

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO CONSERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

September 23, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

| Member Name | Agency Represented |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Dr. Francine Romero | <i>San Antonio Parks & Recreation Board</i> |
| Mr. Homer Garcia | <i>COSA Parks & Recreation Dept.</i> |
| Mr. Brock Curry | <i>Edwards Aquifer Authority</i> |
| Mr. Scott Halty | <i>San Antonio Water System</i> |
| Mr. Stephen Graham | <i>San Antonio River Authority</i> |
| Dr. Russell Persyn | <i>Medina County</i> |

STAFF PRESENT

Melinda Cerda, Assistant Director, Parks & Recreation
 Grant Ellis, Natural Resources Manager, Parks & Recreation
 Phillip Covington, Special Projects Manager, Edwards Aquifer Protection Program (EAPP)
 Susan Courage, Senior Management Analyst, EAPP
 David Bernal, Management Analyst, EAPP
 Steve Whitworth, Assistant City Attorney, City Attorney's Office
 Victoria Shum, Assistant City Attorney, City Attorney's Office

GUESTS PRESENT

| Name | Organization |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| David Bezanson | The Nature Conservancy |
| Jeff Francell | The Nature Conservancy |
| Doug Dillow | Green Spaces Alliance |
| Matthew Fischer | Green Spaces Alliance |
| Mark Hamilton | Edwards Aquifer Authority |
| Kyle Kaspar | Landowner |

REGULAR BUSINESS

Meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by Chairwoman Romero. Roll call was called by Dr. Romero.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Romero asked for approval of the minutes for the August 26, 2020 meeting. Dr. Russell Persyn motioned for approval of the minutes. Mr. Stephen Graham seconded. Dr. Romero asked for a show of hands to vote. Minutes approved.

ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

- Mr. Covington stated that the Monier Ranch conservation easement received final approval at the September 17th City Council meeting. Mr. Covington also stated that the closing for the Monier Ranch would occur mid to late October.
- Mr. Covington stated that a grant opportunity through Natural Resources Conservation Service would be discussed in more detail during today's meeting.
- Mr. Covington introduced Mr. Kyle Kaspar who represented the Highplaces Ranch in Uvalde County.
- Mr. Covington confirmed that the proposed EAPP Funding Plan was approved by City Council on Thursday, September 17, 2020.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

No citizens to be heard.

INDIVIDUAL ITEMS

1. Briefing Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone: Edwards Aquifer Authority
 - a. Dr. Romero introduced Mr. Mark Hamilton of the Edwards Aquifer Authority. Mr. Hamilton presented information on the Contributing Zone and how it relates to the Edwards Aquifer. Mr. Hamilton showed that the Edwards Aquifer was heavily weighted towards the Contributing Zone due to the total land area, which he stated was about 62% of the system acreage. Mr. Hamilton also stated the Contributing Zone acted as a catchment area and a buffer for a most of the rainfall that is funneled into the Recharge Zone. He stated it also supplied baseflows for streams that crossed the Recharge Zone and because of all these scientific factors, the criteria for evaluating prospective properties for consideration into the EAPP should be refined as a result. Mr. Hamilton fielded questions from the CAB. Mr. Covington stated that a meeting with the Land Acquisition Team as well as EAA staff would be scheduled and a discussion on revisiting the selection criteria would be held with regards to the Contributing Zone. Mr. Covington also stated that an update from the meeting would be provided to the CAB.
2. Briefing on Natural Resources Conservation Services grant opportunity: City Staff
 - a. Mr. Covington presented an overview of the grant application for the Natural Resource Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Mr. Covington also stated that potential partnerships on this grant could include San Antonio

Water System, Compatible Lands Foundation, and The Nature Conservancy. He also stated that the deadline for grant submittal is November 4, 2020. Mr. Covington stated this grant would allow for the EAPP to partner on the acquisition of the Bexar Ranch which is located adjacent to the Rancho Blanco conservation easement which was also acquired, in part, through an NRCS grant.

3. Discussion & Update regarding the Middle Verde Ranch addition and the Ellen White Ranch:
The Nature Conservancy

- a. Mr. David Bezanson presented the Middle Verde Ranch addition for stage 1 approval.
- b. Mr. Bezanson presented the Ellen White Ranch for stage 1 approval.

4. Discussion & Update Regarding the Highplaces Ranch: City Staff

- a. Mr. Covington presented the Highplaces Ranch for approval of stage 1-A geological assessment.

Closed Regular Session & Opened Executive Session – No Executive Session

Deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property and discuss related legal issues pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.072 (real property) and 552.071 (consultation with an attorney).

Closed Regular Session & Opened Executive Session – No Executive Session

5. Action on proposed acquisitions in Bexar, Medina, and/or Uvalde Counties:

- Chairwoman Romero opened the floor for motions and a roll call was taken to ensure a quorum and a vote on the motion:
 - Dr. Russell Persyn motioned for approval on stage 1-A geological assessment for the Highplaces Ranch. Mr. Brock Curry seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed.
 - Mr. Scott Halty motioned for stage 1 approval on the Middle Verde Ranch addition. Dr. Russell Persyn seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed.
 - Mr. Brock Curry motioned for stage 1 approval on the Ellen White Ranch. Dr. Russell Persyn seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed.

6. Program fiscal report: Mr. Phillip Covington presented an updated budget expenditure report that reflected the Monier Ranch acquisition. Mr. Covington stated that of the \$90 million Proposition 1 funding approximately \$31 million remains uncommitted. He also stated that the demonstration projects had expenses as reflected on the expenditure report. Mr. Covington provided an update on the requests for proposals for additional water quality demonstration projects had been released earlier in the month.
7. Monitoring status report: Mr. Phillip Covington stated that there were no issues on the site inspections since the monitoring resumed.
8. Report, Discussion, and Action regarding Agenda and for the next CAB meeting – October 28, 2020 at 1:00 pm, via a virtual meeting.
9. Adjournment at 2:04 pm.