

Parks and Recreation Board Minutes January 26, 1999

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department was held on Tuesday, January 26, 1999 at 200 South Lamar Blvd. Board members present: Mike Librik, Mary Ruth Holder, Elaine Carter, Rosemary Castleberry, Rocky Medrano, Jeff Francell.

Staff members present: Jesus M. Olivares, Kim Jamail Mitchell, Tino Garcia, Farhad Madani, Dr. Juan Valera, Stuart Strong, Rick Ramirez, Warren Struss, Leon Barba, Mary Ybarbo.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of January 12, 1999 meeting were approved.

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Mr. Don Rivera, Chairperson of Parque Zaragoza Advisory Board, informed the board a decision was made to deny the request to name the gym at the recreation center after the Tellez Family. A plaque bearing the names of all those who worked to establish the center will be installed.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Update on CIP Projects by Stuart Strong, Division Manager of Planning and Design

The latest CIP schedule was distributed to the board with Mr. Strong emphasizing various projects: the basketball court cover contract for Alamo Recreation Center has been awarded; the Central City Entertainment Center has a planned opening for April 1999; several playscapes around the city are scheduled to be completed on time; Harris Branch, which is new to the City, will have a playscape built; the Riata development includes building a park with the developer. Funding in the ISTE A account includes, among others, the replacement of the bridge at Fiesta Gardens.

Update on PARD Bond Projects by Stuart Strong, Division Manager of Planning and Design

A list of the present 'cash' (non-bond) projects and a listing for the next year and beyond were presented.

Update on the Public Access Issue for BCP by Dr. Juan Valera

Dr. Valera informed the board the PARD Natural Resources Division hosted a full-day public access forum on public access issues affecting City owned components of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP). Over thirty invited participants and other interested observers heard informational briefings, joined in question-and-answer panel discussions and provided recommendations through a facilitated small group work

session. The participants represented a wide spectrum of BCP stakeholders: landowners, recreational interests, environmental groups, neighborhood associations and educators. PARD presented a revised Public Access Plan for City Owned Preserve Tracts that served as the basis for the Forum discussions. The program facilitators have prepared a final report on the Forum. Presentation of this report to the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Coordinating Committee is scheduled for upcoming meetings in February, 1999. Staff is currently revising the Public Access Plan to reflect appropriate comments and recommendations from the Forum. The Public Access plan will be incorporated into the relevant portions of the Tier II Land Managers Handbook and Tier III site-specific Land Management Plans. Presentation of the BCP Land Management Plan to the Coordinating Committee for their approval is tentatively set for March 29, 1999. Upon approval the Plan will be submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for their review and approval. The plan will also be submitted to the Environmental Board and the Parks Board before it goes to USFWS.

Update on the Survey of Stacy Pool by Farhad Madani

Mr. Madani informed the board a survey was conducted at Stacy Pool from Wednesday, December 30, 1998 through January 14, 1999 at the request of customers who felt the pool was either too hot or too cold. 102 swimmers participated in the survey. It is important to note the pool's heating system will vary in temperature even when it is set to a specific temperature due to external factors and the conditions that effects natural hot spring water. The average figure has been settled at 80-81 degrees. Complaints have decreased from the customers.

At 7:30 p.m. there was a 5 minute break

1999 Voice of the Customer Citizen Survey Results by Tino Garcia

Tino Garcia, Training and Development Coordinator for PARD, presented the members with the results of a survey that was taken in 1998. Interviews with adults in 500 randomly-selected households were conducted to measure customer service in city departments.. The highest rated services showing 85% or more of citizens satisfied included three areas of the Parks and Recreation Department. For PARD services and programs 90% were satisfied. For parks maintenance 89% were satisfied and 86% were satisfied with the recreation facilities within PARD. From a survey taken in the early 90's these 1998 results showed a dramatic positive increase for PARD.

A brief time was given to discuss a memo directed to Council and Aides from Mayor Watson, Mayor Pro Tem Goodman and Council Member Spelman. The memo includes the following paragraph "direct the City Manager to undertake a public safety and cost analysis of bringing all City of Austin law enforcement officers under the auspices of the Austin Police Department, and to return with a report to City Council in 45 days." This will be an agenda item at the next Land and Facilities meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Programs Committee: Totally Cool Totally Art will have a showing on February 5th at the Dove Springs Recreation Center. Yule Fest was a great success this year.

Land and Facilities Committee: There were five items discussed at the last meeting and the minutes for that meeting were included in this packet.

Airport Advisory Group: Members were handed three reports: Mueller Airport Development Report Suggestions by Mike Librik, A Second Draft of Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Advisory Group Recommendation to Austin City Council and a redevelopment and reuse plan from the Congress for the New Urbanism. All were encouraged to read the materials for information and consideration.

Downtown Commission: The new computer company which will be developed in the downtown area and employ 900 people gave a lengthy presentation to the commission. Ground breaking could be in 1999.

ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mary Ruth Holder informed the board she is leaving the Department of Insurance and will begin her own law practice in February.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.