



Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
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GBRA Directors Take Comments on Lake Wood Lease Changes

For More Information

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SEGUIN - The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority Board of Directors opened its Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2011 meeting to public comments regarding its recent decision to phase out the Lake Wood land lease program.

During the meeting about 20 individuals who were either members of the Friends of Lake Wood (FOLW) or were in some way connected to Lake Wood attended the meeting. A speaker, who identified himself as Darrel White, took the opportunity to address the directors with on behalf of FOLW voicing concerns with revised leases and GBRA's decision to phase-out the lease program at Lake Wood.

White primarily expressed the group's frustration with trying to understand what prompted the changes in the lease program. "We're a little fuzzy on what to respond to because we don't know what the issues are that are driving us out," White said, adding, "We feel like everybody here has been a good steward of the properties we lease from GBRA."

Initially, GBRA officials invited its Lake Wood leasees to attend a public meeting on Dec. 15, 2010, where they discussed lease changes and the ultimate phasing out of the lease program over an approximate seven-year timeframe ending in 2018. GBRA representatives explained concerns regarding its practice of allowing construction on the leased properties within the flood plain of the Guadalupe River that are subject to damage during flood events, habitation of such structures that potentially pose a hazard to occupants during flood events, as well as regulatory and environmental issues related to the on-site disposal of domestic wastewater.

During that meeting, GBRA representatives also discussed GBRA's continued commitment to the development and use of Lake Wood for recreational purposes. After securing funding from a Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) matching grant, GBRA began construction of a new boat ramp at Lake Wood Park. Boat ramp construction should be completed in 2011.

After Wednesday's Board meeting, GBRA General Manager Bill West, Jr., explained, "The bottom line is that when one considers the major floods of 1998, 2002, and more recently the rain bomb of June 2010 that allowed very limited forewarning to occupants along that stretch of the river, GBRA cannot continue a lease program that allows a population to erect structures on its properties in that area because they are in the floodway." He added, "Furthermore, poorly designed construction for wastewater on some of the properties can directly affect the water quality in the river," he added.

The Texas Legislature established the GBRA in 1933 as a water conservation and reclamation district. GBRA provides stewardship for the water resources in its 10-county statutory district, which begins near the headwaters of the Guadalupe and Blanco rivers, ends at San Antonio Bay, and includes Kendall, Comal, Hays, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales, DeWitt, Victoria, Calhoun, and Refugio counties.