



Recommendation for Action

File #: 23-3549, **Agenda Item #:** 48.

12/14/2023

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of an agreement with Huston-Tillotson University for the use of Downs Field, located at 2816 East 12th Street.

Lead Department

Parks and Recreation Department.

Prior Council Action:

June 23, 2016 - Council authorized the negotiation and execution of an agreement between the City and Huston-Tillotson University.

For More Information:

Christa McCarthy, Division Manager, 512-974-3903.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

November 27, 2023 - The Parks and Recreation Board recommended the authorize the negotiation and execution of this agreement, and recommended the agreement include a designated point of contact for the community, the schedule for usage specifically by Huston-Tillotson University, and recommended any sub-contracting agreement by Huston-Tillotson University be approved by the Parks and Recreation Department on a 9-0 vote. Recommendation No. 20231127-3.

Additional Backup Information:

The Parks and Recreation Department and Huston-Tillotson University have historically partnered to host National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics baseball games and currently have an agreement that is scheduled to expire on December 31, 2023. Downs Field has historic significance to both the City of Austin and the African American community. As such, there is a shared desire by the community and the Department to provide public access to this space to celebrate its historic and cultural significance.

In order to continue to host collegiate baseball games, while providing community access to the site, the basic terms and conditions of the agreement are as follows:

- Establish a three-year contract term with two, two-year extension options for a total of seven years with Huston Tillotson University.
- Establish facility operations and maintenance roles and responsibilities for Huston-Tillotson University.
- Create an equitable practice and game schedule to appropriately meet the needs of Huston-Tillotson University.
- Waive field and utility fees in exchange for Huston-Tillotson University providing year-round maintenance of Downs Field.
- Require Huston-Tillotson University to establish and conduct at a minimum of two volunteer program/events for PARD or the community at Downs Field.
- Set aside dates in the season calendar for scheduled community use of the facility in support of community, historical and cultural activities.

The public benefit of the agreement between the Parks and Recreation Department and Huston-Tillotson University is to honor the historical partnership with the university and provide affordable National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics baseball games for public enjoyment. By requiring public access dates, the public will now have the opportunity to host activities in honor of the field's historic and cultural significance in a space not previously accessible. All benefits will be provided at no or minimal cost to the public.