



**PARKS & RECREATION/ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD  
JOINT COMMITTEE**

**Monday, August 16, 2010  
Meeting Minutes**

**Joint Committee Members in Attendance:**

Linda H. Guerrero, Chair	Jerry Perales, Co-Chair
Jon Beall	Carol Lee
Mary Gay Maxwell	Mary Ann Neely
Thomas Wilcox (Resource)	

**Staff in Attendance:**

Sara Hensley, PARD Director	Victoria Li, WPD Director
Kelly Snook, PARD Asst. Dir.	Nancy McClintock, WPD Asst. Dir.
Laurie Dries, WPD	Gary Gregson, PARD
Clark Hancock, PARD	David Johns, WPD
Tom Nelson, PARD	Johnnie Price, WPD

The PARKS AND RECREATION/ENVIRONMENTAL BOARDS JOINT COMMITTEE convened in a regular meeting on Monday, August 16, 2010, at the Mexican American Cultural Center, 600 River St., in Austin, Texas.

Chair Linda Guerrero called the Joint Committee Meeting to order at 6:26 p.m.

**1. CITIZENS COMMUNICATION**

- Bill Bunch (Save Our Springs Alliance) spoke in opposition to the Barton Springs Pool Flood Debris Removal Project, especially in light of recent improvement in water quality
  - Mary Ann Neely asked staff why water quality has been improved recently
  - Laurie Dries replied that growth of plants in the pool and increased spring flow were likely contributors
  - David Johns stated that with increased spring flow, turnover rate in the pool is now one to two hours
- Ralph Webster (Austin Parks Foundation) spoke in regards to 50 dead trees in Zilker Park and APF's mulching program set to begin August 21<sup>st</sup>

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- The minutes from the July 01, 2010, meeting were approved 5-0 vote.

**3. STAFF BRIEFINGS AND DISCUSSION**

- a. Barton Springs Pool Bypass Culver Repair Project .....Johnnie Price, WPD

- Johnnie Price described bypass culvert issues and provided status update
  - Rock anchor tests were performed beginning in July
- Carol Lee asked what complications had arisen
- Johnnie Price responded that equipment issues were the primary complication
- Mary Ann Neely asked what “overly conservative” meant in regards to initial design of bypass culver repair by Pickett, Kelm and Associates (PKA)
- Johnnie Price described the engineering term “factor of safety” and stated that calculations made in initial design were too conservative
- Tom Wilcox asked if bypass is more stable than PKA thought
- Johnnie Price replied that it is
- Tom Wilcox requested a description of the rock anchors
- Johnnie Price described them as essentially large molly bolts
- Tom Wilcox asked about expected longevity of repair option using anchor bolts
- Johnnie Price estimated 40 years
- Tom Wilcox asked approximate cost
- Johnnie Price responded that using anchor bolts in new design would be about \$2 million as opposed to initial design cost of about \$3 million
- Victoria Li added that a report was expected from AECOM, which is designing new repair option, by end of the week and should have a revised cost estimate
- Jon Beall asked if new design will be safe
- Johnnie Price responded that it will
- Mary Ann Neely asked how likely the anchors are to work
- David Johns responded that the bedrock is dense for sections so those areas are likely to hold, in other areas the bedrock is fractured so a work-around will have to be designed for those areas
- Johnnie Price responded that the final design may have some elements of the PKA design
- Tom Wilcox asked to what extent the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has been involved in the process
- Laurie Dries replied that FWS has been kept in the loop
- David Johns replied that staff met with FWS prior to rock anchor tests
- Jerry Perales asked how AECOM planned to stabilize fractured bedrock
- Johnnie Price replied that they are still investigating
- Carol Lee asked if the rock anchors were permanent
- Johnnie Price replied that they will be
- Linda Guerrero asked if any projects were calling for equipment staging near Eliza Springs
- Tom Nelson replied that no projects currently planned to utilize that area for staging
- Linda Guerrero asked if Joint Committee would be notified if that changed
- Tom Nelson replied that notification would be given
- Linda Guerrero asked if steps had recently been removed at Barton Springs
- Tom Nelson replied that no steps had been removed, but some faulty ladders had in order to be replaced
- Linda Guerrero asked if Laurie Dries had been attempting to plug some of the holes in the bypass

