

Village of Wimberley Parks and Recreation Board
City Hall, 13210 Ranch Road 12, Wimberley
Minutes of Regular Meeting
May 18, 2005, 6:30 p.m.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Malcolm Harris at 6:30 p.m. Present were Board members Mark Bursiel, Fred Franz, Jan Fulkerson, Malcolm Harris, Dell Hood, Tim Thompson, and Horace Wilson. Board members Linda Hudson and Thad Nance were excused.

Minutes of Special Called Meeting on May 3, 2005 were approved by unanimous vote.

Public Comment: No members of the public were present.

A. Reports

1. Staff/Council liaison report on closing on Blue Hole property:

Council member Marilee Wood said Texas Parks & Wildlife wired its grant funds to the City's bank on May 16 and the title papers on Blue Hole are signed.

Board members watched a video on Blue Hole filmed, produced and narrated by Wimberley area residents.

2. Report on Cypress Creek Nature Trail & Preserve:

Horace Wilson said Council accepted Board's recommendation for construction of the Nature Trail entry facilities and the contract with G. Creek has been signed. The joint committee of Parks Board and Water and Wastewater Advisory Board members is still collecting information and considering options on a toilet facility. The consensus is strongly in favor of using portable toilets in the area behind the Square.

Horace reviewed the proposal for a storm drain from Old Kyle Road and construction of a small pad for the pump for the water feature, which could also serve as a storage area for items such as rakes, hoses, etc.

3. Volunteer Program:

Malcolm Harris noted that now that the Village has title to the Blue Hole property, we can use the many individuals and groups who have offered to volunteer for projects in the Village's parks.

4. Blue Hole Master Planning grant process:

Council member Wood said the Mayor has asked for a meeting with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center staff to discuss progress on grant funding for the Blue Hole master plan. She and Carolyn Nichols will participate in the meeting; Malcolm said he would be available for that meeting also.

5. Memorial Day Party in Blue Hole park - Board liaison to fund-raising group:

Fred, Jan and Mark all said they have not had any further contact from the fund-raising committee since the first meeting. Council member Wood said the group meets every other week and would like to have a Board representative.

B. Consider and Act

1. Memorial Day Party in the Park:

Council member Wood said plans for the public event at Blue Hole from noon to 7:00 p.m. on May 28 are well under control, and suggested Board members should be at the Trust for Public Land table to meet the public and answer questions about the park. The party will be free, with music from local groups and food for sale. TPL will have special Blue Hole T-shirts for sale.

Board members discussed the plans for the public event and what their roles should be. Tim Thompson moved that the Board create a sign-up sheet for members to volunteer at the Blue Hole party on May 28. Jan Fulkerson seconded. Motion approved 7 Ayes to 0 Nays.

Malcolm said the party would be the time and place to begin public discussion of forming a "Friends of Blue Hole" group to help in continuing to secure funding and to recruit supporters and volunteers for the park. Board members could begin collecting names of those interested in forming such a group and could collect ideas on how the group should function and what it could do from a wide sample of the public.

Board members discussed this suggestion, including whether such a group should be limited to Blue Hole or should include all City parks. They agreed that Blue Hole is the icon for Wimberley and would be the most important part of the park and recreation program for the foreseeable future, and that it should be a Blue Hole support group.

Jan Fulkerson moved the Board should propose to Council that a Friends of Blue Hole group be formed as a volunteer body to support the Blue Hole park. Mark Bursiel seconded. Motion approved 7 Ayes to 0 Nays.

2. Recommendation for Opening Blue Hole in Summer 2005:

Assistant City Administrator Kay Wilkins presented a proposal for opening Blue Hole this summer with two options: the first for limited activities on specific weekends; the second for opening the swimming area only every weekend from Memorial Day until September 11.

Board members discussed the proposal at length, including the allocation for park activities in this year's budget; insurance liability; the condition of the buildings and facilities at Blue Hole; who would staff and supervise each event; outside groups who want access to the park; which weekends or special events are doable; and public

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reaction to keeping the park closed for another year.

Tim Thompson moved that the Board recommend to Council that it adopt a modified version of Option 1, a Special Events only calendar, with four to five events at Blue Hole to be opened to the public, starting with a July 4 weekend event and closing with a Labor Day weekend event. Fred Franz seconded. Motion approved by 7 Ayes to 0 Nays.

C. Work Session:

1. Blue Hole Fund-raising/Volunteers:

For discussion see above agenda items A.3 and A.4.

Council member Wood reported the fund-raising gala on May 27 has been sold out and there is a waiting list for seats. More than 80 items have been donated for the auction. Chef Damien Mandola from Houston has prepared the menu and will cook the meal.

2. Deconstruction of Blue Hole structures and clean-up program:

Malcolm said he is concerned by the condition of buildings at Blue Hole, which he described as all in poor shape and health and safety hazards. He would like to have them torn down as soon as possible. He suggested volunteers with axes and crowbars should be able to do the job in a few days. They should have safety masks because of mold in the buildings. The cultural resources inventory required under the federal grant funding began on May 16 and should be completed in two or three weeks. After that it should be possible to begin tearing down the buildings.

D. Announcements & Requests for Future Agenda Items

Jan Fulkerson said she wants discussions on master planning for Blue Hole to include a possible nature center and offered to collect information on them. She volunteered to contact nature centers in the area to identify people who could speak with the Board.

Tim Thompson said he would like the agenda for Board meetings to include more detail in the Reports and Consider & Act headings, so that people will be better able to understand from the agenda what we are doing.

Dell Hood asked for discussion of the memorandum of understanding with the Wimberley Birding Society, and on the status of the connections for water and power to the WBS refuge.

E. Adjournment: Board members adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Recorded by Dell Hood

Approved June 1, 2005
