



MINUTES

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, April 5, 2005
6:00 p.m.
Memorial Park Senior Center
1800 Byron Street

Members Present

Bernie Sargent, Chairman
Eileen Karlsruher, Vice Chairman
Daniel Delahaye
Walt Phillips
Yolanda Cordova
Cherilyn Dorsey
Walt Phillips
Robert A. Gonzales
Julio Norman
Olga E. Holguin
Brent Sanders
Henry Stokes
Alejandro Sanchez

Staff Present

Dr. Norman Merrifield, Dir.
Pete Dunavant
Joe Rodriguez
Lucy Martinez
Margie Torres

Others

Ruben Saldana, Ext. Service
Maru Barua, Ext. Service
Raymond Bader, Ext. Service
Jim Rodgers, Ext. Service

Members Absent:

Kelly Duke
Charlotte Johnson
Salvador Quintanilla
Mitch Doblado
Alma Wilson
Jose L. Gutierrez
Alice Davis

1. Meeting called to order by Chairman, Bernie Sargent 6:05 p.m.
2. **Motion to approve minutes of March 1, 2005; Motion passed unanimously.**
3. **Petitions & Communications from the Public Sector:**
 - a) Brent Sanders, Park Board member announced that the White Spur Park Committee, will have Park Clean Up Day, Sunday, April 10 starting at 2:00 pm. Volunteers with brooms and rakes are needed and welcomed.
 - b) Joe Rodriguez, Recreation Service Manager for Parks and Recreation Department announced the start of Senior Games April 9 at the Multi-Purpose Center and "Dia De Los Ninos" event at Washington Park on April 30th.
 - c) A new member to the Park Board Advisory Committee, Henry Stokes appointed March 8th, 2005, was introduced and welcomed to the Committee.
4. **Service Recognition:** Carlos Apodaca, Recreation Service Supervisor at Armijo Center was recognized for his outstanding service for the past 30 years at Parks and Recreation. Mr. Apodaca was presented with a certificate from the Mayor and a pin.

5. **Introduction of County Extension Agents (Partnering with Parks): Ruben Saldana, County Extension Director**, stated that the Extension Service is a educational arm of the Texas A&M University System organized based on Federal, State and Local Funding. Mr. Saldana introduced Maru Barua, with Marketing and Public Information Agent, Jim Rodgers is 4-H Youth and Development Agent, Dr. Raymond Bader is the Natural Resources Agent. Dr. Jim McAfee was in town from the Dallas Center and is a Turf Specialist. He stated they will be offering their service to parks, accessing the grounds and not only apply human resources available locally but also bring people in as needed to work on parks to improve El Paso Parks. The 4-H provides materials and curriculum that classroom teachers can use in program settings and they work with the YWCA afterschool programs as a resource and put together activities with youth. They are working on a youth curriculum that will be used in an afterschool setting for City Parks.
6. **Status Report of QOL Projects:** Item tabled until next meeting.
7. **Update on 5 Mile River Trail: John Torres, Interim Director for the County Parks System** discussed the phases of the trail. Phase II has been completed out of 3 phases of construction. FM259, La Union Road is an access trail that goes north for about 3 miles, another access point is at Venton Road going north ward for approximately 2 miles where bridge crosses the river. The trail is 10 feet wide, composed of cement and has vegetation consisting of cotton woods, mesquite and rosemary. It also has the weather seal bridge you see across the levies. Phase III was deleted in the Lower Valley area near Fabens due to the fact that bond money was not originally identified for that project Phase I starts where Country Club crosses the river going northward to Phase II. Bond monies were originally identified from the bond issuance that have subsequently been identified as monies to go to the Courthouse. Invitation was extended to Park Board for the dedication ceremony of this Phase II trail, April 30th at FM259, La Union Road at 10:00 a.m.
8. **Status Report on Rio Bosque: John Sproul, Program Coordinator/Manager, Rio Bosque Wetlands Park**, presented a Power Point presentation showing Rio Bosque as a 372 acre City of El Paso Park, located along the Rio Grande about 2 miles downstream from the Zaragosa Bridge. Rio Bosque is the site of a long term project to try and re-establish over time examples of native plant and animal communities that historically were found in river valleys in this region. UTEP manages the site under a license agreement with the city, Ducks Unlimited designed the Wetlands Project for the site, the US section of the International Boundary and Water Commission built the Wetland Complex, EPWU and EP County Water Improvement District #1 cooperated to provide water to the site. Park Partners and the Friends of the Rio Bosque are active in every aspect such as on the ground habitat management to trail construction, fundraising, education, outreach advocacy, etc. Treated waste water from the Roberto Bustamante Waste Water Treatment Plant north of the Park is used for vegetation. Last year there was construction of the Parks Visitors Center designed mainly to serve as a staging area for school groups. The structure is in place but facility is not yet complete. Electrical and water system is needed. Three small trail head parking areas are now available to the three main entrances to the park. Top priorities include a small foot bridge to serve as the main entrance to the park; water is a priority also. Water used from the Treatment plant is the same water for irrigation, which is first priority. They must work with irrigation

district and find a way to get a little water running through that channel during the growing season. The district installed 6 wells along the perimeter of the park and in discussion they offered to work with their drilling contractor to help get an additional well specifically for the Bosque. The contractor will drill the well and case it but funds are needed for the pump, motor and operation. Funding comes from different sources such as Texas Parks and Wildlife, El Paso del Norte Health Foundation, Menoes Foundation, Environmental Protection Agency and UTEP pays Mr. Sproul's salary and the student that works with him.

9. **Discussion and Action on Acosta Sports Grievance Subcommittee Meeting held Thursday, March 10, 2005:** No Action Taken on this item until further discussion.
10. **Discussion and Possible Action on Moratorium of Park Naming Policy and Procedures: Motion made** to continue the Moratorium for the next 120 days.
Motion passed unanimously.
11. **Meeting Adjourned:** 7:30 p.m.