

Minutes
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
January 23, 1979

The Parks and Recreation Board met for its regular meeting at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 23, 1979, at the Austin Parks and Recreation Department. Present were Mr. Garrison, Chairman; Mr. Terry Bray, Secretary; and members Mrs. Arnold, Mr. Britton, Mr. Coffee, Mrs. Isely, Miss Dominguez, Mr. Ramos, Mr. Rose, Mr. Nalle, Mr. Shaw and Ms. Stockard. Mr. Hall was absent. Members Emeritus absent were Mr. Coates and Mrs. Crenshaw. Staff members present were Leonard Ehrler, Mike Segrest, Roy Guerrero, John Hughes, Dorothy Nan McLean, Bob Delaney, Dan Wilson, Joe Wilson, Jim Valadez, Preston Wheeler, Crystal Stewart, Jo Bright and Louise Nivison. Visitors included Mr. Robert Chaney, Mr. Bill Snow, Past President of the Austin Softball Association; Mr. Edward Rendon, President of the East Town Lake Citizens Association and members Pete Martinez, Frank Ramirez, Paul Hernandez, Manuel Mena, Adela Mancias, Sally Houghton, Mr. and Mrs. Anacedeto Muniz; Mr. Emit Searcy, Association for Community Organization for Reform Now; Mr. J. H. Landrum, Mr. John Marshall and Mr. Gene Preston from the South Austin Lion's Little League; Ms. Ann Ward and Ms. Beth Yost, Southwood Community Organization; Jack Diamond, Gordon Hall, Willie Howard, David Cornwall, David Firestone and Lisa Castle from the University of Texas Water Ski Team; Mr. Elmer Nygren, Mr. Luther Nygren and Mr. and Mrs. John Flink; Mr. Charles Neuenschwander, Austin Radio Control Association; and Mr. & Mrs. Gary Deshago from the Junior League.

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m., by Mr. Garrison, Chairman.

Mr. Garrison asked for approval of the minutes of December 11, 1978 and January 8, 1979. It was moved by Ms. Stockard and seconded by Mrs. Isely that the minutes be approved as printed. The motion carried unanimously.

CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Robert Chaney stated that he was present to speak to the need of healthier and more nutritious food offered for sale at the Zilker Park concession. It was pointed out by Mr. Garrison that there was presently a contract with Mr. Willie Rodriguez that would extend to January, 1980. Mr. Chaney stated that he felt if healthier food was offered that many more people would take advantage of the change, and it would be a most appropriate addition to the concession in Zilker Park. Mr. Chaney also passed around petitions he had received requesting the change. Mr. Bray stated that the Board could not officially act on the request as there was a concessionaire there with a contract to January, 1980. The Board could refer the matter to the Parks and Recreation Department staff and ask that they investigate the matter and report back to the Board. Mr. Chaney stated that there should be a choice and perhaps the space could be divided so that both types of food and drink could be provided. Ms. Stockard suggested that the Parks and Recreation Department staff send a letter to Mr. Rodriguez informing him of the request and petitions presented and ask that he look into the possibility of adding the type of nutritious food and drink desired. Mr. Garrison stated that this would be the only thing that could be done at this time. He thanked Mr. Chaney for appearing before the Board.

Ms. Ann Ward was present from the Southwood Community Organization to speak. Ms. Ward spoke about the problem of parking in the St. Elmo Elementary School area when athletic events are scheduled. Mr. Ehrler stated that he, Mike Segrest and Roy Guerrero had visited the area when school was in session and the parking was congested. There was only parking for 45 school faculty in the existing parking lot. The Parks and Recreation Department could reduce the number of softball games played on the softball field there, but the Little League groups also used the field and there was no way to control their activities. Mr. Ehrler stated that Mr. Ternus, Director of the Urban Transportation Department has been contacted concerning the problem and the only thing that could be done would be to extend the parking lot and that would encroach on the playground at the school. The cost would be approximately \$17,000 for a 20-space parking lot and the Parks and Recreation Department did not have monies budgeted for such a project. Ms. Yost stated that the parking situation was becoming so bad that it might get to the point of having cars towed off as driveways are being blocked. Mr. Ehrler stated that school faculty park in the street as well as the present parking lot. Mr. Garrison stated that the item could be placed in the next Capital Improvements Program budget. Mr. Ehrler stated that he would contact school officials again to see if something could be worked out to relieve the parking situation.

ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Garrison stated that he had attended the City Council meeting where lowering Lake Austin was brought up. The Council took no action. The Lower Colorado River Authority had recommended against lowering the lake due to the risk of power shortages. Mr. Ramos asked why this had been brought before the Parks and Recreation Board. Mr. Garrison explained that the City Council had abolished the Navigation Board and placed their duties under the Parks and Recreation Board, but only in an advisory capacity. Two additional members were appointed to the Board with navigation experience and these members were Bill Nalle and Mark Rose. Mr. Nalle stated that by next July perhaps the Board could institute a policy for lowering the lake. Mr. Garrison stated that it was clear that the City Council would take no action this year.

FESTIVAL BEACH IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Garrison stated that the next item for action would be consideration of approval of Festival Beach Improvements as recommended by the East Town Lake Citizen's Association and the Parks and Recreation Department staff. Mr. Edward Rendon, President of the East Town Lake Citizen's Association was present. Mr. Rendon asked Mr. Dan Wilson, Park Planner III, of the Parks and Recreation Department to explain the proposed improvements. Mr. Wilson stated that the Parks and Recreation Department staff and the East Town Lake Citizen's Association had been working together for several months on the project. The following was proposed: Landscaping - \$22,050; picnic tables - \$13,000; trash barrels - \$1,750; picnic grills - \$5,200; drinking fountains - \$3,000; irrigation - \$15,000 for a total of \$60,000 that is in the 1978-1979 Capital Improvements Program. There was also \$15,000 available for landscaping from the Town Lake Beautification Fund and a \$75,000 grant available from the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service for an automatic irrigation system. This would be a grant total

of \$150,000. Mrs. Arnold asked if rest rooms would be provided. Mr. Wilson stated that this did not include rest rooms. Mr. Segrest stated that the Fire Marshall's Office has been contacted concerning use of the rest rooms in their building. To date a reply has not been received from them. Mr. Wilson stated these recommendations were from the East Town Lake Citizen's Association and all of these things had been taken into consideration. Mike Segrest stated that the rest rooms at Martin Pool can be used at all times. Vandalism has been a big problem at the Fire Marshall's Building in the past. Mr. Nalle asked if representatives from the Aqua Festival had been contacted concerning the improvements in the Festival Beach area. Mr. Hernandez stated Aqua Festival events were moved to Auditorium Shores. Mike Segrest stated that the City Council had directed the Parks and Recreation Department staff to develop an improvement plan with input from the neighborhood residents. It was moved by Mr. Ramos and seconded by Mr. Rose that the Parks and Recreation Board recommend to City Council approval of improvements on Festival Beach totaling \$60,000 for landscaping, picnic tables, trash barrels, picnic grills, drinking fountains and irrigation as recommended by the East Town Lake Citizen's Association and the Parks and Recreation Department staff, plus additional funding from other sources of \$90,000 for landscaping and irrigation for a grand total of \$150,000. Mr. Nalle stated that he still felt the Aqua Festival representatives should be contacted. It was moved by Mr. Nalle that the original motion be tabled until the next meeting. The motion failed with Mr. Rose, Mr. Coffee, Mr. Shaw, Mr. Bary, Ms. Stockard, Miss Dominguez, Mrs. Arnold. Mr. Britton and Mr. Ramos voting no. Mr. Garrison asked for a vote on the original motion. The motion carried with Mr. Nalle voting no. Mr. Bray asked that the proposed plan be made available to all concerned.

