

Received 7/1/2014
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Application for Park Naming / Renaming

Please follow the instructions below when submitting an application for naming a park.

1. Complete the application by providing detailed information about the proposed park name. Please include supplemental information such as articles, letters of support and signature list with the application.
2. City of Austin Parks & Recreation Department must receive the application within the 90 day solicitation period in order for the application to be considered.
3. Send all inquiries to: Gregory Montes, 919 W. 28 ½ Street, Austin, TX 78705. For questions, please contact, Gregory Montes at 512-974-9458 or at gregory.montes@austintexas.gov

Proposed Name for the Park (Facility): Jack W. Robinson Austin Parks and Recreation Department Headquarters

If proposing the name of an individual, include a biographical description of nominee:

Fifth-generation Texan Jack W. Robinson was born August 28, 1931, the youngest of five children of Mr. and Mrs. Buster Robinson. The family moved into the stone cottage in Zilker Park when Jack was a toddler and Buster was named Park Caretaker. After graduating from Austin High in 1949, Jack enrolled at the University of Texas and earned a degree in Zoology, while working as the manager of Barton Springs Pool. It was here where he met his wife, Jan Hatley Robinson.

During the Korean War, Jack served in the U.S. Navy aboard The U.S.S Lyman K. Swenson. Jack passed away on April 27, 2014, at the age of 82.

Describe the individual's involvement in the Austin community:

Life Member of the Austin Area Garden Council

One of the founders of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and Board Member until 1986

Park West Homeowner's Association Board of Directors

Active Member of University United Methodist Church

Describe the individual's connection to the park or park system, if any:

Jack was hired in 1964 by then-Parks and Recreation Director Beverly Sheffield as Manager of Zilker Park. He moved his family (wife Jan and three sons – Jeff, Greg and Michael) into the cottage that year, beginning his active tenure with the Department. He was named Director after Sheffield left in 1973 and served for five years until leaving to become Director of the City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department. He retired to Austin in 1984.

Jack's career also included active involvement in various leisure services professional organizations, serving at various times as President of the Texas Recreation and Park Society, National Recreation and Parks Association and the Southwest Parks and Recreation Training Institute.

Highlights of his accomplishments while serving the City of Austin include:

- Working with Mrs. Lady Bird Johnson to create the Town Lake Hike and Bike Trail (now known as the Butler Hike and Bike Trail)
- Working with Mrs. Alden Davis to form the Austin Area Garden Council
- Opening South Austin, Dottie Jordan, Alamo, Metz and Montopolis Recreation Centers
- Establishing the Senior Luncheon Program, and breaking ground for a Senior Activity Center at West 29th and Lamar Blvd.
- Starting leisure programs for special needs populations
- Leasing the Giles Homestead for later establishment of Pioneer Farm
- Acquiring land to create Barton Creek District Park, Northeast District Park and Southeast Austin District Park
- Returning the public square known as Republic Square to status as parkland
- Initiating plans for construction of a major recreation center at Givens Park
- Renovating the Naval Reserve Center into the Mary Ireland Graves Dougherty Cultural Arts Center
- Adding swimming pools to Martin and Montopolis Parks

If proposing a name that is not an individual, summarize the reason for the name:

n/a

Date: July 1, 2014

Name of requester(s): Jim Rodgers
Sarah Macias

Address: Jim – 4905 White Elm Dr. Austin, Texas 78749
Sarah - 7303 Grass Cove Austin, Texas 78759

*jim @ austinlive.com
macias.sarah @ att.net*

Phone Number: Jim – 512-892-1231 (home) 512- (cell)
Sarah - 512-257-2061 (home) 512-567-2060 (cell)

Please provide any additional information with the application, e.g., newspaper articles, letter of recommendations, etc.

Luci Baines Johnson

June 17, 2014

Ms. Sara Hensley
Austin PARD Director
200 S. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78704

Dear Ms. Hensley:

It is with immense respect and love that I am thrilled to add my name to those supporting the effort to name the Parks and Recreation Office for Jack W. Robinson.

