

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, May 9, 2014, 8:30 a.m.**

Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center, 2400 S. Scenic, Springfield, Missouri.

I. ROLL CALL

John Price, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Paula Glossip, Kevin Hogan, Sarah McCallister, Mike Mellinger, John Price, Chair, Tim Shryack

Members Absent: Matt Bailey, Phyllis Ferguson

Park Board Staff: Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Karen Herron, Ben Kellner, Peter Longley, Anne-Mary McGrath, Jerry Mitchell, Dave Moore, Tom Moore, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Katie Steinhoff, Lana Woolsey

Guests: Lisa Bakerink, President, Friends of the Garden
Bob Childress, Marthe Close, George Deatz – Friends of the Garden Members

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Paula Glossip made the motion to approve the minutes from the April 11, 2014, Park Board Meeting, and the April 11, 2014, Closed Park Board Meeting as a group and as distributed; seconded by Mr. Tim Shryack. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. INTRODUCTION OF BOTANICAL CENTER STAFF

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director, introduced the staff who manage the Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center including the beautiful gardens and amenities. Mr. Ben Kellner supervises management of the landscape and forestry operations outside at the Botanical Center, while Ms. Katie Steinhoff coordinates the building operations, along with arrangements associated with individual, corporate, and organization rentals. Ms. Steinhoff also coordinates many of the volunteer groups who assist us with maintenance of the gardens and grounds and special event activities. Mr. Peter Longley is our Horticulture Interpreter, who assists with the planning, developing, and maintaining of the gardens, and also narrates tram tours and conducts the monthly "Garden Minute". All of our Botanical staff works cooperatively with the many volunteer groups who assist us in providing a beautiful park and gardens for our citizens and visitors to enjoy.

IV. FRIENDS OF THE GARDEN UPDATE

Ms. Lisa Bakerink, President of the Friends of the Garden, reported that according to Trip Advisor, Nathananel-Greene/Close Memorial Park, the Mizumoto Stroll Garden, the Botanical

Gardens, and the Botanical Center were listed as #1, #7, #11, and #20, respectively, out of 29 attractions to visit in Springfield, Missouri. http://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g44926-Activities-Springfield_Missouri.html Ms. Bakerink stated The Friends of the Garden will celebrate their 15th anniversary in 2015. Currently, there are over 1200 members. A FOG membership also allows free entry into the Mizumoto Stroll Garden, along with 270 public gardens across the country.

Ms. Bakerink stated that she and several members of the FOG Board, along with the Botanical Center Staff and Park Board Administration, have been working on updating the logo and signage for the Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park to enhance the unity of the park features and amenities. The suggested modification is to rename the gardens the "Springfield Botanical Gardens at Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park". The Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center name will remain unchanged. This updated name matches more closely to other regional and national garden destination sites and more specifically identifies what is in the Park, along with maintaining the Botanical Center as its own identity within the Park. Mr. Tim Shryack made the motion to accept the recommended modifications and logo as intended and presented for publication and marketing purposes; seconded by Mr. Mike Mellinger. Motion was approved unanimously.

V. DONOR-FUNDED PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Belote mentioned that Mr. Bobby Allison would like to provide funding for the improvements designed to enhance the junior golf facility and experience of junior golfers at the Betty Allison Junior Golf Course at Rivercut. The proposed improvement design includes a playground unit in the shape of a golf bag, a rubber tiled surface play area, and an educationally-themed golf fence featuring famous golfers from Missouri, along with an accessible access from the parking lot to the play area. A schematic design and layout of the proposed new feature was distributed to the Board members. Mr. Scott Bailes made a motion to accept the playground proposal as intended and presented; seconded by Ms. Paula Glossip. Motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Belote stated that the Westport School-Park improvements will be celebrated with a ribbon cutting on May 28. We will host a "Day in the Park" for the Westport school children, including free admission to the Westport Pool that day. Mr. Bobby Allison generously provided funding for primary and secondary playgrounds at the site, as well as a walking/running track. GameTime Playground Company also supported this effort as well. Because of these donations, the Park Board was able to restore the pavilion in the park.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports to discuss.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards stated that the interviews have been completed and a job offer has been made to fill the Marketing Coordinator position. The new Park Bench was distributed to the Park Board members. Ms. Edwards reported that the updated Photo Policy is ready to move forward and implemented

soon. Photographer passes will be available at the Botanical Center, Mediacom Ice Park, and the main Park Board Administrative Offices.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Jordan Valley Park Manager