WALTER E. LONG METROPOLITAN PARK UPDATED MASTER PLAN

Mr. Garrison stated the next item for action was a public hearing for the updated master plan for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Mike Segrest stated that when the proposals for the Austin Radio Control Association flying field and the Capital City Trap and Skeet Club structures came before the City Council, The Council requested that the Parks and Recreation Department update the master plan and bring this plan showing these facilities back to them for approval. The City Council did approve the sites for the two proposed facilities. Mrs. Arnold stated that she heard on the radio where some of the neighbors were concerned about when the whole master plan would be developed. Mr. Ehrler stated that proposed improvements have been submitted in the Capital Improvements Program each year and the improvements have been deleted each year by the City Council. Mike Segrest stated that it would take 30 to 50 years to implement all of the development as it would cost millions of dollars. It was moved by Mr. Bray and seconded by Mr. Rose that the Parks and Recreation Board recommend to the City Council approval of the updated master plan for the Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. Mr. Jim Webb stated that he had property across from where the skeet and trap facilities would be constructed. He spoke in support of the full development of the park, a master plan and tying into the existing sewer line that surrounds the park. Mr. Elmer Nygren spoke in support of the full development of the park. Mr. Ehrler stated that the Parks and Recreation Department would continue to press for money to develop the park. Mr. Charles Neuenschwander from the Austin Radio Control Association, stated that they had originally been using a site in Zilker Park that had reached the point that it was not safe to fly their planes there. They

had asked the Parks and Recreation Department to help them select a suitable site where the facilities could be open to the public, as their activities were recreational. The area in Walter E. Long District Park was selected as the best site. The agreement reached with the City really provided all benefits to the City. Their association will provide all funds to build the flying field and other facilities needed, and it would be open to the public. They had checked with the Building Inspection Department concerning the rest rooms. They were planning for an underground holding tank, a concrete block building, fresh water supply and would provide mowing and other maintenance. There was other discussion concerning the use of the land by Mr. Nygren, Mr. Webb and Mr. John Flink. Mr. Flink stated that there were many historical sites in the area, and it could be made into a beautiful park. Mr. Rose stated that he would contact Mr. Flink and be glad to go with him to visit the historical sites he mentioned. Mr. Garrison stated that the Board had done everything they can to have the area developed. After further discussion, the motion carried with Mr. Nalle and Mrs. Arnold voting no.

CONCESSION-ANNOUNCER'S BOOTH BUILDING AT KRIEG COMPLEX

Mr. Garrison stated Mr. Bill Snow, Past President of the Austin Softball Association, was present to speak on this item. Mr. Snow stated that the Austin Softball Association was asking permission to construct a concession-announcer's booth building at Krieg Softball Complex. Mr. Coffee spoke to the structural soundness of the building. Mr. Snow stated that the plans were presented for concept and they would come back with final construction plans. If construction could be started by April 1, it would cut the cost \$2,000. The Austin Softball Association now has the money to pay cash for the construction of the building. After further discussion, it was moved by Mr. Nalle and seconded by Mr. Coffee, that the Parks and Recreation Board recommend approval of plans as submitted in concept for construction of a concession-announcer's booth building at Krieg Softball Complex by the Austin Softball Association, subject to approval by the Construction Management Department of the structural soundness of the design. The motion carried unanimously.

REST ROOM AND CONCESSION STAND BUILDING AT WRIGHT LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD

Mr. Garrison stated that Mr. J. H. Landrum was present to speak on this item. Mr. Landrum stated the present concession stand was approximately 20 years old and of wood construction. They were proposing to build a new concession stand and rest room of cinder block in a different area in order to have the building further away from Robert E. Lee Road. Mr. Ehrler stated that this was probably one of the best kept Little League fields. Dick Martin, Superintendent of Parks, stated that the staff has been working very closely with the group and they were very cooperative. After further discussion, it was moved by Mr. Bray and seconded by Ms. Stockard, that the Parks and Recreation Board recommend approval of plans for construction of a rest room and a concession stand building at Wright Little League Field by the South Austin Lion's Club, subject to approval by the Construction Management Department of the structural soundness of the design. The motion carried unanimously.

WATER SKI COURSE ON TOWN LAKE WEST

Mr. Garrison stated that Mr. Jack Diamond was present to speak on the request from the University of Texas Water Ski Team to operate a ski boat and maintain

a ski course on Town Lake West. Mr. Diamond stated that he would like for Gordon Hall to speak on the matter. It was pointed out that the University of Texas Water Ski Team wanted to be able to compete with nationally ranked ski teams and wanted to maintain an adequate jump and slalom course facilities to practice where boat traffic would not create the change of someone sustaining injury. To remedy these problems, they were asking permission to operate a ski boat and maintain a ski course on Town Lake West, the area in front of Zilker Park. This practice facility would be used from March 1 through May 31, 1979, from noon to dusk Monday through Saturday. Mr. Nalle stated there were many rules and problems connected with this request. Ms. Stockard stated that this has never been done before on Town Lake. Mr. Rose stated that he has been contacted by the Austin Water Ski Club and wanted the same privileges, if this request was granted. Mr. Nalle stated that the Austin High School uses this area for their canoeing program. It was moved by Mr. Nalle, navigation member, and seconded by Mr. Rose, navigation member, that the request by the University of Texas Water Ski Team to operate a ski boat and maintain a ski course on Town Lake West, the area in front of Zilker Park, be disapproved due to the present ordinance concerning motor boats on Town Lake and the precedent that would be set by allowing this request. The motion carried unanimously.