Jack was a hero to all who love our parks, who care about nature and a sustainable environment and especially to generations of Johnson's.

My mother Lady Bird Johnson would often get the credit for the creation of the Hike and Bike now rightly called the "Butler" Trail and the "beautification" of Town Lake now tenderly known as Lady Bird Lake. Mama was the first to say, "I was just a part of a merry band of citizens committed to making this spot a place we can all enjoy for generations." Well, if Mother was in the band with Mayor and Mrs. Butler, Jack was the drum major!

Mother and the Butler's loving labors to raise the consciousness and commitment to the project were all expedited by Jack's professional expertise about what could work and how to make it happen. He had no rival for these skills, and everybody in the Parks Department and in civic life adored him which makes it mighty helpful for the success of your project.

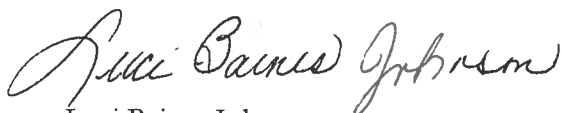
Mother and the Butlers have all left their name on the banks of this lake that lights up our lives, inspires us to exercise, makes us a destination city that enhances our economy. It is only right that the man they looked to for guidance to make their dreams come true have the Parks and Recreation's main office named after him!!!

On a very personal note Mama was so proud when her friend Jack agreed to serve on her "next love," the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center's board. She leaned on his expertise and valued it as none other.

In the years that followed my husband and I were both deeply blessed to have that expertise in a business venture and came to understand just why Mother felt Jack was a man you could always count on.

Ian and I only wish we had known of Jack's death. We would have loved to have been there applauding for a life so very well lived!!!!

Respectfully,


Luci Baines Johnson

June 26, 2014

Sara Hensley
PARD Director
200 South Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Tx. 78704

Dear Ms. Hensley,

A concerted effort has been inspired by a number of citizens including family, friends, dignitaries, park professionals and interested Austinites to rename two Austin Parks and Recreation (PARD) Facilities. There is unwavering support to rename the PARD Administration Office for Mr. Jack W. Robinson, past Director of the Austin PARD and rename the Zilker Clubhouse for Arnulfo Alonso, a forty year dedicated employee at Zilker Park.

As former Director of the Austin PARD, it is indeed my privilege and honor to lend my sincere support to this renaming effort. I have on many public occasions referred to the Austin Parks and Recreation Department as "The House that Jack Built" which simply speaks to the impact that Jack had on PARD. Jack was very instrumental in creating a "culture" that epitomized the "pursuit of excellence" as the roadmap to become one of the best Parks Departments in the Country. His legacy of excellence remains to this day as the cornerstone of the Austin Parks Department. Jack's culture of excellence guided me professionally during my career with PARD that led the Department to a Gold Medal Award as the Best Park system in the Nation as well as a Nationally Accredited Parks and Recreation Department. It was always comforting to know that I could turn to Jack for his advice and wise counsel regarding PARD related matters. Jack's counsel was always well received and more importantly always on target.

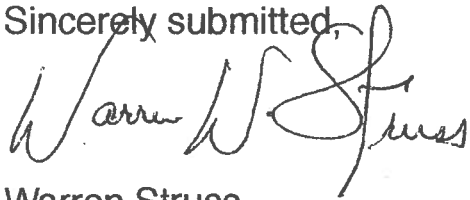
During Jack's career at PARD, he became well acquainted with a young man, Arnulfo Alonso who was hired in 1959 at Zilker Park. Alonso as he was affectionately known was hired with one of his primary duties as caretaker of the Zilker Clubhouse. He was responsible for the safe

operation and maintenance of the Clubhouse. Furthermore, due to Alonso's job skills and commitment, he soon became the "Right-Hand Man" to all future Zilker Park Managers including Jack. Alonso served with distinction for 40 years from 1959 until his death in 1999.

