

Bond Advisory Committee

October 8th, 2014, 2:00 p.m.

Upstairs Conference Room – Civic Center

The Bond Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, October 8th, 2014 at 2:00 pm in the Upstairs Conference Room, Civic Center, 1100 North 6th Street, Abilene, Texas. Stormy Higgins, Chairman of the Committee was present and presiding with the following members: Carissa Platt, Jack Wilson, Sylvia Leal, John Hill, Shannel Anderson, Dr. Allison Garrett, Sam Vinson, Mike Dunnahoo, Lt. Col. Michael Harner, Brent Casey, Michael Hernandez, and Rev. Iziar Lankford. Committee members absent were Jason Smith, Robert Kern and Terry Johnson.

Stormy Higgins called the meeting to order.

Chairman Higgins stated that the committee has been given the minutes from the September 17th meeting, and there being no additions, corrections or deletions to the minutes as presented Dr. Allison Garrett made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mike Dunnahoo made the second, motion carried.

Cedar Creek Waterway

Randy Barnett briefed the committee on the project of enhancing the Cedar Creek Waterway Project.

Cedar Creek Waterway is a landmark transformation of Abilene's landscape to provide great new recreation spaces, generate economic development and create an oasis that will benefit the entire community.

This vision for The Cedar Creek Waterway is not new. The idea has been in the Parks Plan since 1978. After years of public study, it was included in the Abilene Parks Master Plan in 2008. The greenbelt travels through seven city parks – Kirby Lake Park, South 14th Kirby Park, Cal Young Park (Lytle Creek runs adjacent to the park) Stevenson Park, Reyes Flores Park (a pocket park adjacent to the old WTU power plant) Will Hair Park to Seabee Park on Ft. Phantom Lake. The greenbelt already includes hundreds acres of land owned and maintained by the City of Abilene.

Phase 1 – a 2 mile stretch from South 11th to North 10th

Vision: Leverage our recycled water to create an oasis in Abilene

- 1-3 million gallons of recycled water available per day (in good years) leverage the recycled water to transform Abilene's landscape and create economic development

Water sources for The Cedar Creek Waterway:

- Recycled water
- Water wells pumping ground water into Cedar Creek
- Rainfall

Features of the Cedar Creek Waterway:

- nature trails
- walking, hiking, cycling for people of all ages
- from pond to pond and park to park
- trails provide a way to explore and appreciate nature
- shallow-water kayaking
- ponds with small retention structures
- waterfalls, fountains
- paddle boats
- amphitheaters, pavilions
- decks, patios, picnic areas
- cafes, restaurants, coffee shops
- wide basin with room for greenbelt development
- outdoor concerts
- outdoor sculpture
- cultural events
- Riverwalk-type town square

Recreation & Education

- daily recreational use by wide variety of citizens, visitors
- festivals and activities with cumulative impact
- conservation of natural resources
- hands on science, economic and environmental outdoor classrooms
- historic tours

Remake the Landscape & Image of Abilene

- become a leader in water recycling
- become a leader in providing recreational spaces
- redevelop the core of Abilene

Retail & Residential Development

- rehabilitated housing, new homes
- redevelop areas adjacent to greenbelt
- cafes with patio views of greenbelt
- lunch spaces for downtown workers next to waterfalls

Economic Development

- provide local businesses with new opportunities
- major asset to promote tourism, create regional destination
- parks and greenbelts add value to neighborhoods

- active public spaces generate traffic, boost economy

Discussion included: 1) water issues (rain); 2) recycled water; 3) ongoing maintenance costs; 4) old WTU Building; and 5) connect to other city parks.

Kirby Lake Nature Park

Mitch Wright on behalf of The West Texas Science Center briefed the committee on the Kirby Lake Nature Park.

- ✓ The mission of the Kirby Lake Nature Park is to improve and expand the educational, scientific, environmental, and recreational efforts of this valuable resource for the enjoyment of All visitors.

