

**DRAFT FOR APPROVAL - Minutes for the Travis County
Citizens Bond Advisory Committee
PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETING
Wednesday, June 29, 2011, at 7:00 P.M.
Lago Vista Council Chambers
5803 Thunderbird, Lago Vista**

Attendees:

Committee Member:	Representing:	Travis County Staff:	Affiliation:
John Williams	Precinct 1	Steve Manilla	TNR Staff
Carolyn Vogel	Precinct 3	Wendy Scaperotta	TNR Staff
Mark Taylor Evert	Precinct 3	Charlie Watts	TNR Staff
Leigh Naftolin, M.D.	Precinct 3	Stacey Scheffel	TNR Staff
Joe Gieselman	Precinct 4	Steve Sun	TNR Staff
Terrence L. Irion	Judge	Randy Nicholson	TNR Staff
Nell Penridge	Judge	Laura Seaton	TNR Staff
		Robert Armistead	TNR Staff
		Charles Bergh	TNR Staff
Commissioner Karen Huber	Commissioner Precinct 3		

Guests:

Cindy Atlas	Tom Rugel	Mark Oberholzer
Dale Mitchell	Doug Jackson	Ron Smith
Paul Haskins (?)	Dottie Strickler	Joyce Chong
Bill Angelo	Leonard Strickler	Brain Atlas
David Stoneking	Ike Coronis	Doug Casey
D'Anne Gloris	Jack Gullahorn	Lance Williams (?)
David Freeman	Karen Ford	Chuck Wills
Dorothy Rugel	Bob Bradley	Lisa Wolf
Steve Frick	Marcia Punis	Jim Karolik
Pat Hastings	Shirley Davis	George Newton
David Swift	Gary McMullen	Glenda Newton
Lori Duarte	LaDonna McMullen	Trey Smith
Sam Tipton	Shanin Smith	Elizabeth Jamison

Commencement of Meeting

Meeting called to order by acting Chairman Carolyn Vogel at 7:05 P.M.

Presentations by TNR Staff

Mr. Charlie Watts, Roadway, Safety and Bike/Pedestrian Projects

Ms. Stacey Scheffel, Drainage and Bridge Safety Projects
Ms. Wendy Scaperotta, Parks and Land Conservation Projects

Citizen Communication

Ms. Shirley Davis, RE: Dink Pearson Park

With the North Shore Heritage Cultural Society. His property looks into Dink Pearson so very interested in what happens there. Seems the County is still unclear of land ownership in that area and has helped someone from Travis County with names trying to locate land owners. Dink Pearson is loved to death and many families use the area, looking forward to improvements. Would like a historical marker for a bridge that was across the lake, a 20-foot span that is under Lake Traivs called the Forgotten Bridge. A marker was denied by the Texas Historical Commission so now looking to the County. Also in favor of improvements to Lohman Ford Road. Very dangerous road and would like to see improvements from Boggy Ford all the way to Dink Pearson Park: there are no shoulders, lots of teen drivers, really need some help on that road.

Mr. Sam Tipton, RE: Support of Arkansas Bend Park project

Chairman on the Lago Vista Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, speaking in support of the two Lago Vista projects. Offered the assistance of the Committee for any help needed and grateful for the Lago Vista projects on the list.

Ms. Glenda Newton, RE: Impact on current residences, roads, beach access on encroachment

Lives next to Arkansas Bend Park and is concerned about road improvements as more and larger – campers, boats - vehicular traffic will be coming to the park via inadequate roads with no shoulders and tight s-turns. Have difficult time taking their own RV out of the area and onto Lohman Ford Road. Other concern regarding folks walking around the park point on the lake shore and entering their private property. Had a phone conference with “one of your representatives” and was assured that something would be done like a bunch of boulders, etc. In the State of Texas the landowners will be legally responsible if someone enters their property and gets injured even if there is clear signage. They are very concerned about this. Experiencing theft on their docks now due to low water line and concerned about more public traffic as park attendance increases. There is signage keeping people off of Park property, yet no signage keeping people off private property. Not opposed to improvements yet need assurances about their issues. Also spoke on behalf another property owner who wants a four-foot buffer zone to keep out noise, fumes, etc. George Newton

asked about when specifics will be available about buffer zone details and placement. The current plan reveals no more detail than it did a year ago, wants to see the plan in detail before dirt starts moving.

Wendy Scaperotta went over the timeline: funding is secured first, then a consultant is hired for site analysis and planning and then community input is sought including input regarding the buffers. The buffer was brought up previously and the County will work with landowners on that issue. No more details will be identified until we actually have a project.

