impact on the park. Elaine Carter seconded. The vote in favor was 5-0 (Francell, Castleberry, Carter, Isaacs, Naumann)

Make a Recommendation to Council for Approval of a Park Improvement and Use Agreement between the City of Austin and AISD Regarding Mary Moore Searight Metropolitan Park

Mary K. Isaacs informed the board there were concerns such as traffic volume, and road improvements with this issue. A representative from AISD informed the board that AISD will upgrade and maintain the road, at its expense, from Slaughter Road to the school site, a distance of approximately 3,000 feet. AISD agreed to build a sidewalk or trail along the new road for pedestrian access to the school and park. AISD will construct a trail in the south end of the park for pedestrian access to the park and the school. AISD will install a water line from Slaughter Lane to serve the school site and to serve the interior of the park. Public access to the park will be available during construction. Mary K. Isaacs made a motion to recommend approval of the agreement. Elaine Carter seconded. The vote in favor was 5-0 (Francell, Castleberry, Carter, Isaacs, Naumann).

Consider Bicycle Traffic Proposals in Zilker Park and West Enfield Park

Jesus M. Olivares, Director, informed the board there were three proposals submitted in August regarding measures to improve bicycle traffic in and around parks.

(1) Contraflow Bike Lanes in Zilker Park

PARD reviewed this proposal along with the Bicycle Coordinator in the Public Works and Transportation Department. The following observations were made: marking bicycle lanes on both sides of a car lane in the middle of a narrow park road would create an unsafe driving situation; the driver of a car may look for on-coming traffic in one direction only as they enter a one-way road, endangering bicyclists traveling in the contraflow lane; existing park roads do not entirely bypass Barton Springs Road (they re-enter Barton Springs before leaving the park or terminate in a parking lot. Bike path improvements to make the necessary connections would require future funding. An alternate solution is the new bike route through the park which is in design. The Zilker Loop is a funded project which will provide a new bridge across Barton Creek above the swimming pool. A new trail will proceed behind the pool and connect with the existing hike and bike trail on the south side of the creek, and to the Barton Springs Road-Robert E. Lee Road area outside the park.

PARD recommends against the contraflow bicycle lanes in Zilker Park, in favor of the new Zilker Loop as a safe alternative to avoid Barton Springs Road traffic.

(2) Keep the Austin Nature and Science Center Road Open for Bicyclists Use.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, which permits exhibiting wildlife, required

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the City to construct a fence around the entire compound containing animals to protect the captive animals against vandalism and other animals. Before the fence was installed, the center suffered the loss of property and captive animals. The protective fence crosses the drive and is intended to exclude the public.

PARD recommends not opening the Nature Center Drive to traffic after closing hours.

(3) Trail Extension through West Enfield Park and Improvements for the Intersection of Enfield Road and Winstead Road

The Bicycle Advisory Council requests improvements to facilitate crossing the Enfield-Winstead intersection where the Johnson Creek hike and bike trail ends. There is a dirt path through the park, but there are no approved funds for the improvements. PARD will endorse the improved trail and will attempt to secure funds in the Capital Improvements Program process or from the City's bicycle program.

Alterations of street intersections are under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Works and Transportation. This request has been referred to the Bicycle Coordinator who will evaluate the recommended changes for consistency and who will respond directly to the Bicycle Advisory Council.

PARD recommends referral of this issue to the Bicycle Coordinator.

Mary K. Isaacs moved to accept all three staff recommendations. Dewayne Naumann seconded. The vote in favor was 5-0 (Francell, Castleberry, Carter, Isaacs, Naumann)

Make a Recommendation to Council Regarding the Resolution for Park Police

At the previous Parks Board meeting of October 28, 1997, Dewayne Naumann made a motion that the board prepare a resolution to council in support of upgrading park police officers salaries to that of Travis County police and Travis County park rangers. The vote in favor was 5-0 (Naumann, Isaacs, Medrano, Castleberry, Francell). The following resolution was read into the record by Rosemary Castleberry.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The City of Austin Park System serves as an integral part of the resources of the citizens of the City of Austin, and;

WHEREAS, maintaining, encouraging and enhancing the quality of the park system is a priority of the Parks and Recreation Board and the Parks and Recreation Department, and;

WHEREAS, the Park Police of the City of Austin are the principal means to ensure the quality and public safety throughout the City of Austin Parks System, and;

WHEREAS, The Parks and Recreation Board has recognized the existence of salary compensation disparity between similar area law enforcement entities and the City of Austin Park Police,

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD, THAT THE AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL DIRECT THE CITY MANAGER, IN COOPERATION WITH THE DIRECTOR OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT AND THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, TO ELIMINATE THE DISPARITY IN SALARY COMPENSATION, AND BY DOING SO CREATE AND PROVIDE A CAREER ENVIRONMENT TO ATTRACT AND MAINTAIN A SUITABLE AND ACCEPTABLE STAFF OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND PUBLIC SAFETY WITHIN THE CITY OF AUSTIN PARK SYSTEM.

Dewayne Naumann moved to forward the resolution to City Council post haste. Elaine Carter seconded. The vote in favor was 5-0 (Francell, Castleberry, Carter, Isaacs, Naumann)

F. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jesus M. Olivares distributed the Round Two Transmittal of Tier III Land Management Plan Reports for the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve to board members. Mr. Olivares noted that Buzz Avery is the new chair of the Environmental Board. The Parks Board and Environmental Board will be meeting on December 16th to discuss these land management plans. An advisory committee will be formed to help these boards in their discussions. This committee will consist of 2 land owners, 2 business representatives, 2 conservation representatives, 2 recreation representatives and 1 mediation/conflict representative.

