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Dear Client:

Most of the presidential campaign reporting focuses on which candidate carried *this* or *that* state. But Texas is a perfect illustration of how the total *states* are not as important as the total *delegates* when it comes to the eventual nominee at the party's national convention in July. Texas US Senator Ted Cruz solidly carried his home state in the voting Tuesday. But fully a third of Texas delegates must vote for someone not named Cruz. How does that work?

The two political parties have their own rules for selecting delegates and how they must vote. And, each state has its own set of rules within the parties. So, let's focus on the only presidential candidate from Texas, and the GOP/State rules that dictate how it all plays out.

Stay with me here. Texas has 155 delegate votes at the GOP convention. Only 47 delegates are selected as a result of the statewide vote. They are allocated proportionately among the candidates who get more than 20% of the statewide vote. **Cruz won 30 delegates and Donald Trump was awarded 17 delegates.**

Okay, what about the rest of the delegates? The Texas GOP decided that **each of the state's Congressional districts would select three delegates**, again somewhat proportionately (believe me, you don't want to dive deeply into those rules). When those results are added to the statewide voting allocation, **Cruz gets 100 delegates, Trump 46 and Marco Rubio gets 6** (these delegate totals are subject to minor change as the vote totals are more closely examined).

At the GOP national convention in July, the Texas delegates must vote as indicated above. When all the states have voted, and **if no candidate gets a majority, the delegates can change their votes on subsequent roll calls**. The same holds true for most other states. This is where a "brokered" convention emerges and the horse-trading kicks in.

The GOP delegate totals could change dramatically March 15th, when **Florida** (Rubio's home state) and **Ohio (John Kasich's home state)** vote – because, unlike Texas, in those two important large states **the winner takes all of the delegates**.

The Democrats have their own set of rules for delegate selection. But with only two major Dem candidates, there is less delegate intrigue. Two dates: the GOP national convention starts July 18 in Cleveland, and the Dems start the next week on July 25, in Philadelphia. Stay tuned.

Some political junkies wonder “what happened to Garry Mauro,” the former 4-term Texas Land Commissioner who was famously shellacked when he ran for governor against republican Rick Perry. Well, Mauro is still battling for democrats just as he has since he first worked on George McGovern’s failed 1972 presidential campaign. He is the Texas Chair of Hillary Clinton’s campaign, whom he met during the McGovern campaign.

Mauro was a darling of Texas democrats when he was first elected to statewide office at the age of 34 in 1983. **He’s a grad of TexasA&M and the UT Austin law school. And, he has continued his efforts on behalf of his party.** He was Texas Chair for Clinton-Gore, Texas co-chair for Al Gore’s run for president and he was also Hillary Clinton’s 2008 State Director. As for real work, he practices private law and is Board Chair of LifeVantage Corp.

Uh-oh. There is late news from the *Wall Street Journal* that may have ominous implications for some startup businesses in the Silicon Hills of Austin. The business newspaper is reporting mutual funds are pulling back from startups.

Mutual funds helped fuel the technology boom and now the *WSJ* reports the funds are cutting the value of their startup investments “at an accelerating pace and are making fewer new investments.” It also notes that this “reducing tide of capital will **force startup companies of all kinds to focus on the bottom line rather than growth at any cost.**”

For the first time in decades, the City of Austin may – underline “may” – be getting close to doing something about its policy of taking money from its city-owned utilities and spending it on other city services. It’s a controversial practice with well-meaning arguments on both sides. And big dollars are involved.

Those who approve of the process say the transferred funds are well-spent on city services, and **if that money was not available, taxes would need to be raised.** The opponents argue the transfer process amounts to a “**hidden**” tax and **those excess funds should be used to keep the bills for electricity and water lower.**

How much money are we talking about? **Around \$150 million is being siphoned off from the funds you pay for electricity and water to be spent on other city services.** City Council member **Ellen Troxclair** claims this process compromises transparency in the cost of government.