Arnulfo Alonso's four decades of hard work and dedication will be evident to many generations of Austinites to come as they visit Zilker Park, the crown jewel of the Austin Park system.

In closing, the character of an individual is weighed in large part by the impact they have on others that they serve. I was most fortunate to be associated with both of these Park professionals. Their impact on the City of Austin and its citizens will be forever remembered.

Sincerely submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Warren Struss". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Warren Struss

Former Austin Parks and Recreation Department Director, (Retired)

June 25, 2014

3204 Fairfax Walk
Austin, TX 78705

Ms. Sara Hensley
Director, Parks and Recreation Dept.
200 S. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78704

Dear Ms. Hensley:

I am writing you to express my support for naming the Main Office of the Austin PARD the Jack W. Robinson Parks and Recreation Department Headquarters. I knew Jack on a personal and professional level for more than 30 years and I respect and admire the vision and the efforts that he put forth for this city and its parks. Jack's dedication and loyalty were profound and appreciated by all who knew and worked for him.

Jack was born in 1931 and was a fifth-generation Texan. In 1935, his father Buster became the caretaker of Zilker Park and moved the family into the park house. Jack's life was inextricably intertwined with Austin's parks; he met his wife Jan while he was working as a pool lifeguard at Barton Springs and she was a "locker girl," and he obtained his degree in Zoology from the University of Texas while working as Pool Manager at Barton Springs.

He joined the Navy after college and served during the Korean War. After returning home, he followed in his father's footsteps, becoming Manager of Zilker Park Manager in 1964 and moving his family into the park house. He became Director of the Parks and Recreation Department in October of 1973 and served until February of 1978, when he moved to Dallas. He was one of the founders of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and served on the Board of that Center until 1986.

Jack Robinson had an illustrious career in the field of Parks and Recreation, becoming President of the Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS) for 1976-1977, President of the Southwest Parks and Recreation Training Institute in 1979, and President of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in 1984.

In light of this record of distinguished service to Austin's Parks and Recreation Department, I wholeheartedly put my support behind naming the PARD Main Office the Jack W. Robinson Parks and Recreation Department Headquarters.

Sincerely,



Linda H. Guerrero



City of Dallas

June 30, 2014

Ms Sara Hensley

7303 Grass Cove

Austin, TX 78759

Dear Ms. Hensley:

I hope this letter finds you well. I'm writing this letter to recommend that the Austin Park and Recreation Office be named and designated the Jack W. Robinson Park and Recreation Headquarters. I worked for Austin Park and Recreation Department in the 1970's and 1980's, where I served under the directorship of Jack Robinson and also moved to Dallas and worked for Jack, when he served as Director of the Dallas Park and Recreation Department.

Jack was a true lover of the field of park and recreation. He was always great about engaging and embracing each of his employees. I started in an entry level position with the Austin Park and Recreation and because of Jack, I soon became his "right hand man". He taught me everything I know about the field of park and recreation. When he became the Director of the Dallas Parks system, he moved me to Dallas, where I served over the capital improvements division.

Jack also has some great career notables to include founder of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, he was the president of Texas Recreation and Park Society, from 1976-1977, president of Southwest Park and Recreation Training Institute in 1979 and was the National Recreation Park Association president in 1984. While serving as Director of Dallas Parks, he lead the department to receive the Gold Medal Award at NRPA in 1982.

The thing I remember most about Jack was he "walked the talk"! Throughout his career in Park and Recreation he showed unselfish dedication to the field to both his internal customers and the external customers he came into contact with. He challenged everyone to become cultivators of the rich resource of serving people and helped develop fertile minds and helped people discover their hidden talents. He was a person of integrity and honesty. He helped me to live out my convictions and helped me to deal with contradictions. He was a great at delegating, empowering, and turning beliefs into practice.

