

1 The Open Space and Trails Committee met in teleconference session on Thursday, February 4,
2 2021 to discuss and if appropriate, take action on the agenda items listed below.

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4 **THOSE PRESENT WERE:**

5 Helen Burton	Chair
6 Sally Antrobus	Vice-Chair
7 John Coggeshall	Member
8 Monica Comeaux – Ex. Absence	Member
9 Debra Harper	Member
10 David Popken	Member
11 Heather Cable - Ex. Absence	Member
12 Sean Landis	Deputy City Manager
13 Kevin Padgett	Public Works Director
14 Brian Craig	City Engineer/Asst. Public Works Director
15 Stephanie Guerrero	Executive Administrative Assistant
16 Natalie Stephens	Public Works Administrative Specialist

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18 Chair Helen Burton called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

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20 **1. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUCEMENTS**

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22 Laurian Tollett, 601 Bradley Street, stated she was in opposition of Ordinance 2021-14,
23 “Feeding Wildlife.” Ms. Tollett understands the issues being addressed is related to feral pigs
24 in area. The proposed ordinance will not solve that issue. Feeding promotes wildlife
25 awareness and being able to observe wildlife tends to have people support wildlife
26 conservation. If a concern is water quality, look at Galveston Bay Foundation report where
27 humans and industry are the cause of pollution. We support local business by purchasing
28 seeds. The larger correlation is due to de-forestation. We are losing so much of the natural
29 habitat. When Seabrook builds, the animals find other locations. Wildlife does not lose their
30 natural foraging skills when part of their diet is provided by humans. In a perfect world there
31 would be a habitat for food, but as the city grows, there is less for wildlife to call home.
32 There must be a way to develop while providing allowance for wildlife to thrive along with
33 us. If habitat is being destroyed, then animals have to find food, which means crossing roads.

34 Kathy Morgan, 3410 Todville Road, stated she was in opposition of Ordinance 2021-14.
35 “Feeding Wildlife.” Ms. Morgan moved to Seabrook over 25 years ago and in the beginning
36 we had constant stream of deer, rabbits, squirrels, birds, and now city wants to prohibit us
37 from feeding these beautiful creatures. City says that feeding deer will increase likelihood of
38 collision between deer and cars; however our observation is that the deer population has been

39 weening substantially in recent years. When deer cross the road, most people slow down or
40 stop just to admire these majestic creatures. There is no issue if you go the speed limit. If it is
41 on private property, the City show not care what is done. Ms. Morgan would like to see all
42 the reports of findings as mentioned in the Ordinance such as the findings to the contributing
43 to increase in bacteria in Galveston Bay. It is our understanding that farmlands contribute to
44 most of the bacterial pollution due to runoff from chemicals used on farmlands. Who will
45 enforce this ordinance? The police and code enforcement officers? We do not have enough
46 employed to do the job they are being asked to do now. Writing an ordinance for the people
47 who have deer loving plants in their landscaping does not seem fair minded.

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49 **2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

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51 **2.1 Presentation of the Chair’s quarterly report to Council. (Committee)**

52 Chair Burton went over the presentation, in Attachment A, she will make to Council at the
53 February 16, 2021 Regular City Council meeting.

54 **2.2 Discussion on parking at parks. (Committee)**

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56 City Staff is currently researching options for an additional parking lot.

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58 **2.3 Discussion on grants. (Committee)**

59 Public Works Director, Kevin Padgett, mentioned City Staff is reviewing a grant application
60 that is for expanding the trails in Seabrook.

61 **2.4 Discussion on Keep Texas Beautiful. (Committee)**

62 A grant submission is approaching. Vice Chair Antrobus is currently working on the
63 application. Public Works Director, Kevin Padgett, stated that this is the final year of
64 ineligibility since winning the monetary award a few years back.

65 **2.5 Discussion on Trash Bash. (Committee)**

66 Trash Bash will be Thursday, March 25, 2021 – Saturday, March 27, 2021. This event will
67 be virtual. Volunteers will be able to upload their cleanups digitally to have their reports
68 counted.

