



## **Leon Valley Park Commission Meeting Minutes**

**The Park Commission of the City of Leon Valley, Texas met on the 10th day of February 2022, at 7:00 p.m., at the Leon Valley Conference Center, 6421 Evers Road, Leon Valley, Texas, 78238 for the purpose of the following business, to-wit:**

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**1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Determine if Quorum is Present.**

Park Commission Chairman Christensen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., with the following members in attendance: Vice-Chairwoman Danielle Bolton and Commissioners Yvonne Orozco, Michelle Alonzo, Carolyn Gabriel, Evan Bohl, Kathy Hill, Joyce Trent, and Alternate Commissioner Drew Power. Absent were Commissioner Diana Frazier and Alternate Commissioner Kerin Freideck.

Also present at the meeting was resident Peter Alonzo and Staff Liaison Melinda Moritz.

**2. Review and Consider Approval of the November 10, 2021, Park Commission Meeting Minutes.**

Commissioner Orozco made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Valdez. The motion carried unanimously.

**3. Citizens to be Heard.**

There were no citizens requesting to be heard.

**4. Discussion and Action – Recommendation to Move 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate Drew Power to Regular Member Upon Seat Vacancy.**

Chairman Christensen stated that this item was placed on the agenda to assure that the Alternate Commissioner would be moved into a regular member seat as a position became vacant on the Park Commission. By general consensus, Mr. Power was unanimously approved to move up to regular member status if a vacancy were to occur on the Park Commission.

**5. Reports: Activities or Events that Impact Parks or Access to Parks:**

**a. Discussion on Citizen Capital Facilities Improvements Survey.**

Staff Member Moritz explained that the City Council had made some changes to the draft citizen survey and would make a final decision on February 22, 2022. She directed their attention to the draft survey in their packets. A general discussion was held on the timeline for placing the Bond items on a ballot, the wording on the

project's description page, what projects were in the final draft, and the decision to keep the survey simple and easy to complete.

**b. Discussion on the 3-26-22 City Council Town Hall Meeting.**

Staff member Moritz directed the Commission's attention to the draft 3-26-22 City Council Town Hall agenda, stating that the meeting would be held on a Saturday and that the agenda had not been completely finalized as yet. She encouraged all to attend.

**c. Discussion on Huebner-Onion Homestead Barn Encroachment.**

Staff member Moritz reminded the Commissioners of the stack stone barn encroachment into the Triangle Area Conservation Easement Park and explained that, instead of going forward with a land swap, the City had approved an encroachment agreement to allow the Leon Valley Historical Society to maintain the portion of the barn that was on City property and that Public Works Crews would now schedule a service order to replace the fencing along that side of the property.

**6. Discussion on Usage of the Veteran's Memorial Park.**

Staff member Moritz stated that the City had received a request from Mr. Walter Geraghty of the Audie L. Murphy Post 336 of the American Legion to place a multi-use amphitheater-type structure at the Veteran's Memorial Park adjacent to the Community and Conference Centers. The request stated that the amphitheater could be used for veteran's ceremonies, concerts, celebrations, and even City Council meetings. He further noted that this would be a safe venue for use by the city, non-profit organizations, or private citizens. He enclosed a proposed design, which showed a half-circle with 120 regular seats and eight handicapped seats, situated on different levels, with dimensions.

Chairman Christensen noted that the Veteran's Memorial Park area had never been designated as an official park by Ordinance. Commissioner Alonzo noted that the proposed structure was so large it would take up most of the green space in that area. Commissioner Orozco noted that there were only eight proposed handicapped seats and that this few wouldn't be adequate for older and possibly injured or otherwise handicapped members of the American Legion.

Commissioner Alonzo asked if the request had a specific purpose. Staff member Moritz stated that she was not sure, but she knew they held approximately two events per year in the City, with one being a flag retirement ceremony and one being the cleanup of Evers Road. She explained that Mr. Geraghty stated he had

approached State Senator Menendez and several businesses about obtaining funding this project and that he had gotten positive responses. Mrs. Orozco expressed her approval of his ability to garner funding.

Commissioner Hill noted that because the proposed structure only had five seat rows, it probably didn't need to be in stadium style format. She expressed her opinion that it should be kept more casual and have wider aisles for wheelchairs.

