

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CITY OF LEON VALLEY, TEXAS
NOVEMBER 2, 2012**

The City Council of the City of Leon Valley, Texas, met on the 2nd of November, 2012 at 9:15 a.m. at the Leon Valley City Council Chambers, at 6400 El Verde Road, Leon Valley, Texas, for the purpose of the following business, to-wit:

**JOINT LEON VALLEY CITY COUNCIL
& LEON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY (LVHS) WORKSHOP, 9:15 A.M.**

Call the Special Joint Leon Valley City Council & Leon Valley Historical Society Workshop to Order, and Determine a Quorum is Present. Mayor Riley called the Special Joint Workshop Meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. with the following City Council Members in attendance: Hill, Reyna, Baldrige, Dean, and Bieber.

The following Leon Valley Historical Society Members were in attendance: Darby Riley, President, Vice President Irene Baldrige, Correspondence Secretary Mark Eisenhauer, Memorial Trust Officer Carol Poss, Barbara Fryer, Treasurer, Archivist Shirley Owen, Consultant Ed Conroy, and Betty and Jim Wolfshohl.

The following staff members were in attendance: City Manager Longoria, City Attorney McKamie, City Secretary Willman, Fire Chief Irwin, Deputy Fire Marshal Valdez, Library Director Trent, and Police Chief Wallace.

Also in attendance: Park Commission Bert Thomas. Architect Sue Ann Pemberton arrived later.

Mayor Riley announced that the amended agenda was not the agenda meeting format she approved. She indicated she had been in Mexico for five days and the agenda was changed in her absence. She noted that the agenda and meeting format was to be a workshop rather than a town hall style meeting to facilitate dialogue between the two boards. Councilman Dean requested that the workshop be conducted to allow for public and staff comments. Mayor Riley indicated to facilitate the two-way exchange between the two boards with the many topics to be covered in the limited time necessitated keeping public comments to one minute per speaker per each topic to ensure both public input and that the two boards covered the entire agenda.

The City Council and the Leon Valley Historical Society Board discussed the following topics related to the extension of the Lease of the Natural Area as proposed by the LVHS:

1. Homestead Master Plan & Proposal of the LVHS Extension of the Lease, on the 36 acre, which expires in 2015
2. Performance on the Lease by the LVHS since 2005
3. Pending Issues
 - a. Creek Erosion
 - b. Status of Fire Break in the Natural Area
 - c. Status of the Huebner Gravesite
 - d. Access for People with Disabilities
4. Assistance from the City of Leon Valley on Major Projects in the Natural Area
5. Process and Communication and Complaint
6. Triangle Area
 - a. Approval of Plan to Construct Buildings

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- b. Agreement on Plan for Parking and Beautification
- 7. City Representation on LVHS Board
- 8. Coordination of Metropolitan Planning Organization Grant with the Natural Area
- 9. Agreed Modification of the Lease and Extension to 2027

Darby Riley, LVHS President, initiated the dialogue with a detailed history preceding the acquisition of the property including a petition of 1200 signatures petitioning the City Council to save the homestead. Mr. Riley discussed the lease, the term of the lease, and the resulting issues which lead to the LVHS' need and request to modify the lease. He emphasized that the LVHS would like to participate in the landscaping decisions made to beautify the Triangle area. Noted was the parking proposed with the City's involvement. Mr. Riley spoke to the increased communication and partnership with the City of Leon Valley. He recommended that the City's partnership could include a volunteer from the Park Commission. Mr. Riley discussed by the lease is beneficial to both the City of Leon Valley and the Leon Valley Historical Society. Under the lease, the Natural Trails have been created and maintained. The LVHS' educational focus under the lease has included Boy Scout troops learning about the house, the barns, and the Natural Area. All the work to maintain the Natural Trails has been done by volunteers and Mike McDonald, and has not cost the City. Artifacts have been located and documented. A fire break was created. The Historical Society has worked with Texas Parks and Wildlife when the creek was disrupted by the San Antonio Water System sewer project. He noted that restoration needs to be done. The Historic Society has applied to the Texas Historic Cemeteries for approval of a gravesite marker for the Huebner grave. He described community events which have been conducted. Regarding the creek erosion issue, the San Antonio River Authority is ready to meet with the City's Public Works Department to obtain agreement on what needs to be done.

Councilman Dean addressed issues related to the performance under the current lease related to the need for a fire break on the Natural Trail, the need for additional care to the Huebner gravesite, and to make the Natural Area and Homestead as ADA compliant as possible. He agreed that the City of Leon Valley needs to help with cleaning-up and then the Historic Society needs to maintain the property. Councilman Dean stated he would like to see the Natural Trail opened up to the gigantic oak tree so more people can access and use the Natural Trail. Mr. Dean indicated he would like to see the LVHS comply with the current Lease obligations before the City Council considers extending the Lease as requested to 2027.

