

**MINUTES  
PARKS & RECREATION BOND COMMITTEE MEETING**

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2011**

**6:00 PM**

**CLIFF MORTON DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS SERVICES CENTER  
1901 SOUTH ALAMO**

Committee Members Present:	Parks Committee Co-Chairs: Alex Nava, Lisa Rodriguez; District 1: Abigail Kinneson, Ross Garcia; District 2: Alex Saucedo, Bill Burman, Lisa Pfeiffer; District 3: Elaine Anaya-Ortiz, Leticia Ozuna; District 4: Barbara "Robbie" Robinette; District 5: Angela Menchaca, Diane Lang, Patti Ortiz; District 6: Dominick Dina, Jesse Garcia; District 7: Aaron Hanna, Alejandro Soto, Ray Basham; District 8: Chuck Saxer, Preston Woolfolk, Roland Gonzales; District 9: Cindy Jorgensen, John Kent, Zac Harris; District 10: Paul Jimenez, Roger Martinez
Committee Members Absent:	Frank Quijano, District 1; Olga Martinez, District 3; Edie Johnson, Paco Felici, District 4; Camille Fiorillo, District 6; Sherri Dugas, District 10
Staff Present:	Mayor Julián Castro; Peter Zaroni, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Mike Frisbie, <i>CIMS Director</i> ; Xavier D. Urrutia, <i>Director of Parks and Recreation</i> ; Rodney Dziuk, <i>Assistant Capital Programs Manager</i> ; Donna Guerra, <i>Office of the City Clerk</i>
Also Present:	Lila Cockrell, <i>Mayor Emeritus</i> and Tri-Chair
Archived live-stream available:	<a href="http://nowcastsa.com/blogs/charlotteanne-lucas/webcast-san-antonio-bond-hearings-sidewalks-streets-parks-drainage-and-bui">http://nowcastsa.com/blogs/charlotteanne-lucas/webcast-san-antonio-bond-hearings-sidewalks-streets-parks-drainage-and-bui</a>

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co-Chair Lisa Rodriguez called the meeting to order.

**I. Opening Comments, Roll Call, and Approve Minutes**

Co-Chair Rodriguez thanked the committee members for their participation. She asked that a review of the minutes be made, after which no changes or addenda were indicated. The minutes were approved.

Co-Chair Rodriguez welcomed Mayor Julián Castro. Mayor Castro thanked the committee for the many hours they have put in; research into the projects; and for taking their position seriously. Mayor Castro stressed the importance of parks for a population to thrive and the need to keep District, as well as City needs, in mind. He expressed hope for well considered and balanced recommendations.

Co-Chair Nava explained the meeting process and requested that three items be kept in mind: 1) Staff recommendations; 2) Committee member perspective; and 3) Considerations for further vetting of projects.

## **II. Updates from October 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

Mike Frisbie provided updates. No action items were requested, but he provided information on projects requested through Project Request Forms via the San Antonio 2012 Bond Program webpage, as well as Citizens to be Heard requests. Mr. Frisbie stated that feedback and participation in the public meeting process is possible through the webpage. He also reported that NOWCastSA will live stream the meetings.

Mr. Frisbie made the distinction between deferred maintenance and capital improvements.

## **III. Review and Discuss Recommended Tour Itinerary**

Mike Frisbie reviewed the slide that outlined the December 3<sup>rd</sup> tour itinerary for all four committees.

Lisa Pfeiffer, District 2, requested that Pittman Park be replaced with MLK Park, to which the committee responded in agreement.

Angela Menchaca, District 5, suggested a possible recreation center for the Lone Star Neighborhood Area, and to include the area in the tour. She also suggested the removal of Hardberger Park from the tour.

Cindy Jorgensen, District 9, requested review of the votes for and against the sites to be visited before removal of a site from the tour.

District 8 and 9 did not agree with the removal of Hardberger Park from the tour.

Peter Zanoni suggested an additional site from the District 5 area (Lone Star neighborhood) be added to the itinerary, to which the committee agreed.

Diane Lang, District 5, noted that not all committee members will be attending the tour. Aaron Hanna, District 7, requested a list of focal points for each park to be visited.

Mike Frisbie explained that the scope of each park project will be highlighted on the tour. Xavier Urrutia and CIMS Staff will be available at the tour to provide explanations.

The Committee recessed for a break.

## **IV. Bond Committee Discussion and Analysis**

### **a. Committee Member Project Input and Deliberation**

Co-Chair Nava resumed the meeting. He stated that at least one representative from each District should plan to attend the last two meetings, the tour day and the final meeting, where staff will present what they consider the committee's consensus. By the end of the fourth meeting, a framework will have been determined in order to present it to Council.