Mr. David Stoneking, RE: Lohman Ford

President of a company that owns 68 acres of land on Lohman Ford Road in the proposed realignment area. He is against this project. Have been driving the road for 22 years and sees no need to move it. A couple guys have been assertive in their support of the project, they own about 580 feet of the right-of-way, and the movement of the road allows them to build on the cliff. He feels that these developers spending \$200,000 and the County spending \$1.6 million is "swayed the wrong way." He believes he will be the most impacted as he owns 1500 feet along the road and that there is a more worthy 3000 feet of road improvement needed elsewhere. He is against the project, won't donate land and won't give any money.

Mr. Trey Smith, RE: Lohman Ford Road improvements & Parks improvements

Has lived in the area 12 years and supports the straightening project of Lohman Ford Road. Asked how many accidents have been in this proposed area; nine in the last three years, responded Charlie Watts. Mr. Smith said he knew of at least one motorcycle fatality on the road and there are no shoulders. It is very dangerous. Joe Gieselman asked Charlie Watts if the number of accidents constituted the area as a High Accident Location. Charlie responded no, it did not meet the threshold yet there are safety issues. Steve Manilla shared that when a developer wants to develop land that abuts a County arterial road, the County requires they donate right-of-way for the arterial road and the road may not be in the exact location as the existing road. In this case, right-of-way was dedicated further away from the cliff as a means of pulling the road away and straightening it out a bit. That dedication has been in place since the early 1990s. Also at that time, the developers were required to put money into it, called "fiscal". The developers posted "fiscal" in 1993 or 1994 and we have been holding it ever since to complete this road. Now it is not the highest accident location project in the County but it is a project that will get done. It is in the CAMPO Plan and is going to get done eventually anywhere from now to 2035 and it is intended ultimately to be a four-lane road. So whether we are dealing with a developer to make it happen or doing it on our own it eventually will happen. We're trying to, with direction from the Court, to leverage as many dollars we can so there are many projects on this list where we have similar

situations where we have a developer who is going to donate right-of-way, donate money, one or the other or both, and that's the way we are getting projects done now a days.

Citizen asked about the four lane road stopping at Dawn Drive. Are you talking about going four-lanes all the way to Dawn Drive to Point Venture? Charlie Watts responded that is in the CAMPO Plan, which has "constrained projects" and "illustrative projects"; Lohman Ford Road is the latter.

Citizen asked to clarify if this Lohman Ford Road project has been on the books since the early 1990s. Charlie Watts said it had been on the past several CAMPO Plans as a four-lane roadway and in the last Plan it was not financially constrained. Steve Manilla explained that this means we threw everything into the Plan that we could and the Federal Government said we can only put into the Plan what we can afford. So if you have a 25-year plan, decisions have to be made about which projects are the most important at this time. As development comes on and roads get a higher priority to be built, developers are told they need to contribute - right-of-way, fiscal – in order for it to be built.

D'Anne Glorius said there maybe only nine accidents listed, yet there are many unreported near-miss, dangerous situations on that road. It is a valid project and more of the road should be ultimately improved.

Steve Manilla shared that \$640 million worth of projects had to be narrowed down to \$150 million dollars worth and that originally this project was the entire the road, 13,000 feet from Boggy Ford to Ivan Pearson, and they have had to make some tough decisions by cutting, reducing, or down-scoping some of the projects and this one got down-scoped. Doesn't mean you can't ask for it. That is why we are all here.

Joe Gieselman asked if there are other sections that are more important and should be improved. General consensus from the attendees was no. One comment, "It is the most dangerous spot by far and to think that it is not dangerous is wrong in my opinion." Another speaker commented on the current development being a factor; if only open land on either side it is not so much of an issue, yet the Waterford subdivision is almost completely developed, residents enter Lohman Ford at a blind curve and is dangerous, whether reported or not.

Someone else, I believe a Lago Vista official, spoke of recorded accidents at the corner of Lohman Ford and Boggy Ford and expressed the need for a traffic light there. Joe Gieselman suggested he contact Steve and ask the County to do a traffic study of the location. The speaker said a study was done, many accidents reported, Steven Manilla asked if the intersection was in Lago Vista, speaker confirmed it was and Steve informed him it was a Lago Vista jurisdiction issue.

Mr. Leonard Strickler, RE: Lohman Road, Lago Parks

Thanks the committee for their efforts and thanked Commissioner Huber for the attention their community as received. Asked for the whole Lohman Ford Road project to be funded. He has spoken to several community members and expressed the support for this project from city councils, ESD 1, school district, he echoes this concern. Also expressed support for the Parks projects in the area and support for Ms. Davis' request for historic designation of the Forgotten Bridge.

