



Media Contact

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Galveston Park Board Update: September 11, 2014

The Galveston Park Board of Trustees held its regularly scheduled meeting at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 9 at Park Board Plaza. Below is an update of news from the boardroom.

Park Board Approves Contract with Babe Schwartz

On Tuesday, the board approved a contract with former Texas senator and Galveston representative A.R. "Babe" Schwartz to serve as a legislative consultant and liaison for the Galveston Park Board. Schwartz has extensive experience in legislation protecting the environment and management of coastal resources and has therefore been tasked with providing guidance for the organization's 2014-2015 state legislative agenda. He will be responsible for monitoring all legislative issues and proposed legislation pertaining to Park Board interests, including items considered in any special session of the Texas Legislature.

Board Awards Contract for Biological Assessment of Areas Affected by Beach Maintenance

The board Tuesday awarded a \$25,000 contract to Austin-based consulting group Atkins North America to perform a biological assessment of areas maintained by Park Board beach cleaning equipment. The biological assessment will be the first step in the Park Board's efforts to obtain a permit for regular beach maintenance activities as required by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)— the entity responsible for Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. Section 10 regulates work and structures affecting navigable waters including all water affected by the daily tide. After Atkins North America completes the biological assessment, the results will be shared with USACE, US Fish and Wildlife, the General Land Office, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and Texas Parks and Wildlife. Each agency will then have the opportunity to review the assessment and make recommendations regarding Park Board beach maintenance operating procedures with the overall intent of minimizing environmental impacts.

Board Approves Funding for 2014 Santa Hustle Event

The board Tuesday agreed to dedicate \$5,000 from its special event fund to support the Santa Hustle Half Marathon and 5k Race to take place for its third year in Galveston Dec.20. Each participant receives a free Santa hat, beard and Santa shirt to wear during the race, which includes festive decorations, Christmas music, hot chocolate and post race festivities in downtown Galveston. More than 3,400 runners participated in the 2013 Santa Hustle event and the promoters expect to see even more participation at this year's event.

Announcements:

- On Tuesday, the board reviewed and discussed the proposed 2014-2015 budget for East Beach, Stewart Beach, Seawolf Park, Dellanera RV Park and the county Pocket Parks.
- On Tuesday, the board granted permission to First Lutheran Church for their request to utilize Park Board parking facilities for the Oktoberfest event Oct. 24-25.
- On Tuesday, Chairman Melvin Williams announced his appointment to the Tourism Development Advisory Committee (TDAC). Williams replaces Dr. Craig Brown as the Park Board representative.
- On Tuesday, the board reviewed the organization's financial statements for July 2014. Overall, the report was positive showing that revenue is up and expenses are down. Year-to-date revenue exceeded budget by \$1,325,000, with City HOT revenue for July exceeding budget by 8%.

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.