69 **2.6 Discussion on Ordinance 2021-14, “Feeding Wildlife.” (City Staff)**

70 This item came about after various complaints were received from residents of feeding the
71 wildlife in which Staff got direction from City Council to address this item and draft an

72 ordinance. The ordinance has been reviewed and tabled at the February 2, 2021 Regular City
73 Council meeting to be modified, reviewed and brought back to Council at a later date.

74 The Committee made the following Comments:

- 75 • Why was this item brought up to Council? There has been multiple complaints about
76 various wildlife feeding all throughout the city from feeding ducks, the feral cats, etc.
- 77 • The City should give an educational class on feeding wildlife. We are becoming
78 overrun by wild animals.
- 79 • Once you start feeding the wild animals, they become very habit oriented.
- 80 • How will the City enforce not feeding the wildlife? The police department has bigger
81 fish to fry. This seems like government overreach.
- 82 • There is no state wide regulation against feeding, although state parks do prohibit
83 feeding.
- 84 • The buildouts and stripping of the land eliminate food for the animals.
- 85 • The City is having double vision because at the same time of wanting to ban feeding
86 the wildlife, we want to have a pollinator pathway, gardens, and migrant birds. The
87 City needs to use caution with the ordinance.
- 88 • A blanket prohibition is impossible to enforce and does cause offense among people
89 who think they should be able to do what they please on private property.
- 90 • Seabrook brags about its trails and natural areas then goes to war with the wildlife
91 does not sit well with its residents.
- 92 • It was unnerving to residents to find this item on the Council agenda when there has
93 been no real public conversation about feeding wildlife.
- 94 • Council should try to stage a public conversation of some kind, such as an informal
95 poll released to residents on social media or an informal meeting with City Staff. This
96 would allow people to weigh in if they care about this topic. This would give City
97 Staff an insight as to what the demand is from residents.
- 98 • It's discouraging to see the wildlife eat the plants and trees that were planted.

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100 *Motion was made by Vice Chair Antrobus and seconded by Member Popken*

101 *That the Open Space and Trails Committee recommends to City Council that some*
102 *mechanism be found to gather more public input before taking action on this item*

103 *MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT*

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106 **2.7 Update on the Story Walk Signage. (City Staff)**

107 This story walk program was proposed by the Harris County library at Meador Park by
108 Milagros. A Memorandum of Understanding was reviewed and accepted by City Council to
109 allow for the story walk signage, and to move forward with the recommended changes, as far
110 as where the signs would be located, and the number of signs. Milagro's has communicated
111 that they have taken the MOU to the Library Board for consideration. Eighteen signs should
112 be going up at the park. Signs are to go in sequence, where children would walk from sign to
113 sign and read as they go and create a story by the time they get to the end of it. Those signs
114 would be interchangeable throughout the year.

115 **2.8 Update on volunteer hours. (Committee)**

116 Committee members will submit their monthly volunteer hours to Chair Burton for record
117 keeping.

118 **2.9 City Staff update. (City Staff)**

119 Public Works Director, Kevin Padgett, announced that due to recent staff position changes
120 the Public Works Administrative Specialist, Natalie Stephens, will be the new liaison for the
121 Committee.

122 **2.10 Approve the minutes of the December 3, 2020 Open Space and Trails Committee**
123 **meeting. (Guerrero)**

124 *Motion made by Vice Chair Antrobus and seconded by Member Popken*

125 *To approve the minutes of the December 3, 2020 Open Space and Trails Committee meeting*

126 *MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT*

127 **2.11 Approve the minutes of the January 7, 2021 Open Space and Trails Committee**
128 **meeting. (Guerrero)**

129 *Motion made by Vice Chair Antrobus and seconded by Member Popken*

130 *To approve the minutes of the January 7, 2021 Open Space and Trails Committee meeting*

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132 *MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT*

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136 **2.12 Establish future meeting dates and agenda items. (Committee)**

137 The next meeting will be held on March 4, 2021.

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139 Upon motion duly made, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

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Stephanie Guerrero,

148 HR Specialist

Helen Burton,
Chair