



PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Tuesday, May 27, 2014 - 6:00 p.m.

Boards and Commissions Room

City Hall, 301 W. 2nd Street

Austin, Texas 78701

MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rivera called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Jane Rivera, Chair; Jeff Francell, Vice Chair; Dale Glover, Susan Roth, Hill Abell, Lynn Osgood

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Chair Rivera made a motion to approve the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Board meeting of April 22, 2014. Board Member Roth seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Almanza absent.

C. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Sharon Blythe spoke to the Board regarding the cemetery rules process, and expressed concern about the method of public input and asked the Board to slow down the process.

David King spoke to the Board to thank Board Member Abell for speaking up about the process for park naming, and the importance of following the proper procedure for naming. Mr. King also encouraged the Board to keep parks under control of the public, and expressed concern about private influence.

D. NEW BUSINESS: DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

Consent

Board Chair Rivera announced that Items 2 and 4 were pulled from Consent

3. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the approval of the Butler Trail at the Southeast Shore Park Master Plan.

Citizen Communication

Susan Rankin signed up for Item 3 but did not wish to speak.

David King signed up for Item 3 but did not wish to speak

Board Member Osgood made a motion to approve the Consent agenda. Board Member Abell seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Almanza absent.

Non-Consent

2. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the approval of the Bicycle Master Plan Update.

Nathan Wilkes, Engineering Associate, Austin Transportation Department, made a presentation to the Board regarding the Bicycle Master Plan Update.

Board Member Abell made a motion to recommend to the City Council the approval of the Bicycle Master Plan Update. Board Member Roth seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Almanza absent.

4. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the approval of the naming of the Austin BMX and Skate Park to the Heath Eiland and Morgan Moss BMX Skate Park.

Citizen Communication

Board Chair Rivera announced that the Board would hear four speakers representing each family, allotting 3 minutes per person. Vice Chair Francell read into the record the full list of the 28 individuals signed up to speak on this item.

Steve Eiland, Heath Eiland's father, spoke to the Board and stated that he is against the proposal. He asked that the Board consider naming the park the Heath Eiland BMX Skate Park. He spoke about the many other recognition efforts for this son across the city.

Marcelo Tafoya, Deputy State Director for the League of United Latin American Citizens, spoke to the Board and stated that he is against the proposal, citing the naming ordinance. He spoke about Heath's long-lasting impact on the community. He asked the Board to honor Heath by naming the park after him.

Tania Romero, Anderson High School teacher, spoke to the Board and stated that she was against the joint naming proposal. She spoke about Heath's impact on their school and community. Mr. Romero co-produced a documentary about Heath, recognizing his efforts for helmet safety.

Drew Erb, friend and teammate of Heath, spoke to the Board and stated that he was against the proposal. He spoke about how important skateboarding was to Heath, and discussed Heath's far-reaching impact on the community.

Michael Moss, father of Morgan Moss, spoke to the Board and stated that he was in favor of the proposal for the joint naming. He provided some background about Morgan's life history and accomplishments, his love for Austin, and his love for skating. He stated that his family felt that co-naming the park was the most rational and heartfelt thing to do.

Thiago (no last name provided), spoke to the Board and stated that he was in favor of the proposal for the joint naming. He noted that while Morgan was not from Austin, he chose it to be his home. He spoke about Morgan's passion for skateboarding and photography. He noted that a foundation has been started in Morgan's name to assist with photography funding in local schools.

Mason Moss, younger brother of Morgan Moss, spoke to the Board and stated that he was in favor of the co-naming. He spoke about his brother's impact on the community, and how important an existing memorial bench in the park is to his family.

Matt Banks spoke to the Board and stated that he was in favor of the co-naming. He spoke about Morgan's involvement in the local skateboarding community, and his work to photograph skateboarding and his everyday surroundings. He noted that skateboarding is meant to be shared, and that removing Morgan's name would be counter to that.

Board Member Osgood made a motion to recommend to the City Council the approval of the naming of the Austin BMX and Skate Park to the Heath Eiland and Morgan Moss BMX Skate Park. Vice Chair Francell seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Almanza absent.

5. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the proposed future use of City property at 401 West St. John's.

Kimberly McNeeley, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation, gave a presentation to the Board regarding the proposed future use of City property at 401 West St. John's and responded to questions from the Board on this issue.

Ms. McNeeley outlined the immediate proposed use recommendations as such: 1) Maintain in perpetuity a storm water management pond on approximately 1 acre of the 7.464 acres, 2) Maintain the two 125 foot lighted fields currently located on the Southeast corner of the property for tee-ball, coach pitch and kickball until park master plan process completed, 3) Retain the Northeast side of the property as open space, removing fencing to allow for open park feel and allowing soccer to continue, 4) Continue to explore partnership opportunities for youth sports delivery between Gus Garcia Recreation Center and University Hills Optimist, and 5) Limit park development or deconstruction in immediate future and allow the master plan process to guide future park development decisions.

