

**BOND ELECTION ADVISORY TASK FORCE
MINUTES****REGULAR MEETING
October 30, 2017**

The Bond Election Advisory Task Force convened in a regular meeting on October 30, 2017 in Austin, Texas.

Chair Nuckols called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM

Board Members in Attendance:

Tom Nuckols, Chair	Robert Walker
Bruce Evans, Vice Chair	Yasmiyn Irizarry
Estrella de Leon	Rachel Stone
Herbert "Ken" Rigsbee	Sumit DasGupta
Jeff Smith	John McNabb
Dorsey Twidwell	

Staff in Attendance:

Katy Zamesnik, Financial Services
Carla Steffen, ACCD

CALL TO ORDER**1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION**

Raul Alvarez, citizen, spoke on the need for PARD funding. Former City Councilmember.

Hermalinda Zamarripa, spoke on the John Travino Jr park. She noted it was an opportunity to develop a park in a park deficient area of town, and then spoke on the work done by John Travino, Jr during his lifetime. She mentioned there was funding in the amount of \$250,000 for a master plan.

Gloria Malta Pennington also spoke on John Travino, Jr, and his legacy in the City of Austin. She stated that in 2006, land was set aside for the John Travino Jr park, but that there was not a naming ceremony until 2016. She asked that money for the park be included in the 2018 bonds.

Dr. Charles Racquel asked for the inclusion of the John Travino, Jr park in the 2018 bond program. Stated that the park lies in obscurity except for park officials, and that the time has come for it to become a park.

Francois Luca, president of the Gracywoods Neighborhood Association and representative for district 7 on the Parks Board, spoke on the need for additional funding for the Parks department. Parks are a very important part of our City's culture and way of life, as well as for transportation. Spoke on transit parks, which are pocket parks or greenspace that is tied to or close to a public transit spot. For example, no one likes to sit in the sun on the concrete waiting on transit. Pocket parks near transit stops will help encourage the use of mass transit.

Todd Shaw spoke on parks that support the transit system and the critical nature of parks for the City. Noted that in mature cities with fully developed transit systems, there are always green spaces nearby. Stated it would be important for Austin's future.

Henry Acosta, spoke on behalf of Meals on Wheels. Grew up in East Austin, inherited his dad's house, and has been working ever since to fix it. Meals and Wheels has been very helpful in getting his house fixed up. Several neighbors have the same kind of story. Very grateful for the work done by meals on wheels.

Angela Garza, spoke on the experience of a client of hers, and his experience with an unsafe home, and the work they have done to get it back to a livable, safe condition.

Simona Flowers, serves as director of Interfaith Action of Texas, and chair of the Housing Repair Coalition. Supports a minimum of \$125 million toward affordable housing. Her organization works with 100s of elderly and disabled folks, and works toward keeping them in their homes. Wants an Austin for everyone.

Steve Johnson, spoke on Austin's swimming pools. Spoke on how the pools in Austin are very old. Estimates from the Aquatics Master Plan range from \$100 million to \$200 million. It is his understanding that the 2018 bond proposal only includes \$15 million, and that seems low. He stated it seems certain that some pools will have to close, even with the bond program funding. Believes pools are a great way to build community and that losing pools will mean that Austin will lose part of what makes it a great place to live.

Ria Dolstance, active swimmer. Has gone through the Aquatics Master Plan, and believes that many of our pools are within a breath of catastrophic failure. Engineering background. Aquatics Master Plan is a good start, a good inventory of all our pools and what is wrong with them. Most of the pools in Austin don't have stalls with doors on them. This bond should help with that. Maintenance on the pools has been neglected for so long.

Pam O'Conner, represents Aquatics Advisory Board, spoke that the Parks Department has done their job, requesting funding to repair pools. Noted that 4 pools have failed this summer. The Aquatics Master Plan was developed so that the Task Force could make a non-partial call on the funding. The pool system is the most diverse system, mostly serving all the City, except for Colony Park. Colony Park pool is included in the Aquatics Master Plan.

Jamie Breezemeister, Chair of the Austin Commission on Seniors, an advisory board appointed by Council to advise on the quality of life of seniors in Austin. Fastest growing age group in Austin is people 55 and older. In 2040, seniors will be 20% of the population; seniors are typically some of the poorest in Austin. Commission passed a resolution that the Task Force target seniors in their community engagement, and allocate \$18 million for GO Home Repair Program. It's been very successful and is vital to keeping seniors in their homes.

Sabrina Bulter, Austin Housing Coalition, read a letter from the Coalition regarding the 2018 bond package, and their support for safe housing for all. The proposed housing bond package is necessary for the City to address housing needs in the future. The housing bond funding is integral to achieving the City's Housing Strategic Plan. Urged the Task Force to include the full amount for affordable housing

Adam Howser, president and CEO of Meals on Wheels Central Texas. He noted that he delivers for Meals on Wheels, and that he sees unsafe homes on his route every time. Some clients are mobility challenged, older and living in unsafe homes. Noted that he sees new homes going up on every street he delivers on. Keeping his clients in their homes is crucial to the fabric of the City. Urged Task Force to allocate at least \$125 million in the 2018 bond.

