

Media Contact

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Galveston Park Board Update: June 25, 2019

The Galveston Park Board of Trustees held its regular meeting at 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 25th at Park Board Plaza. Below is an update of news from the boardroom.

Park Board Names New Chief Tourism Officer

At its meeting Tuesday, the Park Board announced that Michael Woody would lead the Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau as its Chief Tourism Officer. Mr. Woody will direct tourism efforts for Galveston on behalf of the CVB, the island's official sales and marketing organization. He and his team are expected to devise and implement strategies that align with the CVB's mission to further the success of Galveston as a premier tourist destination while enhancing the quality of life for residents. He will begin working with the organization on July 18, 2019.

Park Board Sets Value of Hotel Occupancy Tax "Penny"

On Tuesday, the Park Board set the value of the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) penny at \$2,051,659 for the fiscal year 2019-2020. The amount represents a 1% increase over the previous year. The Park Board expects hotel revenues to increase slightly because of higher average daily rates and several new hotels are set to open in the coming months. The penny, a concept used for Park Board budgeting purposes, represents the amount the Park Board expects to collect from each 1% of Galveston HOT, which is a 9% tax collected on overnight stays at island hotels, vacation rentals and other accommodations venues.

Park Board Approves Contract for Stewart Beach Pavilion Plan Amendments

At its meeting Tuesday, the Park Board approved a contract from Houston-based Rogers Partners for \$167,000 to update the plans for the Stewart Beach Pavilion. The firm is tasked with amending the Stewart Beach master plan, making recommendations for seating areas and adding a mobile beach-side unit that includes shade areas and restrooms. Funds for the project will come from the Stewart Beach budget

Park Board Approves Grant Request for Beach Nourishment Project on Seawall

On Tuesday, the Park Board authorized staff to apply for funding from the Coastal Erosion Planning and Response Act for beach nourishment between 12th and 61st streets. The project aims to restore the beach to its conditions before Hurricane Harvey made landfall in 2017. The storm resulted in significant erosion to the four-mile area that was nourished in spring 2017 with funding from the Park Board, City of Galveston and Texas General Land Office. **Grant applications are expected to be submitted _____.**

Park Board Approves Third-Party Beach Cleaning Protocol

On Tuesday, the Park Board voted to allow third-party vendors to work from its federal permit to operate heavy equipment in federal waters for the purpose of removing seaweed on the island's west-end public beaches. Vendors must adhere to strict controls in place and employ an environmental quality control officer to monitor beaches, notify environmental agencies and guide environmental education for stakeholders. **The new program will go into effect July 1, 2019.**

Announcements

- At its meeting Tuesday, the Park Board approved a \$53,917.65 contract with Houston-based General Contractor Services, Inc. for repairs at the Dellanera RV Park pavilion.
- On Tuesday, the Park Board approved a permitting process to allow drones at Park Board managed parks or beaches.

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.