



## ***News from the Helotes Heritage Association***

Dear Readers,

As we reported two weeks ago, Mr. Schoolcraft, Mayor of Helotes, sought to have the City of Helotes City Council pass a resolution to designate him as the sole arbitrator to negotiate with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department the designation of the green belt space in the Iron Horse Canyon neighborhood as the Sen Frank Madla Memorial Park. The proposed resolution was as follows:

"Discussion of an action on approving a Resolution authorizing application for \$1.125 million, Sen. Frank Madla grant, from Texas Parks and Wildlife for public park and recreation purposes at Iron Horse Canyon and designating the Mayor as the representative for the applicant in dealing with Texas Parks and Wildlife."

We can report that the Helotes City Council chose a different path and amended the resolution to instead charge the Helotes Parks and Open Space Committee with the task of evaluating all available park land appropriate for the Sen Frank Madla Memorial Park and to report back to City Council their recommendation.

The Parks and Open Space Committee met last week to undertake this important task. At its meeting, it was discussed that the task would have two critical components: (i) criteria against which to evaluate potential park lands would need to be identified and established, and (ii) all available and appropriate park land would need to be identified in order to be evaluated.

The Parks and Open Space Committee reviewed a Guidance Document that was developed by the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department to help San Antonio evaluate natural areas as park lands. It was noted that this document would provide valuable assistance in developing evaluation criteria for the Helotes park because the San Antonio document was prepared for characteristics found in the Texas Hill Country and environs.

The Parks and Open Space Committee is to meet again at 6:30 pm on Wednesday August 8 at the Helotes City Chambers to expedite the park evaluation task. The Parks and Open Space Committee has asked that anyone who is aware of land that may be appropriate for the Sen Frank Madla Memorial Park to contact the committee and notify them of the land. The Parks and Open Space Committee invites community participation to help make this process proceed expeditiously in as transparent fashion as possible.

The HHA strongly commends the Helotes City Council for choosing to take this deliberate and thoughtful approach to the selection of a suitable site for the Sen Frank Madla Memorial Park. The HHA also thanks those citizens who took the time to contact the City Council members to ask them to take this sensible action on such an important, long-lasting decision. Your voice really does make a difference. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Ron Green  
HHA, President