

# CS council accepts \$1.5 M bid

by Mark Evans  
The Battalion

The College Station City Council voted 4-3 to accept the bid from the Construction Resource Group (CRG) for the construction of Wolf Pen Creek Phase I.

The \$1.5 million bid came in at \$250 thousand over the amount the Council had originally budgeted for the park project. It was the lowest of the bids received last September when the bidding opened.

Before accepting the bid, the City Council added an amendment to it. This directs the staff to negotiate with CRG to reduce the project cost to at least \$1.4 million and report back at the next City Council meeting on Nov. 20.

The project, located at the intersection of Dartmouth and Holleman drives, provides for the building of a 14-acre park along the Wolf Pen Creek. The plans include trails, an outdoor amphitheater, and a playground.

The issue of whether to accept the bid or reject it and ask for new ones in the hope of attaining a lower one split the council into two camps.

"The committees have studied it, the consultants have studied it, and the staff has studied it," City Councilman Jim Gardner said. "We know what we want. Let's just find a way to finance it."

If the City Council decided to accept new bids, there is no guarantee that they would come in any lower, said Stephen Beachy, College Station Parks and Recreation

Director. The process could delay work on the project because the bids would not be ready until December at the earliest.

The extra time may allow the City to get a bid that will better fit into their budget, Council member Lynn McIlhane said. This could save the City as well as the taxpayers money. She serves on the Finance Committee which reviewed the bids submitted.

"We felt like we might get some good, competitive bids if we go back out and give the contractors some additional time," McIlhane said. "I feel like we can do better. I think we have to cut the expense of it (the project) without cutting its quality."

Other members of the City Council suggested trimming the project plans. The project could

withstand cuts of trivial items, such as minor changes in the types of building materials used.

"I think we're overlooking some areas where we can save money and nobody would be able to notice a difference from the original plans," City Councilman Dick Birdwell said.

In other business, the City Council approved an ordinance which would allow them to consider granting a three-year tax abatement to C.C. Creations on Holleman Drive. Currently, the business plans to expand its operations with an addition to its offices.

The addition would create more jobs in the low-income neighborhood where it's located.

"It's a win-win situation," McIlhane said.

## Comptroller predicts strong economy for Texas future

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas' economy will expand faster than the nation's as a whole over the next 20 years, and income will rise, the state comptroller's office predicted in a report released Thursday.

"For Texans who weathered the economic storms of the 1980s, the future beckons like a welcome star on the horizon," Comptroller John Sharp said in the October issue of Fiscal Notes.

Texas' economy will grow an average of nearly 3 percent a year over the next two decades, compared to the expected national rate of about 2.5 percent, according to the report.

And average Texans will be better off financially, the report said.

Per-capita Texas income, in 1991 dollars, is projected to rise from about \$17,300 to about \$22,500 in 20 years.

## Former female employees charge law firm with sexual harassment

HOUSTON (AP) — Five former female employees have filed a \$5 million lawsuit against a prominent Houston law firm, alleging that a partner harassed, assaulted or slandered them and the firm was negligent in supervising him.

The women filed the lawsuit Wednesday against Dunn, Kacal, Adams, Pappas & Law.

The only plaintiff named is Hellon Lureen Hopkins, 29, a paralegal fatally shot Oct. 14 after intervening in an attempted purse-snatching. The suit will be amended to name her estate as the plaintiff.

The suit states the firm fired Ms. Hopkins in 1988, three weeks after she complained about the conduct of her immediate supervisor, attorney Pete Andarsio.

Ms. Hopkins and another woman identified as Jane Doe Two complained that Andarsio forcibly touched their breasts. Jane Does Three and Four claim Andarsio forced them to have intercourse and oral sodomy, and Jane Doe Five says Andarsio slandered her.

William Wade, attorney for the five, said the women, all in their mid-20s, were fired or left as a result of Andarsio's actions.

But Wade says some of the women found it easier to look the other way than come forward because they were living "paycheck to pay-

check." According to the suit, Ms. Hopkins and two others complained with little result.

Gerald Holtzman, attorney for the firm, said a month-long, internal investigation showed the women's allegations are "just not true."

"The firm took these charges very seriously," he said.

Randy Schaffer, attorney for Andarsio, said his client had consensual sexual relations with an undisclosed number of the plaintiffs, mostly resulting from "pairing off" after social occasions.

"Some of these allegations are things that occurred years ago, and they never complained," Schaffer said. "There wasn't even a hint of sexual assault."

Wade has called for senior partner Charles R. "Bob" Dunn to step down as president of the State Bar of Texas until the case is resolved.

Holtzman and Schaffer described Wade's settlement offers prior to filing the lawsuit as similar to an extortion attempt.

"It was postured to the firm in such a way that said, 'Bob Dunn is president of the State Bar and you don't want his name all over the papers and on television, so give us a bunch of money,'" Holtzman said.

No criminal charges have been filed with the Houston Police Department.

## Radar system gives false alarms

DALLAS (AP) — Some air-traffic controllers at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport say false alarms from a new radar system being used nationwide have caused dozens of airplanes to unnecessarily swerve from their flight paths.

The problems with the Traffic Alert and Collision System have not led to any reports of near-collisions at DFW. But air-traffic controllers say that the problems with the system could affect safety under extreme conditions, such as bad weather or heavy traffic.

"We do view it as a serious problem," said Michael Drennan,

## Difficulties cause airplanes to swerve from flight path

a controller at DFW.

"In a congested environment like DFW, where you have to run so much traffic all the time, we don't think TCAS is effective."

Air-traffic controllers across the nation are warning Congress and the Federal Aviation Administration of problems in the new system, which has been installed in about 40 percent of the commercial airline fleet. The FAA is requiring that half have the warn-

ing system by the end of the year.

The pilot of a plane equipped with TCAS is warned by the device and told what action he should take if another aircraft comes within about 1,000 feet.

However, false alarms have caused aircraft to divert needlessly from their flight paths — occasionally without warning to air-traffic controllers. Some controllers are worried that an aircraft that is veering off because of a

false TCAS alarm might wander into the path of another plane.

"We haven't had any real close calls yet," noted Jeff Beddow, a spokesman for the controllers association in Washington. "But it doesn't take much imagination to foresee that scenario."

Drennan said DFW has been experiencing three or four TCAS incidents a week.

"We are aware of their complaints," said Fred Farrar, a spokesman for the agency in Washington. "We are trying to find the cause. We don't believe it is a threat to safety. What TCAS is, is an enhancement to safety."

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