Paul Jimenez, District 10, suggested the consolidation of projects in the instance that a District has many projects. This would make a larger impact for the money to be spent. He cited District 5 as an example of doing this. Projects the district would like to see funded include Sunken Gardens and Gervin Academy. He stated that a more informed decision could be made regarding parks if there was information available about the recommendations of the Facilities Committee.

John Kent, District 9, concurred with staff recommendations. He explained that population growth has produced a need for development of Panther Springs and Hardberger Park.

Chuck Saxer, District 8, stated that a 5-year bond program should be focused on Major projects. Hardberger Park has been documented as a developing park with a growing number of visitors. He stressed that parks money should be used for parks, and members should be mindful of money used for educational programs in the parks.

Ray Basham, District 7, recommended that the funding for Gilbert Garza Park be re-examined and supported continued funding of Woodlawn Lake Park. He noted that Lees Creek Park is not on the list and should be considered for funding. It was confirmed that Gilbert Garza Park has \$500,000 in funding.

Peter Zanoni noted that the Lees Creek Park Project, recommended by Ed Garza, is a \$750,000 improvement project. He confirmed it is on City property.

Dominick Dina, District 6, stated that his district supports the greater good and reaffirmed that money allocated to parks projects should stay with parks. He advocated for the Urban Ecology Center at Hardberger Park and for development of Panther Springs Park, as the population in this area has grown, and the people there need to feel that they are a part of San Antonio. He also advocated for Stinson Park Ballfield and the Witte Museum. He suggested that funds not utilized be spent on parks only and not be re-directed to other areas. He requested that the Council increase funding for Parks and Recreation.

Angela Menchaca, District 5, highlighted that the parks on the West, South and East Sides have been neglected. She stated that the greater need in these Districts is for recreation areas and facilities that give children a place to be other than the streets. She stressed that the population in older neighborhoods has waited many years for improvements. She suggested that groups such as the Master Naturalists

consider developing their program in the older parts of town (such as the Mission Reach Area) and not only in more recently developed areas of town.

Robbie Robinette, District 4, advocated for Heritage Park and for the Duck Pond and Skate Park. She added that park funds should stay with parks projects.

Mike Frisbie commented that the Bond Counsel ensures that any bond savings are used within the parks category.

Leticia Ozuna, District 3, stated that the District is in agreement with allocations for Pickwell, Highland and Pytel Parks, Southside Lions Park, HemisFair Park, Brackenridge Park, Miraflores, Botanical Garden, Witte Museum, Japanese Tea Garden, and the Rosedale/Elemendorf Corridor. She requested an additional \$200,000 for Stinson Park (5 Diamonds) as it services multiple districts. She encouraged projects that develop connectivity – corridor plans, contiguous, safe areas, and added that future bond projects should have a vision and evaluation weighted for connectivity.

Mike Frisbie stated that the holistic approach is taken into account, but not at the expense of much-needed improvements with the greatest impact.

Lisa Pfeiffer, District 2, disagreed with the staff recommendations at the last meeting. She cited neglect and pointed to the disproportionate allocation of funds from district to district. District 2 is seeking additional funding for MLK, Northampton (to finish the Master Plan) and Herrera Parks.

Alex Saucedo, District 2, presented figures showing that the last group of Bond Projects allotted Hardberger Park \$90 million and MLK Park \$1 million. He stated that the historic status of the MLK Park; its affiliation with one of the largest MLK Marches in the nation; and a San Antonio tax-base relationship; make it a worthy recipient of more funds.

Bill Burman, District 2, stressed the length of time that the older neighborhoods in the original 36-square miles and inside Loop 410 have waited for allocations. He suggested taking \$1 million from Hardberger Park and \$1 million from HemisFair Park to be allocated to District 2.

Co-Chair Nava confirmed from District 2 that they are requesting a total of \$4 million for MLK; \$600,000 for Northampton; and \$600,000 for Herrera.

Abigail Kennison, District 1, reiterated the need to address long-neglected parks in Districts 1 through 5 and improve the quality of life. She confirmed that District 1 parks need all the money in their allocation.

Ross Garcia, District 1, added that they are satisfied with the funding level of HemisFair Park, but they need to review the scope, details and costs.

Mike Frisbie stated that they can work with Andres Andujar (CEO of HemisFair Park Area Redevelopment Corp.) to provide project details.

Co-Chair Rodriguez re-capped the concerns of all the District comments and particularly acknowledged disparities.

Roger Martinez, District 10, requested a list from District 2 that clearly outlines what the money for MLK Park will be used for. He also requested information regarding how the money related to public art would be used.

Mike Frisbie explained that a City Ordinance states that each proposition has 1% set aside for public art, and that CIMS will work with the Public Art Board to create a plan for the best use of that money.

Abigail Kennison, District 1, asked if the community has input into the process. Mike Frisbie responded by noting that the board works with the Office of Cultural Affairs.

Leticia Ozuna, District 3, remarked that the allocation for the Northwest Recreation Center in District 6 has not been mentioned, even though there have been impassioned pleas for projects such as this one.