AUSTIN RADIO CONTROL ASSOCIATION FLYING FIELD FACILITIES

Mr. Garrison stated that Mr. Charles Neuenschwander was present to speak on this item. Mr. Neuenschwander stated that the City Council on December 7, 1978, approved the use of a 30 acre tract of land at Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park for a radio control flying field. The first phase of construction would include: (1) a 300' paved runway, taxiway, and ramp area; (2) rest rooms (holding tank system); (3) spectator fence; (4) gravel parking lot and road; (5) post and cable barrier around road and parking lot; (6) gate at Lindell Lane. All of these improvements would be completed before the field is opened. Although the plans specify a gravel road and parking lot, they intend to use impregnated asphalt paving. Weather permitting, and with approval of the plans, construction should be completed by March 1, 1979. As funds become available, additional improvements are anticipated, to include sun shelters, bleachers, barbecue pit, and picnic tables. Although the field will be operated by the Austin Radio Control Association, the field will be open to the general public. Non-members will be required to pay a fee of \$3 to fly. Money collected from this fee will be applied directly to a field construction and maintenance fund. There will be no charge to spectators. Members of the Association will pay annual dues of \$60 and have unlimited use of the field at no additional cost. Insurance for the City has been provided by the Association as specified in the agreement. The field will be operated according to safety standards established by both the Association and the Academy of Model Aeronautics, a national organization governing sporting model aviation in the United States. They were presently flying at a temporary grass field at Pflugerville on private property but the land would no longer be available to them in the spring. They presently have 76 members. The improvements would cost approximately \$21,000. It was moved by Mr. Bray and seconded by Mrs. Isely, that the Parks and Recreation Board recommend approval of plans for construction of a flying field and related facilities by the Austin Radio Control Association at Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park, subject to approval by the Construction Management Department of the structural soundness of the design. The motion carried unanimously. The fees to be charged were discussed and it was agreed that the Association

would bring back to the Board the fees to be charged and this recommendation would be sent to City Council for approval, as stated in the contract. Mr. Neuenschwander stated that he thought this was covered in the contract entered into with the City on December 7, 1978, but would be glad to bring the fee structure to the Board.

SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER ADDITIONAL PARKING LOT

Mr. Ehrler stated Parks and Recreation Department staff had met with the Senior Activity Center Advisory Board on January 10, 1979, and they concurred with the staff recommendation of Alternate A. Alternate A would provide for 26 additional parking spaces at an estimated cost of \$380 per space for a total of \$13,500. There were three alternates presented to the Senior Activity Center Advisory Board. It was moved by Ms. Stockard and seconded by Mr. Rose, that the Parks and Recreation Board recommend approval of Senior Activity Center-Additional Parking, Alternate A, for C.I.P. #8651-7, which will provide for 26 additional parking spaces. The motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Arnold asked about landscaping. Mr. Ehrler explained money was available for the landscaping.

FEE WAIVER FOR DISABLED VETERANS

Mr. Garrison asked that this be postponed to the next night meeting as there was no one present to speak on the item.

