

Parks and Recreation Board Minutes

April 27, 1999

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department was held on Tuesday, April 27, 1999, at the PARD Main Office, located at 200 South Lamar Blvd.

Board members present: Rosemary Castleberry, Chair, Carol Kim, Mary Ruth Holder, Erma Linda Cruz-Torres, Elaine Carter, Jeff Francell, and Mike Librik.

Staff members present: Jesus M. Olivares, Director, Stuart Strong, Randy Scott, and Nancy Shaw.

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER

Rosemary Castleberry called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were two corrections, the first under Special Presentations. The complete group name mentioned by Mary Ruth Holder should read, "Capital Area Master Naturalists" with added verbiage of, "which is sponsored in part by the City of Austin and may be able to provide volunteers for such restoration projects."

The second correction, under Items for Action, the sentence should read "The current tool for (strike accessing) reviewing and approving boat dock applications is the Land and Development code.

Elaine Carter moved that the minutes be approved as amended, Rosemary Castleberry seconded and the minutes were passed.

CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS

Robert Holland, an organizational representative from the Austin Area Men's Senior Baseball League, (AAMSBL) a 501c3, nonprofit, organization with over 500 local members of approximately 30 different baseball teams addressed the board. AAMSBL is a national organization in its 10th year with an annual budget in excess of ninety (90) thousand dollars and a recipient of national tournament awards. They play February to November and have had a difficult time finding lighted fields for evening games. The youth activities commission has succeeded in removing them from several fields apparently believing that their league playing is at the expense of the youths activities, a claim which Mr. Holland says is not true. He stated that he felt the adult league both complimented and supplemented the youth games with many of the participants often staying to watch them play. He added that they were committed to taking good care of the fields and represent a diverse group of citizens such as area architects, engineers, and lawyers to name a few.

Mr. Holland made a formal appeal regarding the lack of available lighted sports fields for adult baseball. Specifically, his request was for the use of one of the lighted baseball fields for (AAMSBL). When asked if he had been working with PARD he replied no, but there had been attempts to work with some of the area field overseers. Mr. Jesus M. Olivares, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) informed the members of the Board that it had been a

policy that all the area youth leagues work out separate agreements with the individual fields. Problems had arisen as deals were being struck and it was having a fiscal impact. Currently all of the youth leagues have been advised that anyone wishing to use the youth field, that is not connected to the youth program, must contact the Directors office. Decisions are based on availability. Jesus added that it was suggested to Mr. Holland that Govalle field in Montopolis, which has a lighted, fenced in field, might be compatible with the schedule that the AAMBSL are requesting. Mr. Olivares stated that we would work with Mr. Holland on this.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Sherry Jones from the Public Works Department spoke regarding the Zilker Park Landfill Remediation Project. She spoke of meeting with the Land and Facilities Committee a month ago, and presented a one-page document to share with the Board. Participants in Land and Facilities included PARD staff members and the Solid Wastes Services group. The area on the map refers to an area in Zilker Park on the North West side, which also extends under the Mopac bridge, (23 acres total). The area lies north of the Nature Center and is currently asphalt under the bridge surrounded on either side by grass. This area was operated as a landfill from 1948 to 1967 and was mined for sand, gravel and clay. The City is re-evaluating existing landfills and doing preliminary environmental assessments of them by retaining EMCON to study sights. Assessment goals were listed as follows.

- Characterize environmental contaminants that may be at the site.
- Determine the extent of such contaminants.
- Determine the risks of human exposure from recreational use of the site.

EMCON's results of a preliminary assessment of this sight recommend recovering over the landfill that consists of the following.

- General fill which will raise the elevation of low areas to prevent ponding and provide enough slope to provide drainage as settlement continues.
- Low permeability soil to reduce the rate at which rainfall infiltrates into the waste.
- Topsoil to support vegetation and minimize long term erosion.

Once the final cover is complete there is a possible issue that landfill gas might migrate in the area and the need for monitoring exists. It is also recommended that 3-5 additional wells be installed in different areas. Elaine Carter asked for clarification on the low permeability and the type of waste that exists underneath. Sherry Jones responded that a different kind of soil would be added that would allow the rainfall to shed from the area and that the waste was mostly municipal waste from the 40's and the 60's as opposed to hazardous waste. She added that in the dry creek area there was currently waste exposed. It lies at the Northwest edge in the dry creek area and they recommend cutting that slope back and revegetating it. All removed would be taken to an appropriate landfill. They are continuing to identify great places to get soil. Future plans improve, continue survey information, submit plans for general construction, and prepare for construction.