Abilene's First Nature Park

- A living laboratory for public schools and universities
- A new kind of economic engine expanding economic diversity
- A project that partners well with Abilene's existing programs, institutions and facilities
- Transforming a much neglected park asset
- Designed to be compatible with existing uses
- Aggressively seeking private funding
- Over 200 species of birds
- 37 species of mammals
- 42 species of reptiles
- 12 species of amphibians

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

- Recorded nearly 13,000 fish caught in 2011
- 5000 blue catfish
- 3,500 channel catfish
- 3,300 bluegill

Identified by Texas Parks and Wildlife as an important location for bird watching as indicated on TPWD published map series ..

Primary activities are:

- ✓ Active sports on east edge
- ✓ Fishing

Illegal Activities include:

- ✓ 4-wheeling I mudding
- ✓ Trash dumping

No other public park facility in The Big Country offers a living, natural science based park for the enjoyment and study of the natural environment.

Project Benefits:

Environmental Opportunities:

- Habitat enhancement
- Water quality improvements
- Increased biodiversity

Educational Opportunities:

- Stimulus for related environmental programs
- Multi-Institutional research
- Public school field trips nearby
- Extensive interpretation programs

Economic Development Opportunities:

- Tourism market expansion
- Market stimulus for adjacent commercial real estate
- Diversity of activities promotes longer stays and more opportunity to spend dollars

Social and Civic Opportunities:

- Enhanced facilities and opportunities for diverse recreation on the same site attracting a wide variety of visitation
- Leveraging dramatically underutilized land for a unique experience
- Connectivity to the larger Abilene trail and park system

Primary Phases

Multiple Avenues of Progress - PLANNING

- Moody Foundation Grant Application
- Bond Advisory Committee
- Preliminary Site Assessment
- Dialogue with multiple partners and stakeholders

Implementation Phases:

- Securing the site from damage
- Finalizing site assessment for habitat
- Continual funding activities
- Initiating restoration activities
- Building educational strategy
- Promotional strategy elements
- Constructed elements (multiple phases)
- Initiating programmatic elements

Next Steps- PLANNING

- Migrating project into the public arena
- Initiating project master planning
- Establishing public park goals and timelines
- Stakeholder engaging
- Finalizing Master Plan

Request:

Protecting and securing this park from further destruction by closing all gaps with fencing.

Iron Pipe fence 6,290 LF	\$157,250
Barbed wire 5 strand	\$ 33,142
	\$190,392

FORT PHANTOM HILL

Faith Gage presented the following information regarding the projects for Fort Phantom Hill projects.

Cost Estimates for Johnson Park Improvements
 2014 Bond Presentation
 Johnson Park

Public Restroom at Construct Public Restroom	\$ 70,000
North Boat Ramp: (6-Cover Picnic Tables already built)	
Extended Boat Ramp - Boat Ramp Extension (low water usage)	\$ 70,000
	Total Cost: \$145,000

Cost Estimates for Seabee Park
 Improvements

2014 Bond Presentation

Seabee Park		
Equestrian Trail	Hitching Post and Horse Troughs	\$ 30,000
Parking	Pave a parking lot for equestrian Trail	\$ 15,000
Bird-Watching		
Expansion	Expand Current Platform Area	\$ 50,000
		Total Cost: \$ 95,000

Paving of Unpaved Roads

Total cost without curb and gutter	\$441,991
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Total 2014 Bond Package

Johnson Park	\$145,000
Seabee Park	\$ 95,000
Paving for unpaved named roads	<u>\$441,991</u>
Total	\$681,991

Chairman Higgins asked that the bond committee come up with their own priorities of the projects that have been presented and to email him with a list of locations that the committee would like to visit, for the next meeting.

Chairman Higgins adjourned the meeting at 3:54 p.m.

Danette Dunlap, TRMC
City Secretary

Stormy Higgins
Chairman