



PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Tuesday, February 24, 2015 - 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 6:11 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

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

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approve the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Board meeting of January 27, 2015.

Board Member Abell made a motion to approve the minutes from January 27, 2015. Board Member Roth seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0-1 with Board Member Casias off the dais and Board Member Abell abstaining.

C. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Anita Villalobos addressed the Board and expressed excitement at a new Montopolis Recreation Center, but expressed disillusionment regarding the public input process, stating that the majority of the community is not supportive of sharing this facility with the Health Department. She expressed concerns about sharing the building with sick individuals, and sharing storage space for supplies.

Susana Almanza, President of the Montopolis Neighborhood Association, addressed the Board regarding the new Montopolis Recreation Center and her request for a meeting to discuss the details. She expressed that the community feels that all health services should be located at the Central Health and Wellness Center. She expressed concern that the Health Department has been leading these meetings and requested further info about the contents of the Request for Proposal.

Paul Robbins used this time during General Citizen Communication to address the Board regarding Item 8. He discussed the growth in Austin he's observed and expressed concern about the golf course proposal and stated that this issue should go before voters. He expressed concern about the precedent this agreement would set.

Claire Hirschkind addressed the Board and presented an idea of allowing certain smoking areas in parks as opposed to citing violators. She expressed concern about the public's knowledge of this law and the fines associated. She shared several ideas for implementing this plan, cutting costs, and offered her own annual allotment to get the program started.

Robert Corbin addressed the Board regarding his concerns with off leash dogs on the Barton Creek Greenbelt and other areas. He discussed recent encounters with off leash dogs and the different reactions he's received from dog owners when he confronts them about the off leash law. He shared that a letter to the Parks and Recreation Board would be forthcoming.

Tomas Pantin addressed the Board regarding Balcones Canyonlands Preserves. He proposed that their advisory committee should be Council appointed and run similarly to the Parks and Recreation Board.

D. NEW BUSINESS: DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

Chair Rivera announced that Item 6 has been moved to the Consent Agenda and Item 7 has been withdrawn.

Consent

2. Make a recommendation to the Director to exercise the five-year extension option of the agreement between the Texas Rowing Center and the City of Austin for the operation of a rowing and sculling operation on Lady Bird Lake.

3. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the approval of the Sunfield MUD Amendment.

6. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the negotiation and execution of a Parkland Improvement and Use Agreement between the City of Austin and the Lonestar Soccer Club.

Board Member Glover made a motion to approve Items 2, 3, and 6 on the Consent agenda. Board Member Abell seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Non-Consent

4. Discussion and possible recommendation to the City Council regarding the use of gas powered leaf blowers by the Parks and Recreation Department.

This item was postponed to March 24, 2015.

5. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the negotiation and execution of Amendment One to the August 2013 Parkland Improvement and Use Agreement with the West Austin Youth Association regarding Lamar Beach and Town Lake Metropolitan Park.

Cheryl Bolin, Aquatics and Athletics Division Manager, provided a presentation to the Board and responded to questions with Patricia Rossett, Contract Administrator.

Citizen Communication

Robert Corbin addressed the Board on this item, noting that this land is highly desirable but that the fields are used for only a portion of the year, and only a portion of the day. He suggested tearing most of the ballfields down and not approving this agreement.

Melissa Morrow, Executive Director of the West Austin Youth Association (WAYA), addressed the Board in support of this item and discussed their partnership with the City. She expressed desire to align with the Pressler Road extension and the Lamar Beach Master Plan. She stated that this year WAYA has served over 5000 youth from over 30 City zip codes this year. She asked that the Board support this item.

Sammie Joseph addressed the Board in support of this amendment. He provided some history of WAYA and the West Austin Optimist Club. He stated that WAYA needs this extension and stressed that the service they provide is a bargain to the City. He described a positive relationship between WAYA and PARD.

Chad Auler, President Elect on the WAYA Board, addressed the Board in support of this item. He described the positive impact on the lives of the youth participants. He asked for the Board's support of this item.

Michael Whellan addressed the Board in support of this item. He described WAYA's demonstrated history of maintenance, stewardship, openness to all and ideal central location. He described the need for extension due to the Pressler road extension and the master planning process. He asked the Board to support the amendment pursuant to the Council resolution.

Board Member Abell made a motion to recommend to the City Council to approve the negotiation and execution of an amendment to the August 2013 Parkland Improvement Agreement and Use Agreement with the West Austin Youth Association regarding Lamar Beach and Town Lake Metropolitan Park, with the caveat that only the time for the completion of the improvements be extended from 6 to 10 years to allow for the completion of the Lamar Beach Metro Park Master Planning process and the opening of the Pressler Road extension. Parks and Recreation Board does not recommend an extension of the term from 25 to 50 years nor the 10- to 25- year extension option that was directed by the Council resolution. Board Member Osgood seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

7. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding an ordinance to waive certain park facilities use fees associated with the use of the Slaughter Creek Fields by Lonestar Soccer Club of Austin.

This item was Withdrawn.

8. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the negotiation and execution of a 50-year license agreement with Decker Lake Golf, LLC to provide funding, design, development, management, and maintenance services for a golf course at Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park.

