



**MEETING MINUTES
MAY 1, 2025**

**SEABROOK OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS
COMMITTEE
MEETING**

Member Comeaux called the Seabrook Open Space and Trails Committee to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Public Works and Animal Control Complex Training Room. Present were Nehemiah Jackson, Sally Antrobus, John Coggeshall, Monica Comeaux, Debra Harper, Jesse Jones.

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no citizen comments

2. CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 Approve the minutes of the March 6, 2025 Open Space and Trails Committee meeting.

Motion:	To Approve
Made By:	OST Member Jones
Seconded By:	OST Member Antrobus
Vote:	unanimously by all present

3. OLD BUSINESS

3.1 Consider and take all appropriate action regarding a recommendation to City Council on the allocation of Keep Texas Beautiful Grant proceeds in the amount not to exceed \$160,000 for improvements within the TXDOT right of way (ROW).

- The committee discussed an option presented by the Director of Public Works, Brian Craig, to take a motion to Council to recommend chains along the bollards along Hwy 146.
- Member Jones suggested placing that option on the agenda to give the committee time to give it consideration.
- The committee discussed other options such as an art installation.
- Member Antrobus suggested an option for the heavily trafficked area near NASA and Hwy 146.

3.2 Consider and take all appropriate action regarding a recommendation to Council concerning the Carothers Grading and Drainage Project re-bid.

- Member Jones stated that he would write up an overall plan for the project.
- The committee discussed the RFP and changes that should be made to the minimum qualifications section.

3.3 Consider and take all appropriate action on a recommendation to Council regarding moving the Carothers Fence

- Director of Public Works, Brian Craig, explained to the committee that council is in agreement that the fence must be on the property line.
- Member Jones explained a solution to the issue with the drainage that would need a 10-foot post instead of an 8-foot post to bypass the issue with the drainage ditch.

- Member Antrobus expressed her concern with removing the existing trees.
- The committee planned to walk the property with the other committee members to discuss how moving the fence will affect the trees.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Update and report on various Seabrook Park items including needed repairs, signage, plants, flowers, vegetation, and park use matters - *Committee*

- Member Coggeshall suggested adding a water faucet at Wildlife
- Member Jones suggested putting up a sign stating **NO DUMPING** due to trash being dumped near Pine Gully.
- The committee discussed clustered tree plantings.
- Member Harper discussed the McCartney Rose taking over along Pine Gully.

4.2 Update and report on various Seabrook Park items including community events, emergency events, and grant administration

Chair Comeaux gave the following updates:

- Trash Bash and Trail Adventure since there was no April meeting
- The Easter Extravaganza and Member Jones contributed information regarding his experience at this event.
- The flag retirement on Main Street
- The Kite event on May 17, 2025, at Pine Gully
- The May 26, 2025, Memorial Day event

The Committee discussed the Bayside Park Stakeholders Group meeting on April 9, 2025. Member Jones, as the OST representative, gave his update regarding that meeting which included:

- A presentation from Kimley-Horn.
- A design plan that he and the group had collaborated on and that was submitted to the group earlier in the year.
- An explanation regarding the current design being flawed due to it being at sea level and being susceptible to flooding.

4.3 Consider and take all appropriate action regarding seeding the prairie near Robinson Gazebo

Member Antrobus discussed her suggestion for seeding the prairie near Robinson Gazebo (**SEE ATTACHMENT A**). The committee was in agreement. No action was taken.

4.4 Consider and take all appropriate action regarding emphasizing native plants in Carothers landscape planning.

Member Antrobus discussed the importance of native plants and the benefits of utilizing those plants in Carothers landscaping (**SEE ATTACHMENT B**). No action was taken.

4.5 Consider and take all appropriate action on a recommendation to Council regarding a volunteer project for the design and installation of trail head signage.

Member Coggeshall gave a presentation regarding the design and installation of trailhead signage (**SEE ATTACHMENT C**).

Motion:	To Approve
Made By:	OST Member Jones
Seconded By:	OST Member Coggeshall
Vote:	Passed unanimously by all present

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion regarding Open Space & Trails Committee's involvement in the Bayside Park expansion project at the Main Street Wastewater Treatment Plant

Additional discussion occurred during Item 4.2.

