

Media Contact

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Galveston Park Board Update: October 20, 2014

The Galveston Park Board of Trustees held its regularly scheduled meeting at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 14 at Park Board Plaza. Below is an update of news from the boardroom.

Board Presents Findings from Galveston Tourism Perception Study

On Tuesday, Galveston Island CVB Marketing Director Melody Smith presented results from a study conducted by Houston-based marketing consulting firm MMI. The Park Board hired the firm in April after the Texas City “Y” oil spill to determine if there were any perception issues that would impact future visitation. The study—which surveyed residents in Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio and Beaumont—concluded that despite some negative perceptions about the beach, it remains among Galveston’s top selling points. Awareness of Galveston as a vacation destination in these markets is high and the findings suggest Galveston has an opportunity to leverage its strong reputation in dining, shopping and historical sites.

Board Approves \$50,000 Renewal Contract with John Lee of Coastal Strategies Group

The board Tuesday approved a \$50,000 renewal with John Lee of Coastal Strategies Group, LLC. The Park Board originally hired Lee to help with outreach to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the Texas General Land Office (GLO) and other agencies on projects aimed at improving Galveston’s coastal environment. This fiscal year, Lee will provide assistance with identifying grant opportunities and coordinate efforts with state agencies for beach nourishment, dune restoration and permitting. The board expects to see continued success in these efforts.

Board and City to Share the Cost of Transportation Study Contract

The Park Board and the City of Galveston have agreed to share the cost of a transportation study. The study will identify ways to alleviate existing traffic congestion issues that impact economic development and community improvement. It will also examine the role of transportation in supporting economic growth, job creation and business accessibility and visibility. The plan is intended to guide the Park Board and the City of Galveston in developing short-term and long-term solutions to traffic congestion, recommend options for intra-island connectivity and the development of an action plan to implement the recommendations. The study is expected to be complete by summer 2015.

Board Considers Interlocal Agreement with the City of Galveston

The board Tuesday discussed an interlocal agreement with the City of Galveston regarding the transference of responsibility of various projects to the Park Board including the future management of the Seawall paid parking program, future development of the East End Lagoon, maintenance of West End beach access points, Seawall trash collection and local Hotel Occupancy Tax collections. As outlined in the agreement, the City of Galveston would grant the Park Board \$550,000 to assume responsibility for these services. The Park Board made changes to the agreement. The changes will be presented to City staff for consideration and incorporation.

Announcements:

- On Tuesday, the board presented its end-of-year beach parks report. Overall, park admissions were slightly under budget with the Texas City “Y” oil spill and unprecedented levels of seaweed landings cited as possible reasons for the lower number.
- On Tuesday, Park Board Executive Director Kelly de Schaun gave an update regarding the Dellanera nourishment project, a \$4.5 million endeavor that will restore and nourish Galveston Island’s west end. De Schaun said the project is on track and slated to begin by the end of the month.

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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