



**Westside Creeks Restoration
Oversight Committee (WCROC) Meeting
San Antonio River Authority
In-person: 100 E. Guenther St.
Virtual: Gotomeetings
October 17, 2023 - 6 p.m.**

Committee Members Present

Robert Ramirez, Co-Chair
Gabriel Velasquez, Avenida Guadalupe
Mary Ann Valdez-Hernandez,
Historic Westside Residents Assoc.
Jeremy Landin, Prospect Hill NA
Charles Blank, River Aid SA

Anna Alicia Romero, SAISD
Abel Ramirez, SA Wheelman
Rick Hernandez, SA Conservation Society
William Buhrman, St. Mary's Univ.
Kamala Platt, Ph.D., TexasTejano.com
Erwin DeLuna, United SA Pow WOW

Staff and Public Present

Lourdes Galvan, RA Board Member
Derek Boese, RA General Manager
Rebecca Krug, RA
Brian Mast, RA
Caye Castillo, RA
Linda Ximenes, Ximenes & Assoc.

Natalie Guerrero
Roberto Rodriguez
John J. Speegle
Victoria Escobedo, CoSA Public Works

I. Welcome

Co-Chair Robert Ramirez, called the WCROC meeting to order. He announced that Kendall Hayes will be taking Meera Nguyen's place, as Ms. Nguyen has taken a position with TxDOT in Austin.

II. Roll Call – Brian Mast, RA

Brian Mast called the WCROC roll. Committee members who were present are listed above.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes – August 15, 2023

A quorum was not achieved, and therefore the minutes were not approved.

IV. Calendar Items – Brian Mast, RA

Mr. Mast reviewed the Calendar Items listed on the respective PowerPoint slide, highlighting the WCROC regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, December 19th has been canceled. The WCROC will begin meeting monthly beginning in January 2024, at 6:00 pm on the Third Tuesday of each month; and will continue using the hybrid format. Additionally, Mr. Mast stated that the River Authority (RA) is ordering new shirts for all WCROC committee members and requested members to submit their shirt size to him.

V. General Manager Update – Derek Boese, RA

Mr. Boese reported that the RA did a soft opening this month for San Pedro Creek Culture Park's newest segments, from the El Paso Street Trailhead to Alamo Street. Attendees of the volunteer event at Ruby City will be able to see the new segment. The grand opening is targeted for spring 2024. Regarding the section that is not open yet, staff continues to meet with Union Pacific (UP) for construction coordination. The window of time is 72 hours to take out the old bridge and put in the new one.

He reminded the committee that because RA could not get permission from the hotels to put a path through their property, temporary signage is in place to guide trail users up to the street level and back down. Staff continues to work with COSA for coordination of this section's construction.

The RA's new nature parks, Trueheart Ranch Park and Hendrick Arnold Nature Park on the southside of town opened in September. Both parks have parking and lighting. Staff wanted to get them open so people could use them. Staff will monitor the usage and feedback to guide the addition of any additional amenities.

He stated that Ms. Krug will provide a more detailed update on the 30% design public information sessions held last month- 4 sessions. He shared that each session had approximately 20 attendees.

The quarterly governance meeting with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) was held in September. The team met with the new District Commander and provided a tour of the Westside Creek System and the Mission Reach. The RA received lots of positive feedback.

The update on the Bexar County Zarzamora Creek Trail Connection indicated the design and construction of a 2.5 mile continuation of Zarzamora Creek Trail from Alderete Park to Tierra del Sol Park, includes multiple connections with existing parks, street crossings and park amenities. Pre-design work including field surveys and environmental investigations are ongoing; and they anticipate being at 30% design at the end of 2023. Construction is anticipated in fall 2024.

Questions/Comments:

Lourdes Galvan asked for clarification on Trueheart Ranch Park and Hendrick Arnold Nature Park: whether or not there was an official grand opening where the community was notified. She also asked for the exact location of the two new parks. Staff stated that press releases were distributed for the new park openings and provided guidance on the exact locations via a map. Staff (Nicole Marshall) proceeded to explain there is more opportunity for community awareness this coming December and May 2024. She will coordinate with Ms. Hayes to send information to the WCROC.

Mr. Ramirez noted the completion of the San Pedro Creek project and the grand opening will happen in 2024 and acknowledged Commissioner Paul Elizondo for his efforts to shepherd this along.

VI. Drainage Study, Victoria Escobedo, City of San Antonio

Ms. Escobedo explained that the Westside Creeks (all four creeks) ecological restoration does not target making improvements to drainage and potential flooding. This study by the City of San Antonio (CoSA) is analyzing the impacts of hot spots of potential flooding so the City can make improvements for flood control and identify funding opportunities for the projects. Michael Baker is the firm CoSA is hiring to conduct the study.