Member Antrobus added that native plants should be used in the plantings and the name should be changed to Back Bay Park. She also discussed her displeasure with the idea of having any types of bands or large parking areas.

5.2 Discuss recently viewed Keep Texas Beautiful webinars and take all appropriate action on remaining required webinar hours.

There are no updates regarding this item.

6. ROUTINE BUSINESS

6.1 Report from the Committee Chair on the status of a list of proposed actions taken by the Open Space and Trails Committee and forwarded to City Council for its action or review

There are no updates regarding this item.

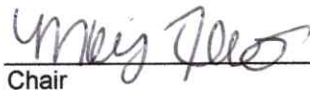
6.2 Update on volunteer hours – Committee

The committee updated their volunteer hours.

6.3 Establish future meeting dates and agenda items – Committee

The next Open Space and Trails meeting will be held on Thursday, June 5, 2025.

APPROVED:


Chair

DATE: 6/5/25

ATTEST:


Amanda Morales
Deputy City Secretary

Re: Agenda Item 4.4

To: Open Space members

From: Sally Antrobus

Subject: Emphasizing Native Plants In Carothers Landscape Planning

Date: April 28, 2025

I want to make the point that because we are basically starting from scratch with floral and ornamental plantings at Carothers, we have an opportunity to focus closely on native plantings in a way that has significant benefits:

- (1) Emphasis on native plantings has not been done before in Seabrook's parks. We have the **opportunity to create a new attraction** in one of our parks, at a time when interest in native plants is rising nation-wide.
- (2) A focus on native floral plantings also provides an **opportunity to offer new educational components** for residents, school groups, and visitors.
- (3) Native plants bring the extra benefit of attracting native wildlife such as birds and butterflies. Many birds eat insects, and they need thousands of insects to fledge their young. We have the **opportunity to provide new productive habitat** that will support migrant and resident birds by providing them with an "island" of suitable food.

I suggest we be guided by the "Top 100" list of native plants of various kinds appropriate for Harris County.

TOP 100 NATIVE PLANTS

FOR HARRIS AND ADJACENT COUNTIES

These **Native Plants** are recommended based upon a combination of their regional suitability for **landscaping AND** their value to **wildlife**. These plants grow well in the soil conditions of Harris and surrounding counties, including gumbo, AND provide value to wildlife such as birds, butterflies and beneficial insects. Each species is hardy for the Gulf Coast climate. Most plants do not require fertilizing, or any special treatment, except proper care until established. Naturally, if the plant becomes stressed or diseased special treatment is recommended. Please see other references for growth characteristics (height, width, evergreen, etc.) and appropriate planting conditions (sun, shade, moisture, etc.) for each species. Appropriate planting yields a healthier and more attractive plant.

Ten Big Trees: Swamp Chestnut Oak, Live Oak, Willow Oak, Loblolly Pine, Bald Cypress, Sweetgum, American Elm, White (Upland) Ash, Green (Swamp) Ash, Drummond Red Maple

Ten Small Trees: Mexican Plum, American Holly, American Fringe Tree, Laurel Cherry, Eastern Redbud, Green Hawthorn, Carolina Buckthorn, Rusty Black-haw Viburnum, Farkleberry, Texas Persimmon

Ten Large Woody Shrubs (can grow to small tree size): Southern Wax Myrtle, Deciduous Holly, Yaupon Holly (thicket former), Rough Leaf Dogwood (thicket former), Elderberry (thicket former), Flame Leaf Sumac (thicket former), Parsley Hawthorn, Ohio Buckeye, Red Buckeye, Buttonbush

Ten Small Shrubs: American Beautyberry, Texas Lantana, Arrowwood Viburnum, Virginia Sweetspire, Red Chokecherry, Coralberry, Fragrant Sumac, Narrow Leaf Yucca, Yellow Sophora, Dwarf Palmetto

