



Meeting Notes  
July 14, 2016  
Christopher Columbus Italian Society  
201 Piazza Italia

**ATTENDING: MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES** – Jerry Geyer, Michael Cortez, Marilyn Bradley, Susan Powers, Ben Brewer, Bob Corbo, Caleb Etheredge, Mitchell Penner, and Andi Rodriguez; **STAFF AND CONSULTANTS** – Suzanne Scott, Kerry Averyt, Betty Bueché, Tony Canez, Kristen Hansen, Bridget Hinze, Kerim Jacaman, Marianne Kumley, John Mize, Shiva Sandrana, Austin Snell, Sonia Jimenez, and Steven Dean; **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC** – Mel Weingart, Olga Lizcano, Robert Ramirez, David Clear, Frates Seeligson, Marion Welsh, Heath Cover, Edward Benavides, Emily Bowe, Kim Miller, Teodoro Zamora, Jr., Kenneth Walker, Erika Haskins, Juan Lopez, Dave Stafford, Frank Monaco, Rosemary Geyer, C. McKnight, Bill Norton, Larry Stevens, Richard Garcia, Cathey Meyer, Tony Cantu, Michael Vela, and Paul Lozano.

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Michael Cortez called the meeting to order at approximately 8:40 a.m. and reviewed the calendar items.

**2. Calendar items**

- a. San Pedro Creek Subcommittee meeting, August 11, 2016 at 8:30 a.m. at the Christopher Columbus Italian Society, 201 Piazza Italia. The next few meetings will be at alternate locations due to construction at the River Authority.
- b. Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee meeting, August 16, 2016, 6:00 p.m. a location to be determined.

**3. Approval of meeting notes from June 9, 2016**

Ben Brewer moved to accept the notes as presented. Andi Rodriguez seconded it and the motion passed with all in favor and none opposed.

**4. San Pedro Tricentennial Artwork**

Betty Bueché, Bexar County Heritage and Parks Director, provided the committee with the briefing. Ms. Bueché stated the County wants a permanent artwork for the Plaza, the area adjacent to the tunnel inlet where the improvement project begins.

They have engaged the River Authority to assist with the Request for Qualifications and it will be a competition for artists to develop a significant piece of art for the plaza. Ms. Bueché's presentation showed the installation location and she indicated the artwork does not necessarily have to be a tree of life. Ms. Bueché will be the curator and Bridget Hinze with the River Authority is leading the artist selection process.

Ms. Bueché went on to say the artwork will commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of San Antonio. The County, in conjunction with the City of San Antonio's 300 organization, will take part in the creek's grand opening and the dedication of the artwork ceremony. The location of the original Alamo was established in this area of the creek as well as the Presidio de Bexar. The Archdiocese also has connections to the area.

The County has identified \$900,000 for the art program. Of those funds, \$750,000 will be used for the permanent artwork to be placed on the plaza, another \$100,000 will be used to establish sites along the creek for performance and visual art, and the remaining \$50,000 will be used for rotating art to be placed after both improvement phases are complete.

Ms. Bueché concluded this portion of the agenda by informing the group of the schedule. On July 8, Bexar County Commissioners Court issued the request for qualifications (RFQ) open call for artists. The submittals are due August 12. On August 23, the shortlist of artists who qualify will be announced and the subsequent proposals will be due from these artists on October 17. The review committee will assess the proposals and hold interviews from October 18 to October 25 (corrected from the presentation given at the meeting). The process will be complete on November 1, when Commissioners Court selects and approves the artist. The dedication is scheduled for May 5, 2018, the date of the founding of the Presidio de Bexar.

## **5. Groundbreaking Event**

Ms. Bueché presented information on the upcoming event. She stated Bexar County is funding the San Pedro Creek Improvements Project and will have two, maybe three, special events. The first event will be the Phase 1 groundbreaking ceremony and there may be another groundbreaking for Phase 2. Once Phase 1 is complete, there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony. Ms. Bueché introduced Mel Weingart, Opera San Antonio Chairman, and stated all of the cultural arts funded by Commissioners Court will participate in the Phase 1 groundbreaking. In addition to Opera San Antonio, Opera Piccolo of San Antonio, the San Antonio Symphony, Ballet San Antonio, and the Children's Choir are collaborating to produce an original operetta. The operetta is written by John Philip Santos. The theme will be the history of the creek with Native American songs and dances. It will be a 15-minute performance held on Thursday,

September 8 at dusk on the Fox Tech athletic fields. Speakers will include Bexar County and City of San Antonio elected officials.

Committee Co-chair Jerry Geyer emphasized to the group that the artist selection process is separate from the Westside Creeks Oversight Committee and this subcommittee. However, these committees will be given the opportunity to comment. Mr. Cortez thanked Ms. Bueché for her hard work and commitment.

## **6. Tricentennial Celebration Planning**

Edward Benavides, CEO of the City's 300 Commission, presented information on the planning and vision behind the City's commemoration of its 300-year existence. The commission was established a year ago, there are 19 members, five of which serve as co-chairs. Mr. Benavides informed the committee the yearlong celebration would have four marquee initiatives: history and education, arts and culture, and the commemoration week. The funding for the effort is valued at \$12 million with \$6 million from public money and an equal match from the private sector for the remaining \$6 million.

Mr. Benavides shared highlights of some of the activities already planned including a VIA bus wrap showcasing the city's history, a commemorative book, resource material for K-12 curriculum, and historical reenactments. The commission will reach out to non-profits and other community organizations to formulate the community service component. For arts and culture, there will be two major concerts: one on New Year's Eve 2018 and the other in May. There will also be multiple public art unveilings representing San Antonio's shared heritage. The Commemorative week will be May 1-6, 2018. Each day will showcase the city in a unique way including the San Pedro Creek event on May 5. Official media partners are KSAT and Univision.