Commissioner Power asked what value this structure would add for the City and what the City would be sacrificing by losing the green space. He noted that he had been to several events in that area where chairs were used and then put away after the event. He expressed his desire that the area be kept a green space and that we should preserve our park areas. He stated that he didn't see a need for a formal structure when there were only five events held in that area per year.

Commissioner Valdez stated that she agreed with Commissioners Orozco and Power, and she also did not see a need to take up more green space. She suggested that Mr. Geraghty make use of chairs and canvas covers for events held in that area. She noted that her decision might be different if Leon Valley had a theater group that would use this area on a regular basis.

Commissioner Alonzo stated that she had proposed an amphitheater for the Peachtree and Poss vacant land, as there were groups in Leon Valley that needed a space for performances. She noted that this proposal would add versatility to the space. Commissioner Trent noted that when the library held events in the past, this was the area they used. She noted that it was the only space that was open and expressed her opinion of leaving it undeveloped.

Commissioner Bohl stated that, from his experience in the City of Austin, the structure was too high and not safe. He noted that the idea was good, but a better design was needed. He stated that if the funding for the structure was not from the City, they should recommend approval of the idea. He noted that if it was built, people would use it.

A general discussion was held on other spaces in Leon Valley for this type of use, using the existing portable bleachers, and remanding this proposal back to Mr. Geraghty for a better design and detailed use statement. Commissioner Power proposed having this space officially designated as a park and that he was all for having a venue for events such as a "Shakespeare in the Park", but that the idea needed to be better expounded upon.

Chairman Christensen stated that he also truly valued green space and that he thought that instead of building a permanent structure, the American Legion could

request the use of the City's portable bleachers for their events. He also stated his agreement with Commissioner Power to have the area officially designated as a park. Commissioner Hill also agreed. Chairman Christensen asked for a show of hands to approve the placement of this item on the next Park Commission agenda for formal vote. By general consensus, it was decided to place the designation of the area as an official park on the next Park Commission agenda.

## **6. Commissioner and Staff Comments.**

Staff member Moritz stated that a group named Culturingua had rented all of the facilities at Raymond Rimkus Park for a large February 26<sup>th</sup> event, which was unbeknownst to the City. She noted that the current park rental software system does not have a feature that allows the denial of a rental when one group or person is trying to rent all of the available areas at the park. She noted that the group would be using the park and the Community Center and would be holding testing, vaccination, and other events on that day. Ms. Moritz stated that the trails, restrooms, and picnic spots would be open to the public. She stated that if City officials had had prior knowledge of the event, they would have forwarded the request to the Park Commission for a recommendation, as is the usual procedure. She noted that this had now been explained to the group.

Commissioner Orozco stated that the annual Earthwise Living Day event was to be held on March 5<sup>th</sup> at the Community Center and she encouraged everyone to attend. She explained that they would have vendors inside the Community Center and a Shreddit truck outside for Leon Valley residents to shred old documents at no cost. She noted that there would not be any food booths, but they would have tacos, or some sort of refreshment, and they would also have a tree giveaway.

Commissioner Hill suggested that they restripe the tennis courts to accommodate a Pickleball setup, noting that Pickleball had become very popular across the states. Chairman Christensen suggested that this might be possibly accommodated at The Ridge at Leon Valley Park.

Commissioner Bolton noted that her child had scored a perfect 100% on the STARR test at school and how proud she was of this accomplishment. The Commissioners congratulated her on this achievement.


Commissioner Bohl told the Commissioners that he was finally able to secure a plot at the Community Garden after a year of waiting and that had him thinking about landscaping in general and possibly filling in the dirt patches in various areas of the park.

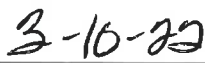
Commissioner Gabriel stated she hoped that when the City sent out the Citizen Surveys, they had a way of also getting them to the public by other means than mailing and suggested they place some at the library and City Hall.

Chairman Christensen reminded the Commissioners of the Park Commission meeting protocols, explaining that to have an item placed on the agenda, the person requesting the placement would need another Commissioner to second the request. He noted that if they did have an item placed on the agenda, the presenter should have all the research prepared in advance. He then thanked all the Commissioners for their participation at the meeting.

## 7. Adjourn.

Chairman Christensen asked for a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chairwoman Bolton made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Orozco. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm.

  
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Roger Christensen, Chairman

  
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Date