Mr. Cumley stated that a press conference was held to announce that Springfield is officially the home for the Junior A Hockey Team, Springfield 417 Express. Team members will be moving to Springfield over the summer months and begin playing in September. During the press conference, a local hockey player, who started playing at Mediacom Ice Park, was signed to the team. The young athlete had been playing for an out-of-state team, but can now be trained and play hockey in his home town. The fountains in Jordan Valley Park are on and have already had several visitors.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation

Ms. McGrath reported that 12 members from the Springfield Cardinals' visited the Miracle League Field on May 5. Jason Motte, St. Louis Cardinals' star relief pitcher, graciously pitched to the Miracle League players, while other players and buddies assisted the youth around the bases. The visit from the Cardinals is a league highlight as the professional players pose for pictures and sign autographs with the Miracle League teams. Participation in the Miracle League has nearly doubled since the field opened in October, 2011.

Ms. McGrath mentioned that the Park Board is collaborating with the YMCA and Red Cross for "Splash Day" on May 10. The event will feature water safety awareness and fun activities for kids and families. Additional collaborative events are being discussed and will be announced soon. Lifeguard "bootcamp" is a two-day intensive training camp for all of our lifeguards. Pools are open on Memorial Day weekend, and then officially open for the season on May 31. We will continue with providing several pools open each day seven days a week, with a rotating maintenance schedule. School-Park day camps are nearly full with 750-800 children attending the camps each week.

Mr. Tom Moore, Superintendent of Special Facilities

Mr. Moore stated by the end of the school year, over 200 school buses will have visited the Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park. Area school-age children visit the farm for a variety of educational experiences about farm life. The Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center has 95 participants in lessons, which is nearly 50 more participants than last year. Mr. Moore reported that all summer camps in the Special Facilities division are filled.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services

Mr. Carney reported that the safety training topic this month was severe weather including a presentation from Ted Keller, former local weather anchor with KOLR10. Bill Ingemi, Parks Health and Wellness Coordinator, conducted a CPR/AED and first aid training class for the Park Operations staff. Mr. Carney stated that we bid farewell to Mr. Fred McConkey, who retired from Park Operations on April 25, after 41 years of services. We wish Fred the best in retirement.

Final touches are being completed on the Park Board Administration Board Room. It will be ready for the June Board Meeting. Staff is completing preparations for the opening of pool season at the end of May. There are a lot of golfers enjoying our courses as the wet weather has helped our greens look great. Mr. Carney reported that there was 50,000 pounds of litter collected in the month of April.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park stated that the Hosta Garden in Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park has been formally recognized as one of 18 display gardens in the United States. National Public Gardens Day is today and the Botanical Center has special activities planned to celebrate the event. The Butterfly House is open, along with the Mizumoto Stroll Garden, which is offering free admission today.

Mr. Park reported that there is a flooding issue in the neighborhood south of Oak Grove Park. To alleviate the downstream flooding, we will lose three trees within the fence line. Two of those three trees were already in decline. As a result, new trees will be placed within the park. Additionally, one golf tee and basket will need to be moved in order for the repair work to be completed. The work should occur in June.

Mr. Park stated the architectural firm of Butler Rosenbury & Partners received a Merit Award from the Springfield Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for the Jordan Valley Park Maintenance Facility as judged by professional jury. Butler Rosenbury also received a Public Recognition Award from the AIA for the Watershed Center located at Valley Water Mill Park.

