




MEMORANDUM

TO: Parks and Recreation Board

FROM: Kimberly A. McNeeley, CPRP, Director
Austin Parks and Recreation Department 

DATE: June 16, 2020

SUBJECT: Response to Questions from June 5, 2020, Contracts and Concessions Committee Meeting Regarding Texas Rowing Center

At the June 5, 2020 Contracts and Concessions Committee Meeting, Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) staff requested that the Concessions and Contracts Committee recommend the following to the Parks and Recreation Board (PARB): *City Council negotiate and execute an agreement with the successful proposer, Texas Rowing Center (TRC).*

Committee members approved the recommendation and placed it on the PARB Consent Agenda contingent on the provision of follow-up information for several questions. Below please find the requested follow-up information:

Q: Provide a timeline for removing the boats, trailers, tools, and other equipment that is currently being stored on the path along Stephen F. Austin/Veterans Drive (across from the Austin High School staff parking lot).

A. That equipment does not belong to TRC, but rather to UT Crew, which uses the dock. TRC will arrange a meeting with the UT Crew leadership to discuss a plan for removing the equipment. TRC will take responsibility for removing all the equipment by the end of the year.

Q. Provide a timeline for the completion of the new boathouse.

A. TRC anticipates the new boathouse, including the new wooden dock frontage, will be completed by 11/15/2020.

Q. Provide a timeline for general cleanup and landscaping of the site.

A. TRC is obligated, under an issued site permit, to perform certain landscaping tasks along the trail. TRC has visited with a Trail Foundation principal regarding the work. Please note in consultation, it is advised the best time to do this work is the fall. TRC

anticipates this work will be completed by 11/15/2020. TRC is in the process of moving all boats located outside on land to indoor space - either to the new floating boathouses or inside the existing boathouse constructed in 2005. Once those boats are moved, the outdoor racks located behind the boathouse built in 2005 will be removed, and the area will be landscaped. This work will be completed before the contract expires on 11/15/2020.

Q. Provide clarification on whether any current buildings or structures will be moved or dismantled once the new boathouse is completed and in use.

A. The old office building will be evacuated once the office in the new boathouse is completed later this year. The boats in that building have already been moved to the dock. TRC does not plan to remove the old office building before the current contract expires on 11/15/2020.

Q. Provide a list of TRC's philanthropic efforts, such as scholarships for underserved youth and/or support to other charities or non-profits.

A. TRC's charitable and philanthropic programs include the following:

- Rowing Scholarships for Young People – One of the largest after-school rowing programs in the country with 187 students starting spring 2020. The kids can receive PE credit, and race at local, state, and national championship regattas. TRC Juniors won the most medals of any team at the U.S. Central Region Championships regatta in May 2019. TRC provides rowing scholarships for five students, from economically disadvantaged families, each semester.*
- Summer Camp Scholarships – Over 500 kids in grades 3 through 12 participated in TRC's summer camps in 2019, including over 79 kids with disabilities. TRC provides summer camp scholarships for students with disabilities or from economically disadvantaged families.*
- Austin High PE Program – TRC provides a water-sport program for Austin High School students that is taught during the school day. The purpose is to introduce economically disadvantaged kids to rowing and paddling at no cost and as part of their regular school curriculum. Enrollment is over 60 students.*
- Adaptive Programs – Along with non-profit partner Texas Rowing For All, TRC provides rowing and kayaking programming for people with physical, sensory, and intellectual disabilities. TRC donated \$6,000 directly to Texas Rowing For All to fund its programs, which served over 250 people in the past year. TRC has organized a rowing program for students with special needs that is part of Austin High's curriculum. TRC is recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee as a Paralympic Sports Club – the only rowing organization so honored in the southwest United States. TRC does not receive any monetary compensation for any of these programs.*
- Cap 2K Swim – Since 2003, TRC has been a sponsor and the finish point for the Cap 2K Swim, which typically has 200 swimmers. The event raises money for prostate cancer research.*

- Other Charitable Events – TRC sponsors Keep Austin Beautiful cleanups, and dozens of other charitable paddling group events throughout the year. Other examples include Con Mi MADRE, Kealing Middle School's Explore Austin elective class, and Texas River School. In addition to providing no-cost equipment, TRC provides \$4,000 in annual funding to Texas River School to offer it's "Discover the Source Program" for students at primarily east Austin elementary schools, including Sanchez, Metz, and Zavala. All of these organizations primarily serve economically-disadvantaged young people.
- Sponsorship of Austin Parks Foundation and Trail Foundation – TRC is a business partner member of both of these organizations.
- Gift Certificates for Charitable Events – In the past year, TRC has provided rowing and paddling gift certificates to over 500 non-profit local charities to support silent auction fundraisers.

Q. Provide clarification on who uses the weight training area behind the large boathouse (e.g., members, staff, AHS students, general public, etc.)

A. TRC assembled the weight training area for the juniors rowing program around 2013. It is used by TRC juniors athletes and staff.

Q. How are you ensuring that all employees are following local orders for face coverings and social distancing mandates in the City of Austin and Travis County per the Mayor's Stay Home—Work Safe Order no 20200529-012?

A. Regarding social distancing, TRC has properly spaced cones set up for the rental lines and on the dock for customers waiting to receive equipment. Further, TRC is running extra registers to reduce rental lines. TRC has purchased an additional 100 SUPs, 48 kayaks, and 5 canoes to increase boat inventory dramatically, thereby reducing or eliminating customer "staging" lines on the dock. Regarding masks, TRC has doubled and tripled our efforts to make sure that our staffers are wearing their masks at all times when working with the public. TRC Leadership has personally been on site enforcing the rule. TRC leadership also sends daily email reminders to managers, coaches, and staff directing them to wear masks.

If further information is required, feel free to contact me at (512) 974-6722.