

Media Contact

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Galveston Park Board Update: December 11th, 2018

The Galveston Park Board of Trustees held its regular meeting at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, December 11th at Park Board Plaza. Below is an update of news from the boardroom.

Approval of Funding for Shuttle Transportation During Mardi Gras! 2019

The board approved staff's recommendation to authorize staff to spend up to \$10,500 for shuttles that will be used during Mardi Gras! 2019 to encourage event goers to stay in local hotels and travel safely. The shuttle service will be available on both Friday and Saturday nights during Mardi Gras! 2019 and will follow three routes. The buses will pick people up and drop people off from the downtown festival area and will make stops at hotels across the Island. In 2018, over 2,000 passengers utilized this service.

Beach Patrol to Purchase State-of-the-Art Lifeguard Towers

Thanks to the continued support of the board to enhance public safety on the Island, Tuesday's board approval will allow Beach Patrol to purchase the first two professional fiberglass lifeguard towers. These towers will bring added protection to the guards, and beach goers. They can be installed with lightening rods, allowing guards to remain on stand during weather events, require less maintenance, and have a longer lifespan. These two towers will be placed in our areas of highest visitation and visibility. One will be placed on the beach at 61st and Seawall and one will be placed inside Stewart Beach. The new design has a 360-degree view, offers our guards protection from the sun, wind, and weather, and have a high resistance to vandalism. They will also provide an opportunity to allow sponsorships on each stand that would help offset the cost to purchase them.

Refining the Vision for the Stewart Beach Pavilion Project

After meeting with City staff to discuss moving forward with the vision for the Stewart Beach pavilion project, Park Board staff revised the \$5563,151 that was initially slated to cover engineering and design to address drainage and the plans for the pavilion, to \$560,015 that will now include: additional drainage engineering and permitting, drainage improvements on roughly half of the project site using City of Galveston contracts to procure a contractor to perform the work, a market assessment and community outreach to ensure that the vision for the park takes into consideration stakeholder and public feedback, a Trustee tour of competing facilities in Florida, development and partnering of private sector attraction and entertainment ventures, development of a fundraising and capital campaign, architectural design of "comfort stations" that will include a bathroom, showers, and retail space closer to the beach front, and a new siting study and update of the Master Plan to include and address concerns over the location of the pavilion within the park. Anyone interested in learning more about the project can visit the dedicated page on our website at www.galvestonparkboard.org/stewartbeach. Those interested in engaging in this process can submit feedback and ask to be included on any future developments through an email sign up as well.

Changes to Concessionaire Agreements

The Board approved an updated concessionaire agreement to upgrade all of the Seawall beaches to a "Tier 2" status, East Beach to a "Tier 1" park, and an inclusion of incentives for concessionaires to follow environmental best practices. The Board also requested to give staff the ability to assess and assign a tier to any future beaches developed through the upcoming nourishment projects as well as language to clarify the renewal process based on an evaluation process for existing contracts.

Legislative Update

The Board received an update on the Park Board's legislative agenda. Park Board representatives work to build and develop positive relationships with industry partners and to align with other coastal communities for a common good. These efforts culminate with visits to state and federal officials to advocate for policies that benefit tourism and coastal resources for the region and the island. This year's priorities will be focused on a uniform start day for school's in the State of Texas, establishment of the Lone Star National Recreational Area (LSNCRA) for the purposes of promoting open lands and historic sites within Matagorda, Brazoria, Jefferson and Galveston counties, advocating for increased funding from the grant program Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities Revived Economies (RESTORE), a funding program established with penalties stemming from the 2012 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, to be dedicated to Galveston. You can learn more about this agenda in this week's "Inside the Park Board" column that will be published in the business section of the Galveston Daily News on Sunday, December 16th, and made available on www.galvestonparkboard.org and social media channels.

About the Park Board of Trustees

The Park Board of Trustees oversees beach maintenance and tourism development on Galveston Island, including operations for beach cleaning, the Galveston Island Beach Patrol and the Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau. For more information on the Park Board of Trustees, please visit www.galvestonparkboard.org.

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