Austin Softball Association is requesting a public hearing on the use of Butler Fields. A date and time for the hearing will be determined at the December 9th board meeting.

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Programs Committee: goals and objectives to be presented soon.

Land and Facilities: most goals are continuing in nature and will be forthcoming. Special Events Policy public hearings are continuing.

Concession Committee: met its one goal of reviewing the concessions ordinance and policy.

Navigation Committee: Peter Marsh informed the board of the following goals and objectives:

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD NAVIGATION COMMITTEE Goals and Objectives 1998

1. Commission a Recreation Boating Study

Commission the US Army Corps of Engineers to undertake a boating recreation study of Lake Austin, Town Lake, and Lake Walter E. Long.

2. Encourage legislative changes to Tx. Water Safety Act

Amendments should be made to the Tx. Water Safety Act during the next legislative agenda that would:

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- (a) Encourage and support state legislation to provide boating law enforcement block grants.
- (b) Encourage and support state legislation to increase fines for 'reckless operation' and 'excessive speed'.

3. **Install Mile/Centerline Markers - Lake Austin**

Centerline/mile markers or buoys, at 1/2 mile intervals, that would designate the channel centerline of Lake Austin and assist in the "drive on the right" rule. The buoys would be marked with the corresponding mile zone to identify the location on Lake Austin.

4. **Produce a revised "Lake Guidelines" brochure**

Revise and reprint the "Lake Guidelines" brochure. Expand distribution to businesses located on Lake Austin and local boat dealers. Consider installing brochure dispensers at the four public boat ramps on Lake Austin and at Lake Walter E. Long.

5. **Investigate ways to relieve Congested Areas - Lake Austin**

Implement a pilot plan for a "No Wake" zone at Loop 360 boat ramp. The no wake rule would be in force during the most congested periods, summer months from Friday evenings through Sunday night. The zone would be identified with "No Wake" buoys located 150' upstream and downstream from the bridge. The buoys would be equipped with flashing strobe lights and the legend "No wake - when light flashing". The lights would be turned on when the no wake rule was in force.

6. **Provide increased Law Enforcement by Lake Patrol**

Increased law enforcement would:

- (a) Focus patrols at high use/conflict areas.
- (b) Adopt zero tolerance for alcohol and drug impairment,
- (c) Adopt No/low tolerance for excessive speed, reckless boating, and boat navigation lights.

7. **Inspect boat dock lighting and enforce regulations**

Inspect boat dock lighting by the Lake Patrol during the winter months. Issue notification if not in compliance with the City Code and take follow-up enforcement action.

8. **Remove and control aquatic weeds/trash**

Investigate methods of removing and controlling aquatic weeds and trash through private/public partnerships.

9. **Create a database of boat docks on Lake Austin**

Create and maintain a database of shoreline properties and boatdocks on Lake Austin, with owners name and address related to map locations.

10. **Provide a 24 hour lake patrol service**

Investigate feasibility of introducing 24 hour lake patrol service funded through annual boat dock fee.

11. **Create Lake Management Plans**

Create management plans for Lake Austin, Town Lake and Lake Walter E. Long using data from commissioned U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Boating Study and other surveys and other resources.

12. **Investigate and evaluate noise level regulations**

Consider establishing a specific decibel noise level for watercraft.

13. **Encourage use of "ski-flags" by boats towing a skier.**

Implement a voluntary program that would encourage boats to display an orange flag when involved in water skiing activities.

14. **Increase reporting of unsafe boating**

Publicize, through various media, telephone numbers for reporting unsafe boating behavior.

15. **Increase awareness of boater education**

Publicize availability of boater education classes.

16. **Reduce impact of personal water craft (pwc) on Lake Austin**

Consider designating specific PWC areas, prohibiting PWCs from specific areas, or creating No Wake Zones in the most congested areas, Walsh Boat Landing, Loop 360 ramp and Emma Long Metro Park during the peak times.

17. **Reduce congestion at the public boat launch ramps on Lake Austin**

Investigate ways to reduce the severe congestion which occurs at

Loop 360 and Walsh boat ramps both on the shore with boats waiting to put in the water, parking vehicles, and boats waiting to get out of the water.

18. **Monitor the number of watercraft on Town Lake**

Monitor and keep records of the number of watercraft, particularly the number of exemptions for gasoline powered watercraft, on Town Lake to have information for planning and safety.

19. **Reduce number of gas powered boats on Town Lake**

Reduce the number of permits issued for gas powered watercraft on Town Lake. Encourage the use of alternative fuel watercraft on Town Lake.

20. **Eliminate lake hazards**

Remove, or mark by buoys, hazards in Town Lake, Lake Austin and Lake Walter E. Long. These include submerged hazards such as shoals at the mouths of creeks and underwater obstructions.

Dewayne Naumann informed the board that public hearings will be held in January 1998 at the Lower Colorado River Authority to discuss the proposed amendments to the Land Development Code which covers boat dock construction and to accept comments on the lowering of Lake Austin.

Jeff Francell has been appointed to the Navigation Committee.

Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Advisory Group has held its first meeting but has not elected a chair.

H. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Board members were encouraged to find candidates for the two board vacancies.

I. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.