So she has asked city staff for a report on the implications of decreasing such transfers. **Does this mean action will be taken after all these years? Not at all.** In fact, Troxclair says all she is doing is gathering information. But this is a step that moves the debate one step farther.

Beginning this week, for the first time since 2011, water is being drawn out of Central Texas lakes Travis and Buchanan and sent downstream to rice farmers, industrialists and others. Yes, those lakes are 90% “full” now. And lake regulators are warning of possible flash flooding. So there appears to be plenty of available water, unlike the drought-stricken previous four years. But one critic is complaining the City of Austin is refusing to lift its Stage 2 drought restrictions that include a maximum of 1-day per week of lawn watering.

Austin City Council Member **Don Zimmerman** complained again this week that Austin’s watering restrictions have not yet been lifted. **“Unfortunately our City Officials decided not to follow their own 2012 Drought Contingency Plan** using the excuse that the Drought Contingency Plan can’t be followed because of fears about future droughts,” he commented.

Zimmerman also indicated the City was going counter to its own Austin Water online survey that generated 1,700 responses on the topic. He said the vote was 56% to 40% *against* making permanent the 1-day/week watering limit.

The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) announced this week that it will **allow up to 202,000 acre-feet of water to be sent downstream through July.** Austin has contracted through 2050 with the LCRA, at a cost of \$100 million, for 150,000 acre-feet of water per year to be used as its primary drinking water source. The two lakes currently hold about 1.8 million acre-feet. **To put this in perspective, an acre-foot is almost 326,000 gallons.** The LCRA is operating under a recent state-approved Water Management Plan.

Okay. Here’s a heads-up if you are planning to travel during March. This is one of the busiest months for air travel at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA). Let’s look at the dates where you may encounter longer ticketing and security lines.

Last March, more than a million passengers trudged through ABIA – setting a record. **This year, the numbers are expected to be even greater.** This is because of the events that are taking place in Austin.

The dates to work around if you want to face less-crowded conditions: **March 11-20**, for the three South By Southwest (SXSW) events (Interactive, Film and Music) ... Spring Break, when families are taking a travel break, **March 13-19** ... Rodeo Austin, March **12-26** ... and the Texas Relays, **March 30-April 2.**

And don’t forget traffic tie-ups with roadway construction going on around the clock. Add on top of that the visit to Austin by President **Barack Obama** on March 11th. As you know, **streets are blocked and traffic stopped or re-routed for security reasons to protect the president** as his motorcade negotiates various Austin streets. And, the motorcade streets are not announced in advance, again for security reasons. Be alert and aware.

Frustrated by having to plug parking meters in Austin (if you are lucky enough to find a space in areas such as downtown)? Well, the City is helping to ease the hassle by introducing a smartphone app that will allow you to pay for parking remotely. And that's not all.

When the app is up-and-working this month, you can purchase parking meter time **with the push of a button, thereby eliminating the need for coins, cash, pay stations and parking stickers.** Called ParkX, the app will be implemented initially March 22 in the UTAustin West Campus area. The plan calls for it to expand to all City-owned, metered parking spots in April. **How does it make parking easier for you?**

ParkX users will receive text alerts when their time is about to expire. They can then move their vehicles or add more time until they reach the posted parking time limit. ParkX also sends regular parking expense reports to businesses. This can come in handy for business and tax purposes.

In addition, **Austin businesses can partner with ParkX to offer patrons exclusive parking expense discount codes.** Users may also receive discounts and coupons for nearby businesses directly on their electronic receipts. ParkX will add a 25-cent fee to each transaction.

To use the system, Android and Apple users can download the free ParkX app in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

Speaking of parking, up to 30 new automated parking pay stations will be operational in Zilker Park starting Saturday. This includes all parking areas surrounding the Great Lawn, as well as all lots south of Barton Springs Road, including the north and south Barton Springs Pool lots. Enforcement will occur during periods of heavy usage.

Dr. Louis Overholster heard this politician's denial: "I didn't actually say everything I said!"

Sincerely,



Editor/Publisher