Jeff Francell questioned whether or not this area has any long-term use in the Zilker Park plan. Jesus M. Olivares stated that this area could be used for overflow parking and that at some point the train concession was projected to extend all the way to Mopac. He also stated that the train project could not move forward until this was completed and there was a possibility of using the area for other multipurpose activities. Mary Ruth Holder asked if they had to submit other plans. No variance is required. Mike Librik wanted to know how long equipment would be out there.

Reply was we are not sure duration of project, as it would be done in sections. Efforts to contain any excessive dust by watering would take place and was not anticipated to be labor intensive. Stockpiled dirt would come from projects all over Austin and precaution taken to ensure it was good dirt. Dates and times of deliveries would be logged along with documentation from sites.

Jay Ulary, City Project Manager, from the Department of Public Works, spoke with an update on the Ullrich Water Transmission Main. The main is a seventy two-inch (72) water line that is going to run from the North Water Plant to downtown. Citizens didn't feel that they had proper notification of plans, as a result stakeholders meetings were held. Those interested in the hike and bike trail were invited, including over seventeen (17) groups, fourteen (14) City of Austin staff, and twenty-one (21) of the Shoal Creek Hike and Bike partnership. A stakeholder meeting was held on March 24th, facilitated by Mr. Flint. City of Austin presented five concepts for discussion at meeting.

- A. Provide a pedestrian bridge over Shoal Creek with the pipe up under bridge.
- B. Pedestrian Bridge left up high and lower the existing hike and bike trail creating a dual trail system over railroad trestle or under.
- C. Provide an over and under boat for the hike and bike trial by raising the pedestrian bridge up higher and leaving the existing trail where it was.
- D. Separating the pipe by taking it out from under the bridge and putting it parallel. But this had restraints on right of way usage.
- E. Tunnel underneath the creek and it would have had to be 80 feet deep, and is expensive.

How design got where we are after discussions? Alternative A was discounted after discussions that it was not in the best interest of the trail users. Concept D provided some constraints on right away for future use. Concept E was too expensive to consider. Concepts B and C were taken to vote. Basically concept B was selected and they are in the process of doing redesign work. Mr. Ulary showed plans that are in existence. Presented artists rendering of what Concept B looks like showing the aesthetically appealing reality of pipe being tucked under bridge.

Jeff Francell questioned the cost, which was stated to be \$350,000 more. Most of the increased cost was in covering up additional foundation work and trail work in that it now goes down and under and has retaining walls. Elaine Carter asked if lowering bridge would make it more susceptible to flooding. Both concepts were not in the flood plain. Elaine Carter questioned safety issue, which are addressed with the standard four-inch railing, with a minimum eight-foot clearance. This bridge will be ADA accessible and railing should provide protection.

Mike Librik questioned source of funding, money was stated to be in the budget. A standard minimum eight feet width preventing blind corners, proper signs, and retaining walls. Mary Ruth Holder extended appreciation for work done.

ITEMS FOR ACTION

The third item regarding the Congress Avenue Project Variance Request was pulled from the agenda. Plan is being rethought.

Elaine Carter addressed item number one (1), regarding the approval of construction of Spann Boat dock at 1208 Rockcliff, which has an existing slip and is proposed for additional two slips with deck added.

Item #2 –Approval of construction of Lamar Boat dock and deck at 4101 and 4106 Rivercrest Drive. Rosemary motioned approval of both items, Jeff seconded. Vote in favor, 4-1, with no

nays, 1 abstention, Rosemary Castleberry not voting; (Kim, Francell, Carter, Holder) in favor, (Librik) abstaining.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Jesus M. Olivares reported to the board, PARD has made contact with the Rowing Concession and that we plan to locate them next to Mopac Bridge. Council directed staff to support/work with both concessionaires.