Mr. Doug Casey, RE; Arkansas Bend

Supports Arkansas Bend Park and its importance for creating a recreational area on the north shore of Lake Travis. The area has very limited access to the Lake (City Manager Bill Angelo testifies later that all of the lake front property in Lago Vista is privately owned.) It is a Jones Brothers park. Will bring visitors to the area for lake access where there is already infrastructure, restaurants, etc. Positive economic impact for the entire north shore area, Cedar Park beyond Lago Vista, providing desirable public access in an area that has private access but not much public. Creates a great place to visit and also will create jobs in the area.

Mr. Mark Oberholzer, RE: Support for Cameron Road West

Precinct Three constituent lives in Barton Hills downtown. An architect that teaches at UT, commends the staff for solid presentations and wishes they had a bigger budget. Works downtown does work for developers, now that the economy is picking up sees developers battling for downtown sites and feels that people want to move to this region and downtown cannot hold them all. Speaking in favor of Cameron Road west. North-south connector, connects transportation infrastructure, schools, good way to avoid the problems experienced in the Lago Vista area; development along roads not suited for the growth. As a taxpayer, throwing in his two cents for the project.

Mr. Jack Gullahorn, RE: Cameron Rd W

Speaking on behalf of Cameron Road west. Why it should matter to Precinct Three folks? If it doesn't get done now, it will be 8-10 years before it comes up again. It is located in the County's desired development zone and it is where all the people you don't want moving to Precinct Three are being told to move to, all the businesses building plants are being told to go there. Cameron Road west is the only major north-south arterial other than Dessau Road between US130 and I-35. Two-lane now, County has invested a lot of resources in the area, the project will leverage those resources if built. Pflugerville is the 8th fastest growing city in the US their residents will be using this roadway to get to employment centers. Has partnership participation, 60% right-of-way donated by mostly small land owners, not much active development planned right now so there is no way

for them to participate at this time. Look at criteria: existing need, future need, leveraging other resources. Please consider this.

Mr. Dale Mitchell, RE: In favor of park development, question road, need a light at Boggy Ford

Been an informative meeting, learned about what kind of process the Committee goes through, including starting at \$640 million (in total project cost) and working down to \$150 million. Is supportive of the projects selected in the Lago Vista area. Asked where the Committee is in the process and can the \$150 million in projects be funded without any increase in cost to the taxpayers? Was this the limit given by the Commissioners Court? Terry Irion answered that the amount has not been finalized, that the Committee was asked to prioritize the projects at this time. Speaker commented it was the same challenge faced by their city council. Terry Irion also mentioned they were actually at \$205 million in recommended projects now. Mark Evert mentioned that some of the projects have some cost-share commitments with others; it was recommended to the Committee that they have some additional "back-up" projects on their list in case cost-share does not come through and other projects can be funded instead. Carolyn Vogel shared that the Committee addressed Commissioners Court a couple weeks ago with the preliminary list and now they are gathering the important community input. They will go back and then "see what happens." There is a cost to the taxpayer. Steve Manilla said they can go online and use the (Proposed 2011 Bond Property Tax Impact) calculator. Committee members and staff explained how it works and how the amounts listed were determined.

A citizen spoke out requesting that the Arkansas Bend Park project stay on the project list. It was a project in 2005 (a project on the bond project list, then removed?)

Mark Evert brought up that older bonds also retire over time which can have a positive effect on the tax rate. Steve Manilla also touched base on a previous inquiry regarding the scheduling of this process; the Committee gives their final recommendations to the Commissioners Court in mid to late July, they have the final say and a few weeks to "mull it over", and then need to make final choices and request an election for the bond referendum in early August.

A citizen asked if a Courthouse was part of this bond. Staff responded that facilities projects were originally considered as a potential part of this bond package, yet since then, the Commissioners Court has decided that more information is needed and has removed facilities projects completely from this potential bond.

Mr. Bill Angelo, RE: Arkansas Bend Park

City Manger of Lago Vista. Has been in government for 33 years and has learned there is never enough money to meet the needs and appreciates the difficulty of the Committee's challenge. Gave some historic perspective on why Arkansas Bend is so important to his area. In the 1960s and 70s, Lago Vista was platted as four communities in 12,000 lots. All those lots were sold to private entities, including the 19 miles of shoreline. All the land to their west is designated as future wildlife preserve so any development providing public access would take an act of Congress, literally. The city has tried on many occasions to purchase private lands for public access, but the cost and local opposition has prohibited it. Arkansas Bend is their last chance to get a decent public access facility in their community and very important to their local economy. They have two fine golf courses in the Lago Vista area which draws folks, but that is about it. You can not get on the lake via public property anywhere else in the area. Arkansas Bend is extremely important to their city, the city council adamantly supports it and they are willing to help in any way possible. He also encouraged previous speakers who spoke of development to come talk to the city and moving into this area.

