



**Environmental Board / Parks and Recreation Board
JOINT COMMITTEE**

**January 19, 2016
Meeting Minutes**

Joint Committee Members in Attendance:

Parks and Recreation Board:

Birger "Alex" Schmitz
Tom Donovan
Mark Vane
Pat Wimberly

Environmental Board:

Mary Gay Maxwell
Mary Ann Neely

Staff in Attendance:

Cheryl Bolin, PARD
Gary Gregson, PARD
Donelle Robinson, WPD
Aaron Levine, PARD

Marty Stump, PARD
Wayne Simmons, PARD
Chris Herrington, WPD
Cara Welch, PARD

The Environmental Board / Parks and Recreation Board JOINT COMMITTEE convened in a joint meeting in the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, 600 River St., Austin, Texas.

The Joint Committee meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m.

1. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- Mary Ann Neely nominated Alex Schmitz as chair, and Pat Wimberly seconded the motion. Motion was approved on a 6-0 vote. Alex Schmitz nominated Mary Ann Neely as co-chair, and Mary Gay Maxwell seconded. Motion was approved on a 6-0 vote.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- The approval of the minutes for the January 19, 2016, meeting was approved with a 6-0 vote, after the motion was made by Mary Gay Maxwell and seconded by Mary Ann Neely.

3. CITIZENS' COMMUNICATION

- Robert Corbin spoke about city-wide issue with dogs being off-leash in areas not designated as such. Stated that many people are afraid of dogs and will not patronize

parks because of so many dogs being off leash. He suggested certain parks or greenbelts be designated as humans-only.

4. STAFF BRIEFINGS AND DISCUSSION

- David Taylor (Project Manager, PWD) gave a presentation on the Zilker Metro Park – Barton Springs Bathhouse Renovation
 - Mary Ann Neely asked about Splash! Exhibit and why it might need to be moved. David Taylor responded that it was due to the bathhouse being within the flood plain. Major alterations to the bathhouse would trigger code requirements that may not allow the exhibit to stay as it is today.
 - Mary Gay Maxwell expressed concern about proposals that vary from the Barton Springs Pool Master Plan since the plan was approved by City Council.
 - Mark Vane asked what is being asked of the committee in regards to the process. Marty Stump responded that the briefing was intended to be informational and no action was being requested
 - Citizen Communication:
 - Zoila Vega (Austin Heritage Tree Foundation) spoke about concerns of the plan which may affect heritage trees in the area.
 - Mike Cannati (Barton Springs Conservancy) spoke about the extensive public process for the plan and how the plan has improved because of it.
 - Robin Cravey (Barton Springs Conservancy) spoke about how the Barton Springs Pool Master Plan and subsequent improvements came about.
 - Bill Bunch (Save Our Springs Alliance) spoke about big picture priorities. He mentioned upstream development and pollution, and how more focus should be put on preserving the water quality. Making Barton Springs a world-class facility is pointless if the water is not protected.

- Donelle Robinson (Environmental Scientist, Watershed Protection Dept.) gave a presentation on the plans to expose the spring run from the Eliza Spring Amphitheater to the bypass culvert underneath the north side deck of Barton Springs Pool.
 - Tom Donovan asked about restoration of the amphitheater. He stated that the walls are deteriorating and trash was in the spring. Donelle stated that a support is proposed to be added to the back side of the wall near the spring run, but otherwise the walls will not be restored with this project.
 - Pat Wimberly asked about concerns he had heard of bald cypress trees being planted in the area. Donelle responded that the cypresses were proposed for biological reasons related to the salamander habitat.
 - Citizens Communication:
 - Zoila Vega spoke of concerns about the bald cypress trees proposed, stating that the Director of the Parks Dept. had committed to the public to not plant any bald cypress trees in the Barton Springs vicinity. Zoila also spoke about concerns regarding the quantity of trees proposed to be planted in a relatively small space.

5. BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

- The committee discussed whether to schedule regular, monthly or bimonthly meeting, or to continue to meet on an as-needed basis. The discussion included questions about the committees purview, and how the purviews of other committees may overlap. No action was taken.

6. FUTURE ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- A briefing on the original development of the Joint Committee and its purpose.

7. ADJOURN

Committee Chair Alex Schmitz adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m. without objection.