

**Media Contact**

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## **Galveston Park Board Update: October 24, 2017**

The Galveston Park Board of Trustees held its regular meeting 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 24 at Park Board Plaza. Below is an update of news from the boardroom.

### **Park Board to Improve East End Lagoon Launch Area**

Thanks to a \$55,000 grant from the Texas General Land Office and a local match of \$13,750 from the City of Galveston's Industrial Development Corporation, the Park Board will soon make improvements to a much used but dilapidated area of the East End Lagoon. The area is comprised of a launch site for human powered watercraft such as paddleboards and kayaks. Devastated by Hurricane Ike in 2008, the launch site is littered with broken pilings, concrete and debris. Using the grant funds, the Park Board will build a parking area that will include three ADA spaces to facilitate access to the site. In addition, it will install bollards to mark the launch's entrance, construct a pathway to the site and remove debris to improve user safety. Work is expected to begin in February 2018.

### **Park Board Approves Lease Agreement**

At its meeting Tuesday, the Park Board approved a five-year lease agreement with the Galveston Historical Foundation (GHF) for the use of the carriage house at Ashton Villa. The Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau has operated its visitor center out of the carriage house since 2009. The Park Board will pay GHF \$1,500 per month for rent including electricity, the alarm system and water.

### **Park Board Approves Insurance Agreement for Employees**

On Tuesday, the Park Board approved an agreement with Principal Financial Group to provide short-term and long-term disability insurance, group life insurance and dental insurance for its employees. The cost of coverage for the 2017-2018 fiscal year has increased 2.9% over last year based on several factors, including the number of claims exceeding premiums last year and because the organization's employee population has become older.

### **Park Board Hires Firm for Hotel Occupancy Tax Audits**

On Tuesday, the Park Board approved an agreement with national firm MuniServices to perform 20 Hotel Occupancy Tax collections audits during the 2017-2018 fiscal year. MuniServices performed 20 audits last year to the satisfaction of the Park Board and City of Galveston officials. The audits are to be completed at a cost of \$2,000 each, plus travel and out of pocket expenses for a total of \$60,000. The audits are intended to ensure that properties reporting hotel occupancy tax collections are doing so in compliance with local and state guidelines.

### **About the Park Board of Trustees**

The Park Board of Trustees oversees beach maintenance and tourism development on Galveston Island, including operations for beach cleaning, the Galveston Island Beach Patrol and the Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau. For more information on the Park Board of Trustees, please visit

[www.galvestonparkboard.org](http://www.galvestonparkboard.org).