Ms. McNeeley outlines the long term master plan recommendations as such: 1) preserve the existing tree line, 2) Allow master plan process to guide the park development and not lock into any particular existing conceptual plan, and 3) Open to kickball/soccer remaining in future, with the relocation of fields utilizing approximately 1.3 acres of the 7.464 acres.

Citizen Communication

Damon Howze signed up to donate his time to Marla Schmitz. Marla Schmitz, Chair of the Highland Neighborhood Park Committee, spoke to the Board and offered their support for staff's recommendation. She stated that they feel this is the best use of this site for the community, and recognize UHO's history at the site and desire to stay. She discussed the compromise terms agreed to by both parties at the most recent public meeting, and the needs of this parkland in the long term. She stated that Highland Neighborhood would pursue grants and other funding sources for improvements.

Rick Weller signed up to donate his time to Charlotte Garza. Charlotte Garza, continued Marla Schmitz' presentation on behalf of Highland Neighborhood and thanked the Board for their assistance through this process. She spoke about the park deficiency in Highland Neighborhood, and the demographics of the neighborhood. She made a request for \$100,000 for master planning and \$237,750 for initial park development.

Ed Reznicek, for whom the field is named, spoke to the Board regarding UHO's concern about a provision that states "should be considered." They want to be assured that youth sports will be included. He discussed the issue of acreage, and stated that he was not sure that both parties totally agreed. He raised concerns about UHO volunteers needing to install and remove temporary fencing daily, and requested that UHO be included in the master planning process considering the improvements they have made to this property.

Robert Deagan, member of the Highland Neighborhood Park Committee, spoke to the Board and confirmed Highland Neighborhood's support for a firm statement confirming UHO at the site. He stated that he felt the acreage issue was decided at the last public meeting. He thanked the Board for their time and work on this.

Board Member Osgood made a motion to recommend to the City Council the immediate proposed use of City property located at 401 West St. John's, with the addition that University Hills Optimist will be included in the future use of the site, and to request that Council fund the initial \$22,525, with recognition of the annual need of \$12,500 for maintenance. Vice Chair Francell seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Almanza absent.

6. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the approval of the Urban Trails Master Plan

Nadia Barrera, Urban Trails Program Manager, Public Works Department, provided a presentation to the Board and responded to questions from the Board on this issue.

Citizen Communication

David King spoke to the Board in support of the Urban Trails Master Plan and urged the Board to include all recommendations from the Urban Forestry Board into the Plan, and ensure urban trails minimize impacts in environmentally sensitive areas. Mr. King spoke to the need for parks in the urban core because of population growth, and his desire that parkland dedication fees be used exclusively on parkland.

Sharon Blythe signed up to speak against the plan, but was not present when called.

Board Member Abell made a motion to recommend to the City Council the approval of the Urban Trails Master Plan. Board Member Roth seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Almanza absent.

7. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the approval of the Consent Agreement by and among the City of Austin, Texas, Onion Creek Metro Park District, and the Austin Goodnight Ranch LP.

Ricardo Soliz, Planning and Development Division Manager, Parks and Recreation, and Susan Benz, Benz Resource Group, provided presentations to the Board and responded to questions from the Board on this issue.

Vice Chair Francell made a motion to recommend to the City Council the approval of the Consent Agreement by and among the City of Austin, Texas, Onion Creek Metro Park District, and the Austin Goodnight Ranch LP. Board Member Roth seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Almanza absent.

8. Make a recommendation to the Director regarding contract extension for two Town Lake Park concessions: Butler Pitch and Putt and Barton Springs Food and Beverage.

Kirk Scanlon, Contract Administrator, Parks and Recreation, provided a presentation to the Board and responded to the Board questions on this issue.

Chair Rivera made a motion to recommend to the Director to competitively solicit proposals for the Butler Pitch and Putt and Barton Springs Food and Beverage. Board Member Abell seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Almanza absent.

E. BRIEFINGS

9. Colorado River Geomorphology: Longhorn Dam to U.S. 183 at Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Metropolitan Park – Morgan Byars, Supervising Engineer, Watershed Protection Department

This item was POSTPONED to next month.

F. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Sara Hensley, Director, Parks and Recreation, provided an update on several items. She announced that interviews for the Assistant Director position would be held Friday May 30th, with Board Chair Rivera serving on one of the panels. She noted several projects including St. Johns, Onion Creek, Seaholm Intake Facility, Auditorium Shores, Republic Square, a new trail effort for goats to maintain Umlauf. She noted the flooding issues that the department Main Office experienced on May 27th. She reminded the Board about the Boardwalk opening, the Carver Genealogy Center, and training at the new Bartholomew Pool.

G. FUTURE ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member Roth requested that information be shared with the Concessions and Contracts Committee members as soon as it is available following Audit and Finance Committee approval of bylaws changes.

Board Member Glover reported issues with trees being hit along the public right of way, specifically along Caesar Chavez. He asked if the City had a safety master plan.

Vice Chair Francell requested an update regarding the status of Barton Springs Pool improvements, and for information regarding the contractor's responsibility. Assistant Director McNeeley committed to providing this update following the meeting.

Board Member Abell requested an update regarding the drainage issues on Robert E Lee, near Barton Springs Pool.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Rivera adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.