Kevin Gomillion, Golf Division Manager, provided a presentation to the Board and responded to questions from the Board with Warren Hayes, the proposed project developer.

Citizen Communication

Barbara Scott, President of the Colony Park Neighborhood Association, addressed the Board regarding this item and noted that many letters of support have been provided for this project. She noted that District 1 needs positive development and no previous project has come this far. She spoke about the need for clinics, grocery stores, and local park development.

Jeffrey Schryver addressed the Board regarding this item. He spoke about the large size of the park and some of the activities originally planned for the park. He believes the golf course will be the spur development and provide future funding to make the park a reality.

Margarita Decierdo, member of the Colony Park Neighborhood Association and President of the Colony Park Lakeside Community Development Corporation, addressed the Board in support of this development proposal. She spoke about the many challenges faced by this neighborhood and the need for change. She pointed the Board towards a list of partnerships she provided via a handout.

Warren Hayes donated his time to Veronica Vargas. Veronica Vargas spoke in support of this project. She noted that opposition to his project is coming from people who do not live in this area. She spoke about the lack of positive growth this project could bring.

Mark Gentle addressed the Board regarding this item as it relates to park users. He noted that golf is not a top need as identified by park users, even though there may be a market need for a higher end golf course.

Liz Carrasco donated her time to Brian Rodgers. Brian Rodgers addressed the Board regarding his concerns about golf being a dying sport. He shared concerns about the projected revenues and number of rounds expected as provided by the developer. He discussed other concerns related to water use at the golf course, as well as Audubon certification concerns. He also shared a list of other items included in the master plan that were never built.

Robert Corbin donated his time to Roy Whaley. Roy Whaley noted disagreement with the Parks and Recreation Board's policy regarding citizen communication that does not allow for citizen sign-up following the meeting being called to order. He addressed the Board regarding this item and noted that he and the Austin Sierra Club are opposed to using parkland for this proposal. He stated that they support the neighbors in their need for resources and services. He spoke about golf being a dying sport and cautioned tying the future of our park service to a dying sport.

Larry Beard addressed the Board and shared his perspective as both a park user and a developer. He noted that the neighborhood strongly desired development in this area and that requires an anchor to bring this development. He noted that the fence around this property has been up for 58 years, or, longer than the Berlin wall stood.

Board Member Roth made a motion to recommend to the City Council the negotiation and execution of a 50-year license agreement with Decker Lake, LLC to provide funding, design, development, management, and maintenance services for a golf course at Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Board Member Glover seconded the motion. The motion failed on a vote of 3-3-1 with Vice Chair Francell, Board Member Abell and Board Member Casias against and Board Chair Rivera abstaining.

9. Discuss and make a recommendation to the Director regarding the public process through the Parks and Recreation Board to consider the installation of a permanent marker at Auditorium Shores at Town Lake for President Obama's February 23, 2007 rally at that site.

April Thedford, Project Assistant, provided a brief presentation to the Board describing the originating Council Resolution and the proposed public input process, and responded to questions from the Board.

Board Member Abell made a motion to approve the public process through the Parks and Recreation Board to consider the installation of a permanent marker at Auditorium Shores at Town Lake for President Obama's February 23, 2007 rally at that site. Board Member Osgood seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Glover off the dais.

10. Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the naming of a deck on parkland located at 800 W. Riverside.

April Thedford, Project Assistant, provided a brief presentation to the Board describing the timeline of this naming process and responded to questions from the Board.

Citizen Communication

Mike Shea, Executive Director of the South by Southwest Conferences and Festivals, addressed the Board on this naming item. He described the impact Brent Grulke had on the festival and the local music scene in general.

Board Member Abell made a motion to recommend to the City Council the naming of a deck on parkland located at 800 W. Riverside after Brent Grulke. Board Member Casias seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 with Board Member Glover off the dais.

E. BRIEFINGS

11. Brief the Parks and Recreation Board regarding the Department's work processes/products associated with alcohol permits within the Austin park system and establish background for a future presentation to the Board to request action regarding the permit requirements for alcohol within the park system.

Kimberly McNeeley, Assistant Director, provided this Briefing to the Board and responded to questions with Pat Fuller, Nature Based Programs Division Manager.

F. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Hensley provided an update regarding the disc golf project at Zilker Park. Working with Watershed, the fences will be up until June during the turf growing season. Director Hensley reported that one Assistant Director candidate will be returning in March to spend more time with staff and determine best fit. Director Hensley provided an update regarding the National Recreation and Parks Association conference is in Las Vegas, Nevada this year. Assistant Director McNeeley provided a copy of the Recreation Program Plan and offered to answer any questions.

G. FUTURE ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member Casias requested discussion and possible recommendation to the City Council regarding the use of gas powered leaf blowers by the Parks and Recreation Department for the March meeting.

Board Chair Rivera requested discussion regarding events in the parks as well as discussion regarding the park naming process to come through the Land, Facilities, and Programs Committee.

Board Member Osgood seconded Chair Rivera's request for discussion regarding events in the parks as well as discussion regarding the park naming process to come through the Land, Facilities, and Programs Committee.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Rivera adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.