VII. Review of Comments, 30% Design Public Information Session, Rebecca Krug, RA

Ms. Krug, Project Manager, thanked all those in attendance who participated in the public sessions for joining the meetings. She provided a pre-design update which included coordinating final revisions to surveys with USACE; kicking off geotech work in late October; notice to proceed with real estate acquisition for three of the four creeks – Apache to be coming soon; and finally, working on an excavation plan with CoSA for remediation of Apache Creek.

Other project activities include: The third Governance Meeting with USACE went well as Mr. Boese previously mentioned; and it was great to get support from the higher ups. Recommendations on new recreation features have been sent to the design team for consideration of inclusion in the 65% design base level recreational features. Any additional requests for recreational features must be reviewed and approved by the USACE before they can be included in the design.

The Cultural Resources Survey kicked off as required by USACE Section 106 of the environmental requirements. She noted that the Value Engineering is in progress to identify possible efficiencies that could be applied to the design.

Ms. Krug stated the WSC Ecosystem Restoration (ER): 30% Design Information Sessions attendance was as follows: Monday, September 18 for San Pedro Creek, 15 attendees; Tuesday, September 19 for Apache Creek, 12 attendees; Wednesday, September 20 for Alazan Creek, 22 attendees; and lastly Thursday, September 21st for Martinez Creek, 15 attendees.

The intent of these meetings was to share with the attendees updates to the project and provide answers to some of the commonly asked question from the last public session. Ms. Krug provided examples of the information shared. Presentations from these meetings are still on the website and will continue there until the project ends. She indicated the following design schedule: Initial Design (30%) was complete in September 2023; Interim Design (60%) to conclude in spring 2024; and Final Design (90%) to be complete in fall 2024. Conversation ensued on examples of informational slides that were provided to the public and concerns for safety and trash along the creeks.

In closing, Ms. Krug announced that the RA was participating in a community event to share information on the WSC ER. The event "Westside Resource Fair & Tree Giveaway" hosted by San Antonio Parks & Recreation and MetroHealth/Healthy Neighborhoods is being held on Saturday, October 21st. The RA will staff a table to share information, have seed packets and coloring pages.

Regarding the Cultural Survey being conducted by USACE: Mr. Velasquez requested a list of all cultural resource organizations that were considered during the environmental phase during the USACE study; and secondly, Mr. Ramirez requested that RA staff ensure USACE tap into Native American residents who can provide oral history of the creeks, as well as other local organizations that have done similar studies that would better inform the cultural survey being conducted. An on-line member of the public (Amanda D) commended the comments made by Mr. Velasquez and Mr. Ramirez. This person also asked the RA to do more about helping to regulate the trash being dumped near Martinez Creek; and requested more safety efforts for the users of the creek. On-line participant, Rick Waverly, raised a concern regarding possible graffiti on a proposed retaining wall along Waverly Avenue. Ms. Krug stated no new retaining walls are proposed for that location. Mr. Landin did make a comment regarding trash problems and asked where those problems should be reported. Mr. Mast provided information on the RA's efforts regarding safety and trash reduction efforts, including the Basura Bash. Dr. Platt asked if the design team is making intentional access points to the creek, and whether or not the public would have direct access to the water; Ms. Krug replied yes there will be direct access points.

VIII. Citizens to Be Heard

None

IX. Miscellaneous Items

Mr. Velasquez asked the committee to consider a shift in the by-laws that would allow those members in attendance to make formal business decisions. Discussion ensued on the issue of attendance of WCROC membership and how it relates to participation and business decisions. Mr. Ramirez recommended this item be discussed at the next committee meeting.

XI. Adjourn

Mr. Ramirez thanked Roberto Rodriguez for attending and there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee – October 2023

October 17, 2023 · 4:08 PM · ID: 668323965

Chat

Caye Castillo (San Antonio River Authority) sent a chat · 6:04 PM

Reminder: If virtual attendees, please sign-in using the online sign-in link posted here:
<https://forms.office.com/r/vui67MsU11>

sent a chat · 6:04 PM

Hello. Anna Alicia Romero of SAISD here.

Caye Castillo (San Antonio River Authority) sent a chat · 6:05 PM

Thank you Ms. Romero.

Caye Castillo (San Antonio River Authority) sent a chat · 7:13 PM

AD, we will call on you shortly.

sent a chat · 7:14 PM

Thank you

Caye Castillo (San Antonio River Authority) sent a chat · 7:17 PM

Rick Waverly, we have you on the list to ask a question as well. We will call on you shortly.

Jeremy Landin sent a chat · 7:28 PM

Question--When there is a specific home or property that is just pouring trash into the creek, is there a way to report that?

Jeremy Landin sent a chat · 7:28 PM

There is a property at 923 N. Zarzamora where it looks like trash is just pouring in by the lbs.