Terry Irion asked if all of the land in Arkansas Bend was in Lago Vista city limits. No it is not and the road leading in to the park is not. At Boggy Ford and Lohman Ford Road there is The Falls development near Sylvester Road, an area where they did come across the lake and annex. It is basically sitting idle. Also have Montecino and The Harbor that approach that direction from the south yet it is a ways away from Arkansas Bend.

Joe Gieselman wanted to remind everyone that Arkansas Bend is not a County property; it is an LCRA (Lower Colorado River Authority) property and there was hesitancy in the last bond election to invest millions of dollars into property they did not own. There is a long-term good relationship with the LCRA but this doesn't mean that at any time the LCRA could "say, 'thank you very much,'" and take their property back. In the County's agreement with the LCRA at Mansfield Dam, modifications were made so the LCRA would pay back the County for the \$3.5 million the County invested in improvement to the area. This same kind of arrangement could be established. But be very clear, it is not County property, and if the politics at the LCRA change, they can sell the property. Steve Manilla said, "They wouldn't do that, Joe," followed by laughter.

A citizen asked if this is the case, why would the County ever enter into an agreement with the LCRA and just let them run their own land? Joe Gieselman responded, "good question" and reiterated that the relationship is excellent and there has never been any indication that they would sell the seven parks around the lake (that the County manages) yet the fact of the matter is they could. He continued, "Just saying, just because an organization does something at one phase in their existence doesn't mean they won't do something else in a new phase."

The citizen asked what are the terms of the contract. Joe replies it is a twenty year contract. How long are we into it? Joe replies we are well into it. Charles Bergh, Parks Director, corrects Joe, saying it is a 40 year contract and that we are about 12 years into it. Joes says that the contract can terminate at any time. The citizen says it is a very lengthy contract and that the County will still be managing the park. Joe agrees. The citizen asks if the LCRA can sell the property and Joe responds they can terminate the contract. The citizen asks about cost. Joe responds that if we entered a contract, the LCRA would have to pay the County back for the "unadvertised part" of the park improvements. He gives the Mansfield Dam example; \$3.5 million dollars invested in improvements, over a twenty year investment, what is left in the value of that is what they would have to pay the County if they terminated the contract and said, "we want our property back."

The citizen adds that this is one of the reasons why he brought up the economic impact; when you create jobs in a specific area due to a park's existence, the County is able to re-coup some of those expenses through other taxing means. That's a good thing to consider when you are evaluating a project; is it just focused on the project itself or on whatever revenues can be generated by the park vs. what does this does to the area and how does it affect us generally in revenue for the County? He believes Arkansas Bend will be a revenue producing park for itself and for the surrounding area.

Another citizen asks who owns the roads leading into the park, Sylvester Ford and Cherry Lane, and will be responsible for their improvement and maintenance? She listed some of the issues with the road and that road jurisdiction is unclear. She believes it is unincorporated. Steve Manilla said some roads are private roads and are to be maintained by the HOA. She responded they are in an unincorporated area with no HOAs in the area and she understands that there are some roads that are not accepted by the County because they do not meet standards. She again asks who will be responsible for improving the infrastructure for handling the new traffic, boat and recreational vehicle, that will be accessing the park and further explains about the details she understands about these roads. Steve Manilla said he will look into this and get back to her.

A citizen asked when the last time was that their area received any bond money. Commissioner Huber responded it was in 1984 and that it was time (they received more) followed by applause.

Action Items

Discussion on Other Items and Next Steps:

No Discussion. The Chairman thanked all citizens who presented testimony and reminded them that written testimony is always welcome through the CBAC website. The next meeting will be at Lakeway City hall tomorrow evening at 7:00 p.m.

Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at approximately at 8:40 P.M.

Note: Above items summarized from the verbatim minutes. Due to the background noise, audience comments, and the levels at which constituents/representatives were speaking into the microphone, verbatim minutes of the meeting are transcribed as best as possible. Please refer to the tapes of the meeting for specific questions regarding the contents in this document. You can call TNR's open records request line at (512) 854-7683.

DRAFT