

# City of Austin

## Water and Wastewater Commission

February 11, 2015

Re: Proposed Decker Lake Golf Course project

Mayor Adler, Mayor Pro Tem Tovo, and Members of the City Council,

The Water and Wastewater Commission respectfully submits the following regarding potential execution of an agreement with Decker Lake Golf, LLC for golf course developments at Walter E. Long Park.

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- The Water and Wastewater Commission continues to support the recommendations of the Water Resource Planning Task Force, which assert that **the use of Decker Lake and its environs are critical components for City supplemental water supplies, especially during the continuing drought.**
- We **support the letter to the Council from members of the Water Resource Planning Task Force** dated Friday, December 5, 2014, regarding the proposed project.
- **Lakes Travis and Buchanan continue to hover near the 600,000 acre-foot capacity threshold, and if that threshold is crossed it will trigger mandatory curtailment of usage.**
- The **sacrifices of Austin Water customers and co-users of the Colorado River should be honored** by continued reductions in non-essential water usage by the City itself.
- We support and encourage the continued efforts of Parks and Recreation Department staff to actively pursue **additional reductions in golf course water use**, irrespective of the disposition of the current proposal.

- Given usage by City golf courses in the most recent year, the members of the Water and Wastewater Commission are **skeptical of the water neutrality concept and it may be unenforceable as written in the draft Agreement and Addendum to the Agreement** dated November 13, 2014, and December 3, 2014, respectively. If the City continues with the water neutrality concept, then the Water and Wastewater Commission members recommend **the City should develop more specific parameters for which to evaluate water neutrality.**
- Given very large rate increases for water service in recent years (almost tripling since 2006), **Austin Water Utility should not add capital project costs for serving the subject development to the rate responsibility of its customers.**
- Given extraordinary reductions in the AWU capital improvements program to only the most critical projects (resulting from the need to shield ratepayers from even higher rate increases), the **Utility should not delay more essential capital projects to accelerate service for the benefit of the subject development.**
- At the February 11, 2015, meeting of the Water and Wastewater Commission, representatives of Decker Lake Golf proposed the possibility of developing a deep well to supply high temperature, brackish groundwater to irrigate the proposed golf course. The members of **the Water and Wastewater Commission encourage the City of Austin to require that Decker Lake Golf develop and bring forth definitive studies and analyses so the City may evaluate the viability of using the proposed source of brackish water, including its safety and impact on the environment as well as its impact on other local water users.**

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

On behalf of the Water & Wastewater Commission,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dale Gray', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Dale Gray, P.E.

Chair, Water and Wastewater Commission