



Parks and Recreation Department
Tuesday, March 25, 2008

Meeting

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department Parks Board was held on Tuesday, March 25, 2008 at the Boards and Commissions Conference Room, 301 West 2nd St. Room 1101.

Board Members Present: Interim Board Chair, Linda Guerrero, Interim Vice-Chair Danette Chimenti, Stephen Shang, Jeb Boyt, and Marilyn Bostick.

Board Members Absent: Mark Vane, Hector Ortiz and Jeff Francell

Staff Members Present: Stuart Strong, Cora Wright, Ricardo Soliz, and Tino Garcia.

A. Meeting called to order

Board Chair Guerrero called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

B. Approval of Minutes

Board Member Chimenti moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Board Member Bostick. Motion passed.

C. Citizen Communication

Charlie McCabe, Executive Director, Austin Parks Foundation, announced the It's My Park citywide park improvement volunteer event. He indicated that there are over 35 different projects from which people may choose. The event will occur on April 12, 2008.

D. Other Business

Briefing on the development along Shoal Creek from 5th Street to Cesar Chavez.

Greg Kiloh provided an overview of the Seaholm District construction projects to be under construction over the next 5 to 6 years. The Board was shown maps that detailed the construction projects and their possible impact to the park's trail system. He announced that projects managers have been meeting regularly, discussing ways to reduce the impact to the public. Mr. Kiloh warned that the Shoal Creek Trail would be the most impacted during the construction period. Other projects affecting the trail system would be the Pfluger Bridge extension, the trail through the Gables development project, and the Bowie Street underpass. The installation of wastewater lines and other improvements would also affect the area. The most imminent impact to the trail system will be the decommissioning of the Greenwater Treatment Plant. All work should be completed, with the trail greatly improved, by the year 2014.

E. Discussion and Action Items

Make a recommendation to the City Council regarding an ACWP Wastewater Improvement project request for a temporary and permanent use agreement on 0.63 acres of parkland near South 2nd Street along East Bouldin Creek Greenbelt.

Sharon Hamilton, indicated that the Austin Clean Water Program, on behalf of the Austin Water Utility and Public Works Department, is proposing to use parkland for wastewater construction purposes. The park is located behind the Bouldin Creek Condominiums at 802 South 1st Street. The proposal is for use as a temporary workspace easement and a permanent wastewater line easement for the ACWP Govalle 1 and South 2nd Street Wastewater Improvement project. Construction should begin early in 2008 and continue through mid-2009. Impacts to the park will be mitigated by on-site seeding with native wildflower seed. Since the park is not actively used as a park, there should be no disturbance to park users. Additionally, there would be no adverse long-term affects to the park as a result of the project. Board Member Boyt indicated that the Land and Facilities subcommittee had unanimously approved the proposal. With that, Board Member Shang moved to approve, seconded by Board Member Chimenti. Motion passed 5-0.

F. Director's Report

Acting Director Strong reported on plan of action to implement a pilot Outdoor Health and Fitness Concession Program that will regulate commercial fitness groups in designated park areas across the City. The pilot will start by April 15, 2008. The issue is that the department is experiencing increased unauthorized commercial usage of dedicated parkland by commercial fitness trainers and other organized groups. Acting Director Strong is proposing to legitimize the groups by:

- ? Receiving concession requests from vendors.
- ? The completion of temporary concession application
- ? Reviewing of applications by staff to determine applicability
- ? Collection of fees
- ? Compliance with concession contact
- ? Enforcement

This proposal impacts profit-making projects only and not the general public using the park for personal use. Board Members had questions regarding policing, fees and roll out plans. Acting Director Strong indicated that this is a pilot project and there would be opportunities to tweak the proposal as it moves forward. A memo to Council will be initiated next week regarding this pilot program.

Mr. Strong also reported on the following; 1) Zilker Garden Festival; 2) Capitol 10K run; 3) Urban Music Festival on April 5th; and 5) the Gus Garcia Recreation Center Grand Opening on April 26th.

G. Items from the Board.

Board Member Boyt, representing the Parks Board on the Waller Creek Advisory Committee, reported on a new proposed plan to improve the lake project (outlet). After much public input, the new structure will be more compatible with the existing shoreline.

Interim Chair Guerrero requested the following: 1) an update on the lease-free area at Auditorium Shores, an area that Scott Johnson has requested the Parks Board to consider; 2) a briefing on the Shoal Creek area, especially around the down-town area around the Austin Music Hall (both of these updates can be done within the next 3 months); 3) a briefing on the CreateAustin Plan.

She also informed the Board on the following:

- ? Reminded everyone that financial disclosure statements are due by the end of April.
- ? A town hall meeting on the Barton Springs Pool Master Plan will be held on April 5th at the City Hall Council chambers. A draft plan can be purchased for \$10 each.
- ? The appointment of Jeff Francell as chair of the Navigation subcommittee.
- ? Asked the department for more information on: 1) dedicated parkland as it pertains to the Seaholm District, and 2) how the department is spending bond monies on the project's identified.

Board Member Bostick requested additional information on: 1) new recreation centers coming online, and 2) an update of the naming options for those considered by the Board for park naming.

Board Member Boyt reported being told of a playscape that had been removed from a park and that it would take a year to replace it. He pointed out that permitting, especially on small projects like playscapes, should be expedited.

Ricardo Soliz reported on the next two long-range planning area meetings. The first will be held at Anderson High School on April 9th and the second on April 14th at O'Henry Middle School.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.