Questions were raised regarding Councils decision and some board members felt process was not followed. Jesus reported that staff was moving forward to put docks in. He also informed the Board that Council directed the department to conduct a Town Lake Study on its capacity within 30 to 60 days. A committee of both members of the Navigation Committee, PARD staff, and possibly concessionaires, will come up with methodology of how we conduct this study on how much can Town Lake take.

PARD is seeking funding in the budget to pay for the study on Lake Austin. If this does not work, approaching stakeholders to assist is being considered.

Present usage of Town Lake was discussed and what would be the future recommendations for curbing usage.

The Board requested a copy of revenue return schedules for old and new rowing concessionaires. Jesus Olivares agreed to provide. PARD's pending relocation issues were discussed, that being the office space on Dawson and at Riverside.

An item that will go before Land and Facilities is Council approval of the relocation of "Fiesta" to Republic Park as part of their preparation to move Laguna Gloria downtown. Also, Laguna Gloria is being encouraged to participate in our Totally Cool Totally Art program.

The Board was invited to attend the upcoming Austin Parks Foundation "Gala", a green tie, Annual FundRaiser event. Members are asked to contact Donna McKennis in the Directors office. Deep Eddy parking has been repainted now thanks to Farhad Madani's father donating his time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Programs: Report that lists all upcoming PARD programs was distributed. Board members were encouraged to attend Cinco de Mayo celebrations April 30th and May 1st, also on May 1st, the 5th Annual boxing tournament at Montopolis, proceeds to benefit the center. The Summer Aquatic Program and pool hours and fees were given out along with a flyer regarding Baywatch; a Sport Fitness Expo designed to recruit Lifeguards on Saturday, May 1.

Land and Facilities: Board was advised regarding a request to name a park after Willie Nelson. Elaine Carter proposed that the requester be asked to provide the following. 1.) Put in writing what they think Willie Nelson has done for the Austin Community to deserve this tribute. 2.) Have requester look at various sights and present options to Board to review. 3.) Conduct informal visits to the neighborhood to get their feedback.

Elaine Carter also informed the Board of something that is in the development stage. The PARD Golf Enterprise Fund is looking in to some ideas to bring in additional revenues to the parks.

Navigations: Nothing to report

Municipal Airport Advisory Group: Final recommendations from the advisory group are not looking significantly different. Mike Librik as of April 27 has not viewed redraft of consultant report yet. Issue of pocket parks although good idea will require funding from both public

/private partnerships. Mike Librik will try to get a copy of recommendations and consultant report to board.

Downtown Commission: Commission members attended The Town Lake Master Plan Charrette.

ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS:

Rosemary Castleberry requested to have the Board members present on May 3rd to observe as non-voting participants a meeting regarding riverboats, with PARD staff.

List of dates and times of meetings and locations was requested to be forwarded to Board.

Carol Kim reported that she thought the Town Lake Charrette was a good process and was impressed with results.

Jeff Francell wanted to know when the Hike and Bike Trail construction near Barton Springs Pool would be complete. Jesus reported that some of the sidewalk was already done and that it was projected to be complete by the end of May. Pool closure will be a sensitive project and will be closely monitored.

Ricardo Rocky Medrano brought up concerns that had been expressed by a Council member. He was basically dissatisfied on the noncompletion of Montopolis Sports Plex. He has relayed that he personally knew that the sight was near completion. Secondly the issue of Park Police consolidation with APD. Mr. Medrano expressed their concerns to the Council member with this proposal and it was recommended that the Board draft a Resolution if they are in agreement.

Rosemary Castleberry offered to coordinate a meeting regarding this. Other Board members offered assistance and concerns in keeping a staff whose focus is the Parks system, on community policing, and APD accountability. An upcoming Alcohol Ban document on the Boggy Creek area was briefly mentioned.

Mike Librik mentioned that there is a scheduled Human Power Party, on May 9th, participants may arrive any way but by motor vehicle.

Erma Linda- Cruz Torres questioned the AISD school lunch programs; Jesus informed her that we do not have jurisdiction on that. Norwood House move has been delayed do to moving company going out of business but PARD is assisting where we can. Question on parliamentary procedure raised regarding order to accept Committee reports.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Mike Librik mentioned a draft of a Resolution regarding Andrew Zilker Road was being forwarded to the Land and Facilities meeting soon.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.