

**COMMITTEE ON OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY  
MEETING MINUTES**

May 27, 2015

**THE AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY CONVENED IN A REGULAR MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2015 AT 2PM IN THE BOARDS & COMMISSIONS ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, ROOM 1101, CITY HALL 301 W. 2<sup>ND</sup> STREET.**

**Council Member Leslie Pool called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM. In attendance were Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo, Council Member Don Zimmerman, Environmental Board Chair Mary Gay Maxwell, and Parks & Recreation Board Chair Jane Rivera.**

**Agenda Item #1:** Approval of minutes.

**The minutes of the April 29, 2015 meeting were approved on CM Zimmerman's motion and MPT Tovo's second. CM Garza was absent. Passed unanimously. Vote 3-0-0-1**

**Agenda Item #2:** General Citizen Communications

**There were 5 speakers:**

- Yoep Meijer spoke on the Austin Community Climate Plan and the importance of its goals.**
- Sharon Blythe spoke on her concerns about the City's Cemetery Master Plan.**
- David King spoke on three items including the amendment to the Parkland Dedication Code, the necessary steps to implement the Austin Community Climate Plan in relation to flood mitigation, and the importance of maintaining a consistent connection between the use of public parkland and the adjacent neighborhoods.**
- Heidi Gerbracht spoke on RECA's concerns regarding the potential compounding of fees related to the Parkland Dedication plans.**
- Mike Cannatti spoke on the bathhouse renovation project at Barton Springs.**

**Agenda Item #3:** Trailwide Urban Forestry and Ecological Restoration Plan (Susan Rankin, Executive Director, The Trail Foundation)

**Susan Rankin provided a brief overview of the history and funding of The Trail Foundation. Over time, the trail has become widely used for recreational purposes thus leading to a deterioration of the trail's infrastructure. In 2003, The Trail Foundation was formed to privately raise funds for the maintenance of the trees on the trail and the trail itself. In late 2014, the Trailwide Urban Forestry and Ecological Restoration Plan was conceived in order to guide work and gather data metrics dedicated to the associated woodlands. Approximately 6,100 trees were inventoried and will be used for various metrics. Rankin offered to provide the Committee with examples of high priority recommendations generated through the Plan such as mulching existing trees, adding compost to the soil, and creating a more diverse canopy.**

**Agenda Item #4:** Discuss the nomination of three members to the Parkland Events Task Force in accordance with Resolution No. 20150305-025.

**The three nominations to the Parkland Events Task Force included Bobby Garza, James Russell, and Jeff Smith. The three recommended nominations made by the Committee were approved on MPT Tovo's motion and on CM Pool's second. Vote 2-1-0-1. CM Zimmerman abstained and CM Garza was absent.**

**Agenda Item #5:** Discussion and presentation on benefits of prescribed burns as a land management technique on City-owned lands. (Willy Conrad, Environmental Policy Program Manager, Austin Water Utility; and Chief Matt Orta, Assistant Chief, Austin Fire Department)

**Willy Conrad provided an overview of the City's prescribed burns program and policies. The practice has been established as a land management activity rather than a fire fighting activity, however, the Austin Water Utility department does conduct the burning in partnership with the Austin Fire Department. The City uses prescribed burns to maintain inconsistencies in landscapes and to avoid wildfire risks, and to promote and control a diverse ecosystem. Chief Matt Orta noted that this process is safe, effective, and professional and is all executed with the assistance of the Austin Water Utility department.**

**Agenda Item #6:** Briefing on the City's Community Climate Plan. (Lucia Athens, Chief Sustainability Office, Office of Sustainability; and Zach Baumer, Climate Protection Manager, Office of Sustainability)

**Lucia Athens provided an overview on the City's Community Climate plan while highlighting the mitigation actions and recommendations submitted by the Technical Advisory Group. Zach Baumer elaborated on the strategies recommended by the Technical Advisory Group in four major areas of implementation which are electricity and natural gas, transportation and land use, materials and waste management, and industrial process.**

**Agenda Item #10:** Consider and develop recommendations for a resolution related to the 2015 Austin Community Climate Plan and steps necessary to implement it. (Lucia Athens, Chief Sustainability Office, Office of Sustainability)

**CM Pool moved item 10 to follow item 6 in order to allow for the Committee to take action on a resolution if a quorum was present. The proposed resolution would adopt the 2015 Austin Community Plan. Following the presentation a quorum was no longer present and a formal vote was not made however committee support was given.**

**Agenda Item #7:** Discuss the proposed amendments to the parkland dedication code provisions, in accordance with Resolution No. 20141211-219. (Randy Scott, Parks Development Coordinator, Parks and Recreation Department; Cora Wright, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Department; and Ricardo Soliz, Division Manager, Parks and Recreation Department)

**Randy Scott provided an overview of the Parkland Dedication Program, its current requirements, a chronology of past Council directives, the proposed new ordinance, and the proposed steps in order to adopt the ordinance. Austin's parkland acres are not keeping pace with the City's growth and currently Austin's fee ranks among the lowest in the country. The proposed code amendment requires 9.4 acres per 1,000 residents, calculated fees on a per person demand, establishes an**

**annual fee review, includes land requirement or a fee in lieu of land based on current land costs, and designates a Park Development Fee based on current park construction costs. Due to a lack of quorum, a formal vote was not made however committee support was given.**

**Agenda Item #8:** Discussion and presentation on the Seaholm Intake Facility. (Lyn Estabrook, Project Manager, Parks and Recreation Department)

**Lyn Estabrook provided a briefing on the process of the Seaholm Intake Facility project. The process overview included history of the Seaholm Power Plant, history of the Seaholm Power Plant District, investigations of the Facility, and the community stakeholder process. The Facility's Master Plan was adopted in 2001 with a vision to serve as a community public destination to creatively address the needs of the public. The project will respond to the surrounding changing environment while engaging the trail, park users, and the lake front.**

**Agenda Item #9:** Presentation on the Onion Creek Master Plan. (Randy Scott, Parks Development Coordinator, Parks and Recreation Department; Matt Baumgarten, Sr. Landscape Designer, SWA; Nelly Fuentes, Landscape Designer, SWA; Cora Wright, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Department; and Ricardo Soliz, Division Manager, Parks and Recreation Department)

**Randy Scott provided an overview of the Onion Creek Metro Park Master Plan with a request to the Committee to recommend the adoption of the plan to City Council. The presentation included background on the Onion Creek Metro Park, the partnership agreement, the public engagement process, the Master Plan components and the Implementation Process. Due to a lack of quorum, a formal vote was not made however committee support was given.**

**Agenda Item #11:** Discussion of future agenda items.

**CM Pool discussed consideration of a possible special called meeting to formally vote on the agenda items. Pool has asked her staff to check in with CM Garza and CM Zimmerman for any availability regarding that opportunity.**

**Council Member Leslie Pool adjourned the meeting at 4:35 PM.**

**The minutes were approved on this the 24th day of June, 2015 on CM Zimmerman's motion, and on CM Garza' second. Vote 4-0-0-0.**

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