Mike Frisbie explained that the Northwest Recreation Center is a city-led effort and partnership, and it is on the parks bond list instead of the facilities list because of the recreation component.

Abigail Kinneson, District 1, asked if groups can match funding amounts.

Mike Frisbie confirmed that matching funds are possible, but that a firm commitment must be in place for that option.

Zac Harris, District 9, re-affirmed support for the entire Hardberger Park Project \$3 million allocation, in response to the suggestion that \$1 million be removed.

Peter Zaroni commented that a consensus would be sought on the tour, with a majority rule. It is not an official vote, but rather a gauging of the tolerance of the committee. He also stated that when a District works within its own allocation (as District 5), there may be a more favorable opportunity for change.

Patty Ortiz, District 5, requested clarification regarding whether regional park allocation funds are the same as District funds.

Mike Frisbie responded that the city or regional park status is determined by staff and that these parks are not part of the District allocations. He explained that all

committee members have input regarding city and regional park projects, as well as those across all Districts.

Angela Menchaca, District 5, expressed concern that there is insufficient information regarding how money is to be spent on projects, especially HemisFair Park, which makes effective decision-making difficult.

Co-Chair Nava clarified that HemisFair Park originally requested \$64 million dollars; \$32 million is allocated from the Parks Committee.

Omar Gonzales, Director of Planning, Development and Operations, HemisFair Park Area Development Corporation, explained that the proposed impact for HemisFair Park is similar to that from the original 1968 development, and that the timeframe to complete this is by the 50-Year Anniversary in 2018. He noted that additional information on the breakdown for the \$15 million recommended for Parks will be available soon.

#### **V. Citizens to be Heard**

**Nettie Hinton** submitted a project request for the land next to Hays Street Bridge that was donated to the City by the Dawson family to be a park. That park land may be misidentified and the difference between the two parks with the name Dawson needs to be clarified.

**Kirk Feldman** presented a Sunken Garden update. He noted that testing and studies are complete, and meetings with River Road Neighborhood Association are taking place on an ongoing basis. Mr. Feldman presented a comprehensive proposal that takes the project amount from \$20 million to \$18 million, and stated that funding outside the City is being sought.

**Kevin Livingston** spoke in support of the Botanical Gardens project. He explained the importance of making San Antonians aware of their connection to plants, and noted that a Master Plan is being developed.

**David Walsworth** spoke in support of Panther Springs Park. He called attention to the additional fact sheet for the Wilderness Oak Alliance that provides additional information on the Mays Family YMCA and on Parman Library usage, which supports the potential regional status of Panther Springs Park.

**Michael P. Sanchez**, Executive Director of Facilities for SAISD, spoke on behalf of the Board of Trustees of SAISD in favor of the \$400,000 for improvements for the San Antonio Natatorium. He emphasized that the natatorium is used by SAISD students and athletes for their programs, as well as by the community. Mike Frisbie noted that the funding amount may be increased to \$500,000.

**Gerry Noriega**, of Gerardo Noriega Architect LLC, advocated for Normoyle Park in District 5, which is not on the list of projects. He stated that the park needs

many repairs to make it useable. He proposed \$750,000 for improvements and a walking and jogging trail and community garden. Co-Chair Nava encouraged Mr. Noriega to discuss with District 5 committee members.

**Robert Herrera**, President of Panther Creek Homeowners Association, voiced his association’s support for the Panther Springs Park project. He emphasized that population growth has created the need for a park within walking distance where there is none.

**Leroy Martinez**, President of Canterbury Farms Neighborhood Association, advocated for Gilbert Garza Park. He indicated his belief that funding should be utilized toward expanding the park rather than building a skate park. He stated that the park is heavily used and should be regarded as a high-use park. Co-Chair Nava encouraged working with District 5 committee members.

**Robert Escobedo**, Collins Garden Neighborhood, advocated for a basketball court be converted to additional parking and also for a covered playground.

**John Linkhart**, Northside Neighborhoods for Organized Development (NNOD), advocated for Hardberger Park and completion of the Urban Ecology Center. He stressed that the park may attract volunteer activity because of the Center and the Master Naturalists Program.

**Elizabeth Mora** advocated for Morrill Park in District 5. She stated that for eight years, the park has only had two courts for basketball; one water fountain; and only four swings for children to play. She requested a covered playscape and \$200,000 for improvements. Co-Chair Nava encouraged Ms. Mora to fill out a Project Request Form. Peter Zanoni stated that Xavier Urrutia would speak with Ms. Mora.

**VI. Next Steps for Community Bond Committee Process**

Zac Harris, District 9, expressed appreciation for the way District 5 has been working with fund allocations for projects.

Co-Chair Nava reminded the committee that there will be forthcoming details about projects.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

**Co-Chair,** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Name**

**Co-Chair,** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Name**