Ten Perennials For Sun: Purple Coneflower, Scarlet Sage, Maximilian Sunflower, Kansas Gayfeather, Eastern Gamagrass, Switch Grass, Indian Grass, Pink Evening Primrose, Guara, Giant Coneflower

Ten Perennials For Shade: Turk's Cap, Strawberry Bush, Cardinal Flower, Farkleberry, Blue Mistflower, Big Thicket Hibiscus, Gulf Coast Penstemon, Spring Obedient Plant, Fall Obedient Plant, Arkansas Yucca

Ten Vines For Sun: Coral Honeysuckle, Purple Passionflower, Carolina Jessamine, Carolina Snailseed, Globe Berry, Common Greenbriar, Mustang Grape, Prairie Rose, Trumpet Creeper, Curly Clematis

Ten Vines For Shade: Virginia Creeper, Cross Vine, Yellow Passionflower, Saw Greenbriar, Woolly Pipevine, Texas Dutchman's Pipe, Pitcher Clematis, Leather Clematis, Climbing Milkweed, Virginia Dutchman's Pipe

Ten Groundcovers For Sun: Frog Fruit, Knotroot Bristlegrass, Gulf Coast Muhly, Prairie Verbena, Little Bluestem, Indian Blanket, Winecup, Powderpuff (*mimosa strigulosa*), Creeping Spotflower, Carolina Ponyfoot

Ten Groundcovers For Shade: Pigeonberry, Coralberry, Wood Fern, Spiderwort, Cherokee Sedge, Horseherb, Carolina Elephant Foot, Partridgeberry, White Avens, Missouri Violet

References:

Checklist of the Vascular Plants of Texas, by Hatch, Gandhi, Brown, *American Wildlife & Plants: A Guide to Wildlife Food Habits*, by Martin, Zim, Nelson, *Butterflies of Houston & Southeast Texas*, by John and Gloria Tveten, *Trees Shrubs and Woody Vines of the Southwest*, by R. A. Vines, *Native Texas Plants Landscaping Region by Region*, by Wasowski, *Atlas of the Vascular Plants of Texas*, by Turner, Nichols, Denny, Doron, *Guide to Native Trees, Shrubs & Vines*, Published by Houston Chapter of NPSOT, *Life Histories of North American Birds*, by A. C. Bent, *A Checklist of the Native and Naturalized Plants of Houston and Vicinity*, by R.A Vines and Frederick W. Thurow, Informal Survey of Some Chapter Members with Personal Observations of the Compiler; Compiled for the Native Plant Society of Texas - Houston Chapter by Glenn Olsen from an informal survey of chapter members and the references listed above.
August 2004 WWW.NPSOT.org/houston



Seabrook Trailhead Signs

John Coggeshall, Open Space and Trails member
May 2025

Benefits of Seabrook Trail System

- Citizens love it
 - *Additional elaboration not required*
- Draws day visitors

Economic Benefits of Trails

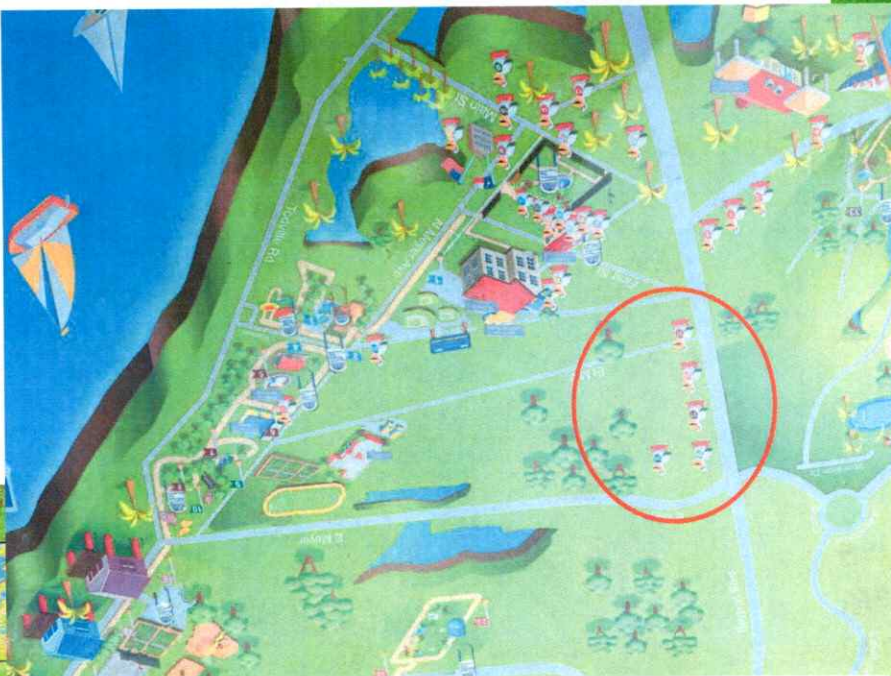
Trails stimulate the economies of surrounding communities. As tourists come to experience the trail, they also bring money into the area. According to the [Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research](#), during the summer of 2017, visitors to Mt. Helena who used the trail system brought over \$4 million into the area.

