

Office of the City Manager

City of Richland Hills, Texas

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council
From: Eric Strong
Date: September 24, 2013
Subject: Parks Planning and Amenities

Council Action Requested:

Any action necessary to provide staff direction

Background Information:

One of the items that has been identified as a potential priority of the Council is evaluating the needs of City Parks and making appropriate upgrades to the parks systems. In the most recent PPFCO, \$100,000 was designated for Park Improvements. These funds have not yet been expended. The reason these funds have not yet been spent is because we want to ensure that we take a comprehensive look at the parks system as a whole and make meaningful upgrades that fit into a larger plan, rather than just purchase miscellaneous pieces of parks equipment to place randomly in the parks. Staff would like to discuss where we are at in this process and possible next steps.

In conjunction with this discussion, Mr. Oliver Pettit has approached the City Council on numerous occasions to discuss the possibility of constructing a log cabin at Kate Baker Park. In recent months, Mr. Pettit has diligently and frequently come by city hall in an attempt to revive those discussions. A summary of the history of Mr. Pettit's previous requests to the City Council are found below.

At the July 3, 2012 Council Meeting, Mr. Oliver Pettit came before the City Council and requested permission to seek donations for the construction of a log cabin at Kate Baker Park. There was a lengthy discussion, which centered around the following topics:

1. Type of appropriate construction (log cabin vs. another type of building)
2. Ensuring ADA accessibility
3. Ensuring appropriate parking
4. The need for a more detailed plan and cost estimate
5. How to handle donations and what to do with donations if the building were never built

This item was listed as a “Discussion” item, and therefore, no action was taken. However, there was a general directive to bring the item back to the City Council at a future date.

The item did come back to the City Council on August 7, 2012. At this meeting, council began discussing the possibility of conducting a survey amongst residents to gauge the interest level of residents in having a facility in Kate Baker Park. The City Manager was directed to put a survey together and bring it back to council for approval. Shortly after that meeting, the City Manager left his employment with the City, and as such a survey never came back to the City Council.

The park planning and future needs are obviously related to Mr. Pettit’s request. As we take a comprehensive look at the parks and the types of amenities that are appropriate for each, Council will need to decide if a log cabin in Kate Baker Park fits with the overall vision for the parks and is in the best interest of the community. While I do not anticipate that the discussion at the council meeting will necessarily focus on specific improvements, Mr. Pettit is looking for some direction and resolution to the issue of the log cabin, which is why I have provided the history of his requests in this memo.

Board/Citizen Input: N/A

Financial Impact: N/A

Staff Contacts:

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Attachments: N/A