Marcus Semmelman objected to the public input being limited to one minute per topic. He left the meeting.

There was more discussion about the status of the fire break in the Natural Area and the standards required. Mr. Riley noted he wants to get it cut along both sides of the fence line. He reported that the Deputy Fire Marshal communicated that two large trees need to cut and moved off. Mayor Riley asked how often the fire break needs to be cut. The Deputy Fire Marshal answered the fire code doesn't stipulate how often-just that it needs to be maintained. The Deputy Fire Marshal addressed the standards for trimming the trees.

There was extensive discussion about access for people with disabilities. Councilwoman Hill voiced a concern for safety during the discussion of accessibility. Fire Chief Irwin answered that persons becoming injured or ill would be carried on litters to the point where an ambulance could be parked. City Attorney McKamie indicated that in terms of ADA compliance, there is a

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need to provide access for persons who are visually and hearing impaired in addition to those who are physically impaired. Mr. Riley noted he visited with a resident who accesses services using a wheelchair. Ms. Barbara Fryer indicated it would be wonderful for visitors to be able to access the Huebner gravesite. Resident Christine Koger who lives adjacent to the Natural Area noted she enjoys the two areas that cross the creek and that it should be maintained in its natural and wild status. Regarding changes to the Natural Trail to make it more accessible, it was noted that the trails in a wildlife area are unique and different and that this park is different from parks like Raymond Rimkus and other parks. It was also noted that Library Director Trent's son created a virtual walk as part of an urban wildlife display which allows visitors who may not be able to visit the Natural Area Parkland to experience its beauty and uniqueness. Councilwoman Hill indicated she supported making the area more accessible with the addition of marking to point out which areas are more accessible as it is a public park. Councilman Bieber addressed a need to keep the covenant with our citizens including disabled persons. He noted he would like to see the area more inviting. He visited a park in Bexar County which has beautiful accessible pathways that maintain the integrity of the wilderness. He further noted that what might have worked 5 to 10 years ago may not be what works today in terms of the trails being narrow. LVHS Consultant Ed Conroy noted that the architects working with the Historic Society pointed out that the trails need to be better organized and that is reflected in the Master Plan; going in exactly the direction Mr. Bieber pointed out; the trail width will be largely addressed in the Master Plan. LVHS Memorial Trust Officer Carol Poss noted that Raymond Rimkus has walking trails regarding the question of wheelchair access on primitive walking trails. Park Commission Chairman Bert Thomas noted the dialogue has yielded some great ideas. He asked why the ideas couldn't be added to the City's Master Plan. He added that he would bring some of the ideas to the Park Commission.

Al Uvietta noted concerns with the City of Leon Valley and the Leon Valley Historical Society avoiding public input when decisions are made about how things will work regarding access to their park.

Questions were raised regarding the City's budgeting and contributing \$10,000 to the 2012 Commemoration Events. A flyer about the Commemoration Event was mentioned with references of contributions to the LVHS. Councilwoman Hill who co-chaired the Commemoration Committee reported that the \$10,000 was completely spent for the events and services provided at the City's Raymond Rimkus Park during the Saturday Commemoration Event.

Cynthia Koger asked about transparent communications with the citizenry who live adjacent to the area. She indicated she is against a paved road being installed along the back side of the Natural Area. City Manager Longoria stated there is no plan to put a road back there.

There was discussion about a process for communication and resolving complaints. Councilwoman Baldrige noted that the current lease provides for a 30 day notice which was not used to communicate problem areas related to the Lease. It was suggested by a number of the speakers that the desire to establish an open and positive communication channel between the City and the LVHS focused on partnering to find solutions. It was suggested that a more structured process for communicating be established. It was noted that the City can have representation on the LVHS Board to include any number of members from the Park Commission. City Manager Longoria noted discussions with Mr. Riley about a communication process for notification of the extension of the Lease. He noted the discussion included needing

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a point of contact for communications. Councilwoman Hill asked that the new lease include specific language about communications. Councilman Biever stated he doesn't want to have removed the City Council's responsibility to allow citizens to come directly to their elected officials.

Then Mr. Conroy noted the specific duty of Board Membership and its fund raising activity. He spoke to the building fund and that the Historic Society works on an annual basis to raise the funds needed to pay for the Master Plan and utilities. Regarding fiduciary duties, it was also noted that the Historic Society has contributed thousands of volunteer hours including the educational component that was important to Mrs. Onion in addition to the fundraising events such the pioneer run. There was discussion about the partnership between the City and the Historic Society to realize the work of the Natural Trail.