Mr. Benavides concluded his presentation by stating currently the commission is reaching out to various organizations to invite participation and the opportunity to leverage the media by hosting an official event. These organizations and their related events, ideally, will be identified before the end of this year in order to use 2017 to actively promote them locally and nationally.

Robert Ramirez, Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee Co-chair, asked about plans to include indigenous people in the effort. Mr. Benavides indicated the commission is currently meeting with Native American representatives to determine what they would like to do so they can be supported. Ms. Bueché added that a tricentennial pow-wow is being considered and the entire operetta, all three parts, is based on a score and drum beats built upon Native American influence. There were no other questions and Mr. Benavides was thanked for providing the information to the committee.

## 7. Design and CMAR Update

Kerry Averyt, San Antonio River Authority San Pedro Creek Project Manager, provided the update. Mr. Averyt informed the committee that the 70 percent design plans are under review and the team is simultaneously moving forward to 100 percent design. The design team and the construction manager at risk (CMAR) have been coordinating and working well together. He reviewed the process used to select the CMAR and reminded the committee that using a CMAR allows construction to begin ahead of the 100 percent design to accelerate the Phase 1 completion. The design team will continue coordination with the CMAR team. Construction methods, value engineering, and analysis will be conducted and the design modified as agreed.

Mr. Averyt went over the River Authority's scope of work. The scope includes ensuring quality of construction and execution, managing permitting requirements, and coordinating the operations and maintenance with the City. He went on to say that the effort has already realized \$700k savings using the CMAR approach and another potential savings of \$5 million with the value engineering. With regard to the schedule, it is currently on track but there is some potential for delay related to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404/408 permitting, securing the construction easements, and the completion of the design drawings.

The River Authority, design team, and CMAR went to Commissioners Court on July 12. Mr. Averyt reported that the Court authorized the pre-construction services and the permitting process. The goal is still completion of Phase 1 by May 5, 2018. The team will report back to the Court once the determination is made about exactly how much can be done by May 2018. The next Court review will include cost estimates, the CMAR schedule, progress on the permits, and the design documents.

Mr. Geyer requested the committee get notified when the permits and other major accomplishments are secured, especially if the news comes between committee meetings.

Mr. Averyt's update also included the artwork administration. He informed the committee that Bridget Hinze will be representing the River Authority and leading the effort for the agency. She will be responsible for public communications and the stakeholder committee. Mr. Averyt briefly went over the tricentennial art installation information again. At the June 21 Commissioners Court, the Court approved the commissioning of an artist to design an art piece for the City's Tricentennial event scheduled for May 5, 2018. The request for qualifications was issued on July 8. Commissioner Paul Elizondo will chair the stakeholder selection committee with the full court making the final selection.

The final portion of the update recapped the River Authority's recommendations that were approved by the Court on July 12. The approved items included the execution of the CMAR contract, the cooperative agreement for construction and artwork administration, the 70 percent design and authorization to proceed to 100 percent design, and authorization to amend the design contract to add preconstruction phase services.

The co-chairs praised the River Authority, the County staff, and design team for their work at Commissioners Court and Mr. Avery thanked everyone for their support.

## 8. Items to WCROC

The items to report to the Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee (WCROC) will include the update on the CMAR as well as the design and artwork effort.

## 9. Other items

Olga Lizcano, Co-chair for the WCROC, informed the committee that three (Apache, Alazan, and San Pedro near the confluence) of the four hike-n-bike trails are complete with Martinez Creek close to completion. Mrs. Lizcano thanked the committee and the community for the support and went on to say there a couple of pending projects. The WCROC is interested in extending the trail system to connect Zarzamora Creek to Alderete Park. She also noted that the St. Mary's University President would like to extend the Apache Creek trail to the campus. With this proposed extension, St. Mary's would be connected to Our Lady of the Lake University. The final item Mrs. Lizcano reported about was the Elmendorf Lake Park improvements. With regard to the swimming pool at the park, the design is being worked on and District 5 Councilwoman Gonzales would like an Olympic pool. It is slated, but not confirmed, to be part of the 2017 City of San Antonio Bond.

Mr. Geyer had several questions and comments. He asked about funding for the trails. Suzanne Scott, River Authority General Manager, responded the next funding opportunity is anticipated to be the City's 2017 Bond. Mr. Geyer also commented that creek signage needs to be adequate enough for drivers and people at street level to know where they are. Mr. Ramirez noted that the improvements at Elmendorf include signage at the bridges and maps. Mr. Geyer encouraged the design team and project managers to revisit the cultural resources map, developed early on in the public engagement process, to hone in on the history of San Pedro Creek and use it to inform the art committee. Mr. Geyer then informed the committee that Commissioner Elizondo urged the team to be sure collateral projects, such as the new Frost Tower and Little Italy San Antonio, are considered. **He would like to have Weston present the tower**

plans to the committee.<sup>1</sup> Finally, he would like to have an update on the signage package at the next meeting.

Ms. Hinze reminded the committee that the art consultants, the group developing the process for the public art effort, would be in San Antonio on July 28 and 29. She will send an invitation to the committee for a meeting with them. They will be sharing their initial recommended approach during their visit.

#### 10. Comments from public

David Stafford inquired about the “band shell” on Cameron Street. A member of the design team responded that the amphitheater is now south of Houston adjacent to Alameda and is still being designed.

#### 11. Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:53 a.m.

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<sup>1</sup> Items in bold text indicate action that needs to be followed up.