Mr. Park stated he appreciated Todd Wagner, from Public Works, for working with Parks on our various stormwater projects. His attention to details help to solve a flooding issue while still designing the project that fits well within a park setting. Evidence of Mr. Wagner's collaboration will be celebrated at the ribbon-cutting ceremony following today's meeting for the stormwater/trail improvements in Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker reported that this is the peak season for school bus visits at the Dickerson Park Zoo. The Zoo will offer free admission on Mother's Day for area moms. The FOZ Members Night event is scheduled for May 22, and the Annual Dream Night event is coming up on June 6. The Dream Night event is one of the staff's favorite events. Mr. Crocker stated that our new veterinarian should start sometime in August.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser stated that she and several staff attended the Women in Sports Luncheon on April 24, featuring the naming of Dr. Mary Jo Wynn as a Missouri Sports Legend. Dr. Wynn has been a long-time supporter of our programs and staff. The Community Olympic Development Program will host their annual benefit golf tournament at Rivercut Golf Course on June 7.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote mentioned Park staff has been involved in a discussion group of community advocates who would like to have a Safety Town location or facility within the community. A Safety Town location would include bringing information about several aspects of safety such as fire, water, bike, trail, public, and park safety to a central location and help educate kids, youth and families. There are several good examples nationally of the site being located in a park setting. We are reviewing the possibilities of how a Safety Town location might be incorporated into our park plans. Several parks, including the McDaniel/George Moore Park, are being considered as potential sites because of the compatible long term amenities in the park. These amenities include a learn-to-ride a bike area, introductory mountain bike course, and a trail head. An update will be provided to the Board once more information becomes available.

VIII. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. John Price thanked the Friends of the Garden members for their partnership with the Park Board. With over 13,500 volunteer hours recorded throughout the park system last year, a great majority of hours are from FOG members. He stated that the Board values their continued support and the tremendous impact their volunteers have on the park system.

Mr. Price stated that we had received an information request from City Council regarding the Parks' proposed FY2014-15 Budget. The Chair, Parks Director, and Superintendent of Business Operations will meet with the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and Finance Director to discuss the issue. A summary of the information used to prepare the budget and previously discussed at meetings was included in the Board's packet for review. Mr. Price stated that the inquiry is mainly a concern of a perceived cash flow issue. Mr. Price invited fellow Park Board members to attend the City Council budget workshop, where the cash flow situation will be explained. Although the Park Board is experiencing budgetary challenges, we remain in sound fiscal shape and the Parks' budget is always in budgetary compliance. The Board reviews the budget in great detail to make sure the public's money is spent properly to provide the maximum level of programs and services. Mr. Belote stated that a handout included in the packet explains in detail where Parks' money goes and provided an explanation chart regarding the cash flow situation. Our sales tax payments, along with state and federal grant funds, are received after the end of fiscal year on June 30. Once these funds are received in July or August, the Parks budget graph shows that the last fiscal year we ended with a positive budget. The graph also indicates that this is a consistent trend for the Parks Department the last several years.

Mr. Belote stated that with no operational funds provided by Greene County or the City of Springfield, and the reimbursement amount we now remit back to the City for internal services that they provide, it is becoming more difficult to grow the park system like we have over the last decade. It is one of our priorities to identify an appropriate long-term capital funding source, as well as grow our Parks Reserve accounts.

Mr. Price stated that he will be meeting with the City Manager and the Greene County Administrator to discuss the personnel evaluation of Mr. Belote. Park Board Members are welcome to send their comments to Mr. Price to assist him in the preparation of the document that will be submitted.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

X. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

XI. CALENDAR

The next Park Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 13, 2014, at 8:30 am. It will be held at the Park Board Administrative Offices.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Tim Shryack made the motion to adjourn to Closed Session; seconded by Dr. Sarah McCallister. The motion was approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned to Closed Session at 10:00 am.