Councilman Dean read from a report that referenced financial support. Mayor Riley asked that copies of the information be distributed so everyone could see that information. The City Manager indicated he would ensure the information was provided.

Councilman Reyna noted the Lease and Parkland are part of a public – private partnership. He further noted the City needs to be responsible to track with our legal requirements regarding the Lease. He asked what the City's legal obligations are regarding the Lease and the Natural Area. He voiced a preference to see the Historic Society be more inclusive in working with the Park Commission. He asked about the LVHS adding their Master Plan to the City's Master Plan and referenced the SDAT Plan.

During the discussion of the Triangle Area, the City Manager noted the issue of budgeting related to the plan for parking and beautification needs to resolved as the costs to do some of the improvement communicated will be very expensive because it involves traffic control devices which are very expensive.

Discussion ensued about the coordination of the MPO Grant filed related to the Hike and Bike Trail for the Natural Area. Park Commissioner Bill Cooper noted that the involvement of the architect is key when designing access between the Natural Area and the Hike and Bike Trail. Christine Koger indicated she is willing to bring a citizen petition asking that the trails in the Natural Area not be paved. Councilman Biever noted he and the City Council are open to receive such a petition if that is her desire. Mr. Uvietta noted that the City needs to be an integral part of the planning process rather than relinquishing the responsibility to the LVHS including and up to the renewal of the Lease. Mayor Riley confirmed that the Hike and Bike Trails MPO Application included a conceptual rendering only in order to ensure the application deadline was met. There is still time for a public component for input on the final actual plan for the project. Mayor Riley detailed all of the projects the City is working on. The City Manager asked that the map detailing the project area was reduced on the overhead screen to show clearly that the connections were going around the Natural Area rather than through it. Mayor Riley noted this is a quality of life issue for the City's residents. The City Manager confirmed that at this stage, the map shown is a conceptual plan, which will require more coordination with the City of San Antonio and Bexar County as it tracks through Crystal Hills Park and the Creek Channel. A question was raised if the Park Commission has been involved. The City Manager indicated that would be opportunity for input as the planning and work will not be done until the 2014-2015 timeframe. The plan presented is conceptual and not designed to exclude anyone rather an effort to get an application before the application deadline.

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Architect Sue Ann Pemberton addressed the assembly. She shared that from a master planning process the LVHS and the architects considered the complete area as a whole rather than as parts or fractions of acreage. That is the only way to interpret the character well and sell it well is in its entirety as a property harkening back to its original uses. She indicated that in order to celebrate the homestead, the parkland, and the ranch land, the Master Plan incorporates a parking lot that is less intrusive and works around the natural landscaping. The house would be renovated to the Onion time period and the barns and outbuildings would be renovated to Huebner time period. The area has a deep history rooted significantly as part of the stagecoach trails. The property line bifurcates the site as far as trying to do the site. She noted other buildings outside the property line that were originally part of the use. She noted that for that reason it needs to be considered as one piece. She described other potential uses based on new structures under the proposed renovation plan. She detailed aspects covered in the Master Plan. She described a proposed low water crossing to connect the Natural Area to the Homestead area. She noted that the architects are recommending widening the trail to allow for two persons to walk them without any kind of asphalt improvement. There are components which include partnering with SAWS to maintain the creek in its natural state. Discreet signage will be included as part of the Natural Area. She detailed the plans for accessibility. Rather than paving, Ms. Pemberton noted there may be compacted materials that can be used. She noted the architects agreed the area needs to be accessible. Councilman Dean asked to be provided a calculation of how much land will be left once the parking and renovations are done. Ms. Pemberton agreed to try to get the calculation back to Councilman Dean.

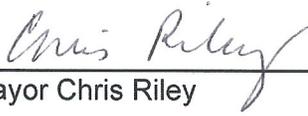
Councilman Reyna left at 11:50 a.m.

The discussion of the agreed modification of the Lease and extension to 2027 brought up areas to be addressed:

- That the fire break needs to be done now to allow the fire trucks to enter the area
- Removal of the two trees
- Trees need to be trimmed
- ADA compliant for accessibility for all
- Parking – more detail
- Maintenance of Trails
- Resrepresentation on the two boards
- Financial Reporting since the LVHS is operating on public property for every quarter
- Cooperation between the City and the Leon Valley Historical Society
- The City Council want whatever is proposed reviewed by the City Attorney
- That communication be open and that a complaint process be defined
- Post meeting notices of the LVHS on the City's website

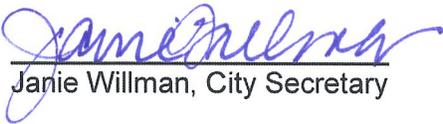
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Mayor Riley adjourned the meeting without objection at 12:40 p.m.



Mayor Chris Riley

ATTEST:



Janie Willman, City Secretary

