

Austin Post-Bulletin

Bike Safety Bash
It's about helmets and more » **A3**



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Par for the course
Packers golf season begins today » **B1**



Three cheers
Packers, Bruins are exciting » **B1**

Retirement
President of subsidiary will retire » **A3**



Joe Michaud-Scorza / jscorza@postbulletin.com

AN EYE FOR THE FUTURE

Kaylyn Huinker, 10, plants potato sprouts Saturday at the Mower County Fairgrounds in Austin.

AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

Boughton: Backlash is misdirected

Boughton says Hurm did not deserve criticism

By Heather Rule
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Roger Boughton offered an apology, on behalf of himself and Austin's Housing and Redevelopment Authority, to City Administrator and HRA executive director Jim Hurm at Monday's Austin City Council work session.

That apology, and the discussion that followed, was in response to comments made at Saturday's Coffee with the Council meeting, particularly the relating to Hurm's recommendation to explore City Engineer Jon Erichson's interest in a part-time position as HRA director. The recommendation was presented in a memo to the mayor, city council and HRA board at the council's April 2 work session.

Boughton was not at Coffee with the Council, but it was his understanding that Hurm "got hammered," "and it was very, very unfair."

He said Hurm was just the conveyor of the message regarding the recommendation. Boughton said he suggested Hurm would be the appropriate person, as executive director, to bring the information to the council as a "courtesy."

"This was not Jim's initiation," Boughton said. "It was my initiation. So if anyone should be mad, it should be directed at me."

The process

Boughton explained the process of this recommendation to date. Erichson's name was first mentioned in a meeting Boughton and HRA Board Chair Marvin Repinski had with Mayor Tom Stiehm to keep him updated in terms of changing leadership. Afterwards, Boughton first checked with Erichson, then met with Hurm.

After discussing Erichson's interest in the position and the possible change in leadership, Hurm was supportive of that, and it was then decided that Hurm would call the HRA board, "because we didn't want them to be blindsided, either," Boughton said.

"So he called each board member, I understand, and said this is what's happening," Boughton said. "Nothing has been decided. No decision had been made. No discussion had taken place with HRA,

What's next:

The HRA board's monthly meeting is at 3:30 p.m. Thursday at the HRA office, 308 Second Ave. N.E.

the board, at all."

HRA Board Member Marilyn Prenosil spoke at Coffee with the Council and attended Monday's work session. She said her feeling was that this should have been discussed with the whole HRA board, not by individual phone calls.

"We were not told that it came from you," Prenosil said to Boughton. "That you instigated this."

Council Member-at-large Janet Anderson told Prenosil to check her sources. Prenosil said her source was Hurm when he called her March 27 to tell her he was going to hand out information.

"That was my source," Prenosil said. "Roger's name was not mentioned once."

Decision yet to come

Boughton said he didn't have any hard feelings and that he felt bad for Hurm. Anderson said she didn't understand "why there was such a backlash" about the situation during Saturday's meeting. Council Member Jeff Austin, who was not at Coffee with the Council, said he thinks the council is well within its rights to discuss things like the HRA executive director position.

No official decisions have been made about the future of the HRA executive director position. The HRA board has its monthly meeting at 3:30 p.m. Thursday at the HRA office, where it will decide how to move ahead with the executive director position, Boughton said.

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Boughton



Hurm

They're going to Katmandu

By Jeff Hansel
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By the time you read this, a team of Mayo Clinic scientists should be nearing Katmandu, Nepal, for a research journey to Mount Everest.

The researchers, including Alex Kasak, a research assistant from Austin, and an accompanying team of mountain climbers will serve as heart-failure models, team members said as they prepared to leave Monday from the Rochester International Airport.

That's possible because mountain climbers tend to experience many of the symptoms of heart-failure patients, such as shortness of breath and fluid in the lungs. Exercise at high altitude for a healthy individual has a similar effect as exercise at ground level for someone with heart failure.

While the Mayo researchers are studying National Geographic and the North Face expedition climbers, their colleagues back in Rochester will continue collecting data from heart-failure patients for comparison.

Intensive care unit fellow Dr. Doug Summerfield said the team will monitor climbers from base camp, about 17,500 to 18,000 feet above sea level. The expedition climbers will continue on to 29,000 feet.

Summerfield expects to monitor beat-to-beat variability in heart rhythm, sleep disruption, headaches, oxygen deficiency and fluid in the lungs.

Team leader Bruce Johnson, a Mayo Clinic scientist has traveled to a variety of high-altitude locations for research focused on altitude sickness, heart disease and other conditions. He said research won't end once the climb is complete, as the climbers and researchers will be flown to Mayo Clinic for further tests, "almost like a heart patient," Johnson said.

Each member of the team of Mayo



Photo courtesy of Mayo Clinic

From left are Dr. Doug Summerfield, Dr. Bruce Johnson, Dr. Amine Issa, Dr. Joel Streed, Dr. Bryan Taylor and Alex Kasak.

Clinic researchers will handle different chores.

Amine Issa, who has a doctorate in biomedical engineering, will try to keep the testing devices working in the high altitude.

He expects heart rate and movement of climbers to be measured with "very high resolution." Then, he said, the team will come back and design algorithms for home-monitoring of heart patients. If, through early home monitoring, emergency responders can be alerted one to five minutes earlier, it could have profound implications.

Bryan Taylor will be watching for build-up of fluid in the lungs at high altitude, which occurs to most heart-failure patients.

Kasak will be looking at energy

expenditure and body composition, and he'll take blood draws. He said the team is carting along close to 1,500 pounds of equipment and supplies, necessitating a split into two jets for the first leg of the trip.

Once the team reaches Nepal, the journey has just begun. It's a 53-mile trek, Kasak said, with sherpas and yaks "and carrying our own packs."

"I don't know how I'm going to do mentally or physically," he said.

Despite the uncertainty, he's excited about the travel.

"We're going with the North Face," Kasak said. "We're going with 20 of the most-competent people we can go with."

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Angela Winkels, Rochester

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6 a.m. 50° Noon 63° 6 p.m. 65°

Corrections

The Post-Bulletin is committed to fairness and accuracy. If you have a concern, contact Managing Editor Jay Furst at 285-7742 or furst@postbulletin.com.

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Punchline A2

"I can't read, I can't write and they won't let me talk."

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