- Laurie Dries replied that some plastic sheets that were being used to slow water flow from the pool into the bypass had been replaced with a geotextile fabric
- Linda Guerrero asked if the idea of an outlet gate on the bypass had been investigated
- Laurie Dries replied that a gate to retain water in the bypass could have a detrimental effect to the spring flow from Eliza Springs, but, utilized properly, the gate could be beneficial
- Linda Guerrero expressed appreciation to WPD staff for further investigating bypass repair options
- Mary Gay Maxwell asked what the Biological Assessment (BA) is and how it relates to the Flood Debris Removal project (FDR)
- Laurie Dries replied that the BA is what WPD submitted to FWS in order to gain approval for the project
- Mary Gay Maxwell asked if the BA was still under review by FWS
- Laurie Dries replied that it is
- Mary Gay Maxwell asked if plants had been recently removed in preparation for the FDR
- Laurie Dries replied that about 20 square feet of plants were removed in preparation of the coffer dam installation for the FDR, and that she hoped to replace the particular variety of plant removed with a less “spiky” variety anyway
- Mary Ann Neely asked if removing the flood debris was necessary or if more plants could simply be planted in order to maintain water quality
- Laurie Dries replied that planting more plants will not improve the flow regime, which will benefit salamanders; more plants may help in short term, but improvements to flow regime are the long term solution
- Jon Beall stated that there is enough gravel upstream in the creek bed to fill up BSP; asked how salamander count compares to previous year
- Laurie Dries replied that numbers have started to increase
- Mary Gay Maxwell asked Jon Beall for an explanation of his comment on gravel upstream
- Jon Beall stated that the next gravel bar in BSP is on its way
- Linda Guerrero asked citizen, Dan Crow, which plants in BSP affect his swimming
- Dan Crow replied that it was the Sagittaria platyphylla
- Linda Guerrero asked Veronica Li if the project will move forward once the AECOM report had been received
- Victoria Li replied that it would

Citizen Comments and Questions on Agenda Item:

- Robin Cravey (Friends of Barton Springs Pool) spoke about the “Council Cleans the Pool Day” at Barton Springs; announced that the Friends group had applied for and been granted a \$300,000 grant for redesigning and replacing the inlet grate to the bypass culvert and possibly add a gate at the downstream end
  - Carol Lee asked about the design status of the inlet grate
  - David Johns replied that preliminary work had been done, but no design work had been accomplished

- Dan Crow asked if the anticipated salamander take for the FDR would affect the work on the bypass culvert
  - Laurie Dries replied that the take for the FDR would affect future projects, but that the anticipated take for the FDR was extremely low
  - Dan Crow asked Jon Beall if his earlier statement was meant to suggest that the FDR be delayed
  - Jon Beall declined to state an opinion on the FDR
  - Mary Gay Maxwell asked why modifying the dams were not given a higher priority
  - Robin Cravey explained that flow modeling needed to be completed prior to making a determination on modifications to dams
- Bill Bunch (Save Our Springs Alliance) spoke about the improved water quality at BSP this year and stated that the additional plants are the likely reason; removing the flood debris will likely cause water quality to worsen; glad that newer bypass repair design will save approximately \$1 million, but cost still too high

**4. BRIEFING**

- a. Walk for a Day Trail ..... George Cofer, Hill Country Conservancy
  - George Cofer gave a presentation and update on the Walk for a Day Trail

**5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- No Director's Report

**6. FUTURE ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

- Tom Wilcox requested an update on the Flow Modeling project
- Carol Lee requested an update on expenditures to date

**7. ADJOURN**

Committee Co-Chair Jerry Perales adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m. without objection.