LAKE AUSTIN GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr. Garrison asked Mrs. Arnold to speak on this item. Mrs. Arnold stated that in November 1978, the chairman of the Parks and Recreation Board appointed a sub-committee comprised of herself, Miss Dominguez and Mr. Nalle, to study this plan and make recommendations to the Board. After further discussion, it was moved by Mr. Bray and seconded by Mr. Shaw that the following recommendations be made to the City Council:

"The Parks and Recreation Board concurs with the Planning Commission report in all matters which this report addresses. The preservation of water quality, the stated objective of the Planning Commission report, is important to the interests of the Parks and Recreation Board. This Board recommends, however, that the following items be considered for addition to the report:

The Parks and Recreation Board recognizes the importance of public policy for open space as an element in the Lake Austin Growth Management Plan (refer to page 63). The proposed Parks Master Plan should use the Lake Austin Growth Management Plan as a guide for park acquisition and development within the Lake Austin watershed. Emphasis should be placed on the Lake Austin Corridor and the Bull Creek Valley. If the City's present and future residents are to have access to the Corridor amenities, and are to fully realize the recreational opportunities of the Bull Creek Valley, steps should be taken in the immediate future for the public to acquire either full ownership, development rights, or easements to those properties which still remain undeveloped. The Parks and Recreation Department and the City Legal Staff should work together to investigate the possibilities for acquiring easements, as suggested by the Plan.

The Board encourages further studies to determine optimum sizes, configurations and locations of natural areas where natural communities can survive (page 46). These studies should be conducted with the use of in-house staff or donated expertise, e.g., Travis Audubon Society, University of Texas, Natural Science Center, etc.

The Lake Austin Growth Management Plan should be used as a guide for the Parks and Recreation Department participation in the review process of subdivisions proposed in the Lake Austin Watershed."

The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Garrison thanked the sub-committee for all their work.

PROPOSED OVERALL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Garrison asked that recommendations for the proposed Overall Economic Development Plan be postponed until the next Board meeting.

LEARN-TO-SWIM PROGRAM

Mr. Ehrler stated that the Parks and Recreation Department was at this point getting ready for the summer programs and a decision on a charge of \$3.50 per participant for the learn-to-swim program was essential. The City Council in adopting the 1978-1979 Operating Budget for the Parks and Recreation Department had adopted this charge. This item appeared on the City Council agenda and they had referred the matter back to the Board for their recommendation. Mrs. Arnold asked if the Red Cross had been contacted for volunteers to instruct for this program. Jim Valadez, Supervisor of Aquatics, stated that they had been contacted but enough volunteers for a program of this nature were not available. Mr. Ehrler stated that other cities charge \$5, \$10 and as high as \$12.50 for learn-to-swim instruction. The charge of \$3.50 was simply to pay the instructors. More and more, people were beginning to see that modest fees charged for some recreational programs will keep taxes down. Mrs. Arnold asked if lifeguards could teach. Jim Valadez explained that in many cases lifeguards did teach as they had their Water Safety Instructor certificate, but Water Safety Instructors were needed in addition to lifeguards. Ms. Stockard asked about those who cannot afford to pay the fee. Mr. Ehrler stated that no funds were available at present for these and perhaps the City Council could subsidize this portion. Dorothy Nan McLean, Superintendent of Special Activities, stated that perhaps private clubs and organizations could give scholarships for those who absolutely could not afford to pay. Mr. Garrison asked how many participated in the program last year in the East district. Mr. Ehrler stated that approximately 740 registered last year but they did not have statistics on how many completed the course. Mr. Bray stated that he felt a nominal fee of \$3.50 per participant was desirable. After further discussion, it was moved by Mr. Bray and seconded by Mrs. Isely, that the Parks and Recreation Board recommend to the Mayor and City Council approval of a \$3.50 charge per participant for the learn-to-swim program. Mr. Ehrler again emphasized that this would be to pay salary for the instructors only. After further discussion, it was agreed that members of the Board would contact local civic organizations to see if they could furnish scholarships to pay for children who absolutely could

not afford to pay for the lessons. Mr. Garrison stated that he would be glad to contact the Downtown Lion's Club. Mr. Rose emphasized that without the fee to pay the instructor's salary, there would be no learn-to-swim program. The motion carried with Ms. Stockard, Miss Dominguez, Mrs. Arnold, Mr. Britton and Mr. Ramos voting no; the chairman not voting; and Mr. Bray, Mr. Coffee, Mrs. Isely, Mr. Nalle, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Rose voting yes.

Mr. Ehrler stated that the Givens Recreation Center would be opened within the next few weeks, and the Northwest Recreation Center probably would not be open before October 1st.

Mr. Ehrler introduced Preston Wheeler, Supervisor of Park Rangers and Mr. Bob Delaney, recently appointed Superintendent of Administration.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 p.m.