In summary, Jack was a great man and I highly recommend this naming of the Park and Recreation Headquarters be designated the Jack W. Robinson Recreation Headquarters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Beam', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ken Beam, District Manager

June 20, 2014

Ms. Sara Hensley, PARD Director
City of Austin
200 S. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78704

RE: Jack Robinson Naming

Dear Ms. Hensley:

I write in enthusiastic support of the recommendation to name the Austin Parks and Recreation Department's main office building for Jack W. Robinson. Having worked with Jack, I can say without reservation that it's an honor and a privilege to recommend naming the main Parks and Recreation office in memory of him.

Jack is such a worthy individual to be honored in this fashion. From his deep family and personal connection as caretaker of the park that is at the soul of Austin, Zilker Park, to his outstanding achievements as the PARD Director in Austin, to his service to the parks and recreation profession at state and national levels, Jack's devotion to the people of Austin and to the PARD staff and department that he built and strengthened to serve them is exceptional.

In addition to the significant and time-consuming responsibilities that Jack met every day as Director, he also found time to instill an incredible work ethic in his staff and to inspire them to achieve excellence in the field about which he was so passionate. As a result of his tutelage and example, numerous Austin PARD employees received advanced degrees and became certified professional members of the Texas Recreation and Parks Professional Society and the National Recreation and Parks Association.

Jack led by example and was generous in sharing his knowledge and expertise with younger and less-experienced staff members. He was color- and gender-blind, and a trusted mentor to so many staff who subsequently rose as leaders in their field. Jack's willingness to help others learn and practice in the profession inspired an entire generation of leaders in parks and recreation.

That his sphere of influence in the parks and recreation field has been far-reaching is exemplified by the number of people who worked with Jack in Austin and Dallas and who subsequently became leaders in the field:

- Donna Brasher, Director PARD, Arlington, and Deputy General Manager, Lower Colorado River Authority.
- Ramon Garza, Director PARD, Laredo
- Sally Gavlik, Director PARD, Corpus Christi and El Paso
- Mark Lord, Executive Director, Texas Amateur Athletic Federation

Letter to Sara Hensley

June 20, 2014

Page 2

- Dr. Michal Lord, Executive Director, Texas Recreation and Parks Association
- Janet Martin, Director PARD, San Antonio
- Alicia Mentell, Director PARD, Waukegan, Illinois
- Jesus Olivares, Director PARD, Austin
- Jim Rodgers, Director PARD Cedar Park and Williamson County
- Warren Struss, Director PARD, Austin
- Linda Tyler, Director PARD, Copperas Cove
- Dr. Jackie Vaughan, Director of Therapeutic Recreation, Veterans Hospital, Kerrville
- Cliff Warrick, Executive Director, Texas Amateur Athletic Federation
- Danny Whitworth, Director PARD, Corpus Christi

I know of no other person so deserving of having his legacy honored with an Austin park facility named after him. Naming an Austin parks department facility after Jack is a perfect tribute to this wonderful man and public servant whose life was distinguished by love of his work and his city, the highest standards of professional practice, unwavering support of others, and service to the ideals of his chosen profession.

Respectfully,



Donna K. Brasher

June 24, 2014

Sara Hensley, CPRP
Director
Austin Parks and Recreation Department
200 S. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78702

Dear Sara:

As a former employee – over 31 years – of the Parks and Recreation Department, it is my privilege to support the naming of the Austin Parks and Recreation Department's Main Office, the "Jack W. Robinson Parks and Recreation Headquarters".

Mr. Robinson's story with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department is such a great one. Growing up in Zilker Park, the son of the park manager, then working as park manager and living in Zilker, raising his family there, serving as Park Superintendent and then, as Director from 1973-78.

I had the opportunity, very early in my career, to work for Mr. Robinson with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department. Having spent many summers as a youth participant in the Summer Playground Program, I worked at Dottie Jordan Recreation Center when I was in college. At that time, Mr. Robinson was Director of the department. I remember him as the ultimate parks and recreation professional and a great leader. Due to his many accomplishments in Austin, he was highly sought by the City of Dallas to run their department.

Throughout the state of Texas and nationally, Mr. Robinson was highly regarded by parks and recreation professionals. He served on the Board of Directors, and as President, of the Texas Recreation & Park Society (TRAPS), and on the Board of Trustees, and as President, of the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA).

