

## Parks Board minutes Tues. October 23, 2007

(below from the minutes:)

### E. Discussion and Action Items:

1. Briefing and Possible Action recommending that the City of Austin acquire and preserve the Lions Municipal Golf Course for use by future generations.

Farhad Madani, Assistant Director, provided the Board with an overview detailing:

- 1) the partnership between the University of Texas and the Citizens of Austin;
- 2) the Brackenridge Task Force Recommendation (which recommended the lease of the golf course not be renewed or extended when it expires in 2019);
- 3) the history of the lease including the lease payments made throughout the lease term;
- 4) the importance of low cost golf to the Citizens of Austin and;
- 5) the impact that the golf course has had on the community. Lions, is was noted, is one of the most popular courses in Central Texas. The course has exceeded over 1.3 million patrons since 1988.

Mr. Madani also indicated that the University of Texas Board of Regents will take public comment on November 9, 2007 at 1: 30 p.m.

Mary Arnold provided the Board with additional information including how in the 1970's the Regents and the City agreed to continue the lease and how a second agreement was approved to continue with the terms of the lease. After additional discussion, Board Member Chimenti moved to approve a resolution (attached) which recommended: 1) the City of Austin seek to acquire and preserve the Lions Municipal Golf Course for use by future generations and; 2) the City of Austin encourage the University of Texas Board of Regents to include the City, users of Lions Municipal, neighbors and any other interested parties in the Master Planning Process for the Brackenridge Tract. Motion was seconded by Board Member Shang. Board Member Boyt requested that an addendum be added to include "that the City work with the UT to complete the extension of the Town Lake trail to Red Bud Island". Board Member Vane added "that the resolution be presented to the Board of Regents at their next meeting". Motion with the addendum passed 8-0.

2. Consider approval of the Paul Grimme Boat Dock Case Number SP-2007-0470DS

Board Member Small indicated that the request requires a variance for two different reasons. The first is the applicant is wishing to build within the 10 foot side setback and secondly they are replacing existing dock and wish to leave the dock at a width that is greater than 20%. Mr. Small does not think that the second request is valid therefore, moved to approve the Paul Grimme Boat Dock to build only within the 10 foot side setback, seconded by Board Member Francell. Motion passed 8-0.

**Whereas** the construction of the first “public” golf course in Austin, Lions Municipal Golf Course, was sponsored by the Lions Club of Austin in the mid 1920’s under a lease of a portion of the Brackenridge Tract from the University of Texas, and

**Whereas** the City of Austin agreed to take over the lease and the management and maintenance of the course in 1937 through a new 50 year lease with the University of Texas, and

**Whereas** Lions Municipal Golf Course was the only golf course operated by the City of Austin until the 1950’s when the Austin Country Club moved to a new location and its golf course became a city-owned golf course, the 9 hole Hancock Golf Course, and

**Whereas** the University of Texas and the City of Austin have negotiated the city’s lease on Lions Municipal Golf Course in 1973-74, and in 1988-1989, resulting, in both instances, in extensions of the Golf Course lease, and in benefits to the University of Texas from the City of Austin, and

**Whereas** a Brackenridge Tract Task Force, appointed by The University of Texas Board of Regents, is recommending that the Board of Regents not extend the current Golf Course lease but instead let it expire in 2019, and

**Whereas** the Parks and Recreation Board advises the city council concerning improvements in the maintenance, operation and general welfare of the public parks, playgrounds and recreational facilities such as the Lions Municipal Golf Course, and

**Whereas** the Parks and Recreation Board recognizes the importance of the Lions Municipal Golf Course to public golf in this community, and recognizes its history as part of the history of Austin Parks and Recreation,

**Now therefore be it Resolved**, that the Parks and Recreation Board recommends to the City Council that

- the City of Austin seek to acquire and preserve the Lions Municipal Golf Course for use by future generations;
- the City of Austin encourage the University of Texas Board of Regents to include the City, users of Lions Municipal, neighbors and any other interested parties in the Master Planning Process for the Brackenridge Tract.

October 23, 2007

5. The Lions Municipal Golf Course lease should be allowed to terminate at the end of its current term in 2019 and the Board should include the tract in the master planning process.

The Task Force's recommendation is based on its conclusion that the lease of the land for a public golf course at a rental rate that is substantially below what the property could generate were it used for other purposes does not meet the intent of Colonel Brackenridge's gift. Brackenridge was a great benefactor of several cities in Texas, and in fact, expressly conveyed some land for public park purposes, most notably the Brackenridge Park in San Antonio. He gave the Brackenridge Tract in Austin, however, specifically to support the educational mission of the University.

As mentioned earlier, the Board has leased a portion of the Brackenridge Tract to the City for a public golf course since 1937. Decisions by past Boards of Regents to permit use of the land as a golf course have provided an amenity to the community for more than 70 years.

The current lease involves approximately 141 acres. Since the golf course was first established, however, the City has established three additional 18-hole courses and a 9-hole course. In addition to courses maintained by the City, there are numerous other courses open to the public in Austin and the surrounding area.