Day Visitor Inputs to OST

- About 50% of the trail users on the weekends are from out of town (*John's swag*)

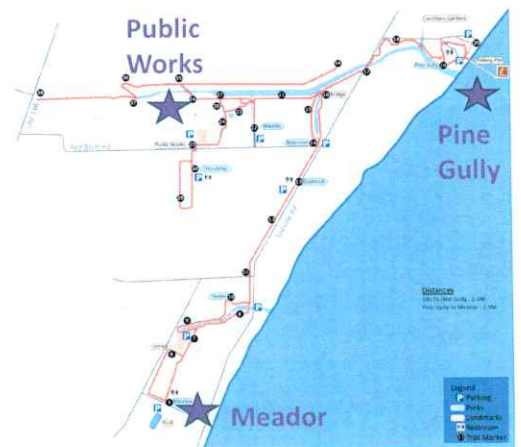
Unofficial survey data (talking to hikers)

- Frequent Compliments
 - Overall beauty
 - Bird watching is great
 - On the Greater Coastal Birding Trail (4 bird biomes : Coastal, Woodlands, Prairie, Marsh)
 - Cleanliness
 - Not along roads (sound, safety, heat)
- Frequent complaint
 - Mosquitoes (See Alltrail reviews)
- Suggestions for improvements from out-of-town hikers
 - Trail Signs (Map)
 - More Trails



Current Trail Signs

- OST + volunteers would finalize design and install trailhead signs
- If popular, 2 more trail signs will be added



Trailhead Signs Need

- Good Map (will be 36 x 36)
- Roof (shade , protects Map)

Re: Agenda Item 5.1

To: Open Space members

From: Sally Antrobus

Subject: Report-back on Bayside Park, last meeting

Date: April 28, 2025

Park consultants Kimley Horn did well—they gave an effective rendering of ideas with good mix-and-match potential.

The Nature Park option seemed to me a winner. We get great feedback on our more natural and wilder parks—residents and visitors love them. In contrast, I'm not aware of any groundswell of residents begging for playgrounds or pavilions. We have those already.

Native plantings—in contrast, we don't really have a park specifically emphasizing native plantings. Native plants serve native insects, which in turn attract birds, enhancing the appeal of a park to both residents and visitors.

A Farmers' Market may not be quite appropriate for the waterfront? This has been proposed several times over the 37 years I've lived here, but doesn't quite catch on, for three reasons, I think:

- (1) *Competition*: There are already some 15 farmers' markets in the greater Houston area.
- (2) *Location*: East of Seabrook is all water – Galveston Bay – and west of Seabrook is mostly urban development, not farm land.
- (3) A farmers' market seems to need an organizational infrastructure that we don't have.

On the name—there are lots of parks named Bayside Park, including one just 6 or 7 miles away in Bacliff. There are parks of that name in Portland OR, Everett WA, Lake Champlain NY, St. Louis MS, Bayside Beach MD; in Fort Myers and Miami Beach FL; and in San Diego, Arcata, Burlingame, and Marin County, CA . . . at that point I quit looking. I think we can do better on the name.