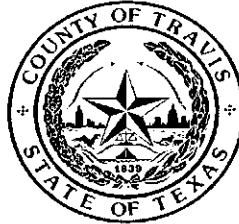


Late Backup

D.1

6/12/18 WS

BRANDY MUELLER
JUDGE
COUNTY COURT AT LAW #6
P.O. BOX 1748
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78767



PHONE (512) 854-9677
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Cc: Council Member Pio Renteria, District 3

Re: The Austin Rowing Club ("ARC")
74 Trinity Street, Austin 78701

February 2018

Dear Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo,

Thank you very much for your time recently. I really appreciated the chance to talk with you about the 501c(3) organization on *Lake Lady Bird*, the Austin Rowing Club. I wanted to follow up and further express how ARC has regularly provided community service opportunities and free programming for indigent teens on probation before me in the criminal court over which I preside.

When we spoke, I mentioned that the youth offender docket that I preside over, is called *Project Engage*. It amounts to a specialized form of probation for teenage defendants who are high risk for re-offending. It gets its name from my belief that people who are *engaged* in our community are less likely to re-offend and more likely to contribute. The defendants in this program are required to give back by doing 100 hours of community service (in addition to working and/or being in school, seeing their Probation officer, making monthly court appearances, remaining free from alcohol and drugs...). The community service these teenage defendants are ordered to do, is meant to *engage* them in our city. The experience they have at the Austin Rowing Club, ...landscaping, cleaning docks, cleaning a boathouse full of racing shells, and learning how to row on the Lake is just that.

Many of the defendants, in spite of growing up in Austin, have never been on or near the Lake. Almost all are indigent and a good number of them have family members who are incarcerated; some are former foster kids. They are all on probation for committing a criminal offense yet have chosen this more stringent and arduous form of probation in an effort to better themselves and in many cases avoid a permanent conviction. The successful completion requires the community service element. As you can imagine, many non-profits are not comfortable allowing teens with criminal charges to do work for them. ARC has never been of that mindset. They have regularly created community service projects for our teenage defendants.

I feel strongly in the value of ARC in our community and believe that the commitment the people at ARC have shown to our teens has been consistent, unwavering and meaningful. Please let me know if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Judge Brandy Mueller