Christy Muse, works for the Shield Ranch, a large private ranch in Western Travis County. Speaking on open space. Been a working ranch since 1938, and spoke on the need to balance growth with conservation. There are two conservation easements on the ranch- 1,600 acres purchased outright and then 4,500 acres donated to the Nature Conservancy. Have partnered with the City on water quality data and open the ranch to informational tours. More landowners are getting interested, but there is not funding available to provide for the conservation easements. Noticed that the City of Austin investment in open space has been decreasing since 1998. Supports more than \$25 million for open space in the bond.

Charles Klautman, Vice Chair of Austin Housing Coalition, and Meals on Wheels. Spoke on the need for funding for the Home Repair Program. Echoed Adam Howser that it is important to keep people in their homes. Cheaper to do so, and essential for quality of life. Can't protect the vulnerable population without funding.

Ken Jacobs, former member of the Flood Mitigation Task Force. Stated that flooding is the single most important issue facing Austin right now. Read recommendations from the Flood Mitigation Task Force, and stated his support for large funding for flood mitigation.

John Rooney, representing the Austin Parks Foundation, adding to the voices in support for parks in Austin. \$700 million is the backlog for Austin, including ADA compliance. There is diminishing parkland acreage per capita, and failing pools. Said by 2020, there will be a parkland deficit of 5,000 acres. Asked the TF to keep in mind the importance of parks for quality of life for now and into the future. Urged to fund to the fullest extent possible the parks portion of the bond.

Ann Howard, Executive Director of ECHO. Spoke on bond, and the need for supportive housing. Moving folks from the streets to permanent housing, which means a lease. Supports \$125 million, had a short presentation. Have the names of 3,300 households that are waiting for housing. They know how many different types of housing are needed. Need affordable housing that is low barrier (so don't need 3x the income, can have a criminal history); currently those folks can't compete. 90% of those that have been placed have stayed in their homes.

Junie Plummer, former City employee, believes strongly that open space supports City of Austin. Stated our natural resources are fragile and finite, and that soon they will be gone. Austin parks and open spaces are under intense development pressure. Give Austin voters the ability to fund \$50 million in Open space.

Barbara Scott, spoke on the need for a swimming pool for the Colony Park area. Said they've lived in the area for over 40 years without a park or a pool. Have a park, trails, and recreation center, but no pool. Kids in the Colony Park area climb the fences to get to pools and get in trouble. Spoke on the Colony Park Master Plan, where it is in the RFQ process. Asking the Task Force to include money in the bond for a new pool for Colony Park.

George Cofer, executive director of Hill Country Conservancy, spoke in support of parkland, open space, and Parks facilities. Requesting \$50 million for open space. Have had a 25 year relationship with Nature Conservancy, and there is a great opportunity to leverage other funding with County and federal dollars. Important to support \$30 million for parkland. Might be the last opportunity for infill parks due to development pressures.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were approved on Task Force Member Smith's motion, seconded by Task Force Member Das Gupta, on a 11-0- vote, with Members Santiago and Bentley off the dais.

3. NEW BUSINESS – BRIEFINGS

Brion Oaks, the City's Equity Office, provided an update on the equity assessment tool as was introduced at the Task Force's July meeting. Spoke on how the City received an award for being the most livable city for families, yet minority children in the city are 5-7 times more likely to live in poverty.

Introduced the Equity Analysis Worksheet to allow the Task Force to evaluate individual projects and their impact on equity. He spoke on the development of the tool and walked through the elements contained within.

Mr. Oaks discussed the 6 steps for building racial equity, as developed by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE). He noted that we don't always close the feedback loop with our community engagement, which he thinks is important. He also discussed the Strategic Priority Outcome Areas, and how they ask the departments to align their work with these six priorities. These priorities are embedded in the worksheet.

Ginger Yachinich presented on the worksheet, including the elements of the worksheet, such as alignment, history, data, community engagement, advancing equity, unintended outcomes, and impact. Ms. Yachinich walked through the questions on the worksheet, and how everything is calculated for a final score. Mr. Oaks noted that technical assistance is available to both the Task Force and departments. They then answered questions from the Task Force, and participated in a discussion on what equity means and how it can be applied to the citizens of Austin.

The Task Force asked for the Equity Office to come back to the Task Force regarding the community engagement efforts as described in the plan.

4. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

a. Discussion and possible action on a community engagement plan

Staff presented new community engagement tools, and requested input on the schedule of town halls they created. They received input and agreed to send out and updated town hall schedule.

b. Reports and possible action on items from working groups

Affordable Housing Working Group reported on their work and noted that they are pursuing a recommendation of \$125 million to \$146 million for affordable housing in the 2018 bond.

c. Discussion and possible action on development of guidelines, prioritization metrics, or other criteria for evaluation and ranking bond projects, and for development of a framework of Task Force recommendations.

Steven Zettner spoke in support of infill park space in the 2018 bond program. He spoke on the history of funding, where in the City these should go, and his experience with City infrastructure around the corridors.

5. FUTURE AGENDAS

Task Force rescheduled the November 17th meeting to November 16th with an extended meeting.

6. ADJOURN

Chair Nuckols adjourned the meeting at 3:10 PM without objection

The minutes from October 30, 2017 were approved on Task Force Member Evans's motion, seconded by Task Force Member Irizarry, on a 11-0-1 vote, with Members Santiago abstaining and Task Force Member Stone off the dais.