Due to his passion for the parks and recreation profession, his outstanding leadership and his service to the Austin community, I recommend the naming of the Main Office as "Jack W. Robinson Parks and Recreation Headquarters".

I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert Armistead, CPRP

Past President, TRAPS
Former Member, NRPA Board of Trustees

Parks Division Manager
Travis County Parks
1010 Lavaca
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 854-9831
robert.armistead@co.travis.tx.us

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PETER A. UMOFF

TELEPHONE: (805) 963-0669
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HARRIS W. SEED, RETIRED

June 12, 2014

Jim Rogers
4905 White Elm Drive
Austin, TX 78749

Re: Austin PARD Building

Dear Jim:

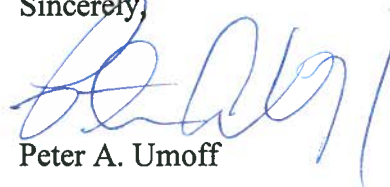
It was great to see you at the recent Barton Springs Crew reunion. I was sad to hear of the passing of Jack Robinson mere days before our reunion.

I am writing in support of the effort that I understand that you and others are undertaking to have the PARD building renamed after Jack.

As you know, although I am no longer an Austin resident, I still love Austin and especially Barton Springs. I had the good fortune to meet Jack back in the day...he was the manager of Zilker Park when I started working at Barton Springs. I am familiar with Jack's history with and devotion to Zilker Park and Barton Springs and have always admired his devotion to that wonderful place.

I can think of no more appropriate honor to Jack, and to Austin and the Parks and Recreation Department, than to name the PARD building after Jack, and I applaud and support your efforts to do that.

Sincerely,



Peter A. Umoff

PAU/bp

June 9, 2014

Mr. Jim Rodgers
4905 White Elm Dr
Austin, Texas 78749

RE: Letter of Recommendation to name the Parks and Recreation Office in the name of Jack Robinson.

Name: Charles B Kerr
3712 Steck Avenue
Austin, Texas 78759

Employed by City of Austin 1972-1978 working several of those years at Barton Springs Pool as Lifeguard and Cashier.

Retired from State of Texas (1981-2011). Served as Director of Business Services and Ports of Entry/Excise Tax at time of retirement from the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission.

Jack Robinson was a memorable man in my days at Barton Springs with a reputation of being a disciplinarian but in a positive way. I didn't necessarily fear him but I certainly knew not to cross him.

My most vivid recollection of the man was somewhere around 1974 when I was basically in charge of a lifeguard staff that was, on this particular day, cleaning Barton Springs Pool after a recent flood. It was somewhere around the noon hour and we had been cleaning since early that morning and most of the staff had broken for lunch. Jack apparently looked out of his window from his Zilker Park home and noticed the lack of activity being performed at the pool. He showed up at the pool office where I was waiting for staff to return from lunch and immediately asked who was in charge. I nervously responded that I was. He asked me why I and the staff were not working on the pool and I explained that everyone had gone to grab a bite to eat. He then proceeded to enter the office where he donned a pair of rental swimming shorts that were provided in those days and told me to follow him down to the pool. He grabbed point position on a fire hose and ordered me to turn on the water and get behind him on the hose. We then started to spray the mud and silt downstream. He worked at a frantic pace and I, 20 years his junior, struggled to keep up. After about 20 minutes some of my staff began to return and I motioned for them to get moving as some of them recognized that it was Jack on the fire hose and they bolted into action. Jack then turned the hose over to me and another staff person and told me that he wasn't mad at me but that he was trying to make a point in that the pool needed to be reopened as soon as possible and that letting everyone go to lunch at the same time was not an effective nor an efficient way to get that accomplished. I never forgot that lesson and always had a deep respect and appreciation for him after that because rather than chewing me out in front of staff, he simply made his point and let me resume my duties as manager.

Sincerely,



Charles B Kerr