MINUTES
SPECIAL WORKSHOP OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Wednesday, December 18, 2013, 5:30 p.m.
Park Board Administrative Offices, 1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri.

I. ROLL CALL

John Price, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m.

Members Present: Matt Bailey, Phyllis Ferguson, Paula Glossip, Kevin Hogan, Sarah McCallister, Mike Mellinger, John Price, Chair, Tim Shryack

Members Absent: Scott Bailes

Park Board Staff: Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Alan Cummins, Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Shawn Freeman, Karen Herron, Steve King, Jerry Mitchell, Tom Moore, Miles Park, Kim Reser, John Waldo, Lana Woolsey

II. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2014-2015 BUDGET YEAR

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, explained the documents that were present in the Board's packet of materials. A proposed fees and charges document with comments provided for clarity was included. Although we do not set our fees and charges based upon market analyses, several divisions conducted research to identify industry standards, and regional and local fee information for similar activities. When new fees are proposed, a program study of direct and indirect costs is prepared to determine a reasonable fee for the activity. Additionally, the Board reviewed a document that included what new expenditures we already know at this time and will significantly impact our budget next year and a summary of the projected revenue increase should the proposed fees and charges be adopted as presented.

Expenditures Document Mr. Belote explained the expenses that we already know will impact next year's budget which include absorbing the cost of four staff positions in the School-Park area as they were originally provided by a federal grant for the past several years. We are responsible for covering the cost of providing on-going step increases as required by City of Springfield Merit Rules and any designated cost of living adjustment raise as determined by the City of Springfield for our Park employees. The minimum wage rates have been raised twice without an adjustment to our budget, and it will be raised a third time beginning January 1, 2014. Utility and fuel costs have increased and significantly impact our budget. We are now required to reimburse the City of Springfield annually for internal services such as staff time in human resources, information systems, and finance departments. We are currently conducting our own internal review to make sure the services are fair and equitable. Additionally, we are working to restore our contingency fund level to a healthier overall level.

Proposed Fees and Charges Document Mr. Belote stated we are in the second year of being a self-sustainable department with no general fund transfer funds from the City. Also, this is the second year of no new Parks Sales Tax funds, and the current one-eighth park sales tax collected has remained flat the past two years. In many cases, fees and charges have not been increased for several years, but now with continued increase in costs for operations and maintenance of facilities and programs, the following represents some of the new proposed fees and charges deemed necessary for next year's budget.

Archery Division Mr. Jeff Cumley explained that some of the newly proposed fees were requested by archery customers including monthly and yearly pass options. With the impending move of the indoor and outdoor facility to the Davis Property location soon, it is anticipated that we will continue to see an increase in archery participants at a much faster rate.

Botanical Center Mr. Miles Park reviewed the new proposed fees that include offering customers an opportunity to rent smaller garden areas. We also included a new proposed fee for the Moon Deck area within the Mizumoto Stroll Garden to accommodate the many requests by citizens to use this site as a wedding venue.

Family Centers Ms. Kim Reser stated that to continue offering current services and recover more of the costs incurred at the centers, an increase in membership fees is proposed for the family centers, including Cooper Tennis Complex. When reviewing our family centers, our membership rates will still remain below the local average.

Dickerson Park Zoo Mr. Mike Crocker stated that in reviewing his research of seven zoos of similar size and operating budget, we remain comparable in admission prices even with a proposed increase of $1 to all age categories. Food and lab costs for the animals continue to rise, so the proposed fee increase may help to offset these additional expenditures. Mr. Crocker stated that a Friends of the Zoo (FOZ) membership will remain the same. Mr. Crocker mentioned that all of the FOZ membership fee is used to support Zoo operations, which includes providing funding for as many as 14 full-time employee positions at the Zoo.

Jordan Valley Park Mr. Cumley reviewed the proposed new fee for rentals at Jordan Valley Park stating that the current fee did not adequately match the actual cost of the service provided by staff for an event rental.

Special Facilities Lake Springfield Park Mr. Tom Moore mentioned the updated proposed fee range allows for more flexibility in rental times for the citizen. Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center Mr. Moore explained that new fee ranges are being proposed to offer more flexibility to meet customer's needs for lessons and event rentals.

Mediacom Ice Park Mr. Cumley stated that customers have requested one of the new proposed fees, which is a yearly pass to the Medicom Ice Park. He reviewed proposed new rates explaining there have been no increases in figure skating and ice hockey rates for at least seven years in most areas, and adjusting the rates will help with recovering operating costs yet still keep them in line with industry averages.

Aquatics Ms. Reser stated that pool admission rates are proposed to increase by .25 cents in each age level. This small increase still allows access to our pools at a reasonable rate and well below the local average.

Commercial Photographer Annual/Daily Pass Mr. Belote explained that a commercial photographer fee has been present since 2001, though not efficiently enforced or advertised.

He met with several commercial photographers about clarifying the pass process and more effectively advertising that an annual or daily pass is required. It is recommended that commercial photographers will be charged $25 for a daily pass or a $150 for an annual pass. There is no charge for recreational photography within the park system.

Sports—Adult and Youth Activities Ms. Reser mentioned that adjusted fee ranges are being proposed to offer more flexibility in the different durations of various leagues.

Golf Division Mr. Steve King explained that our golf courses are proposing a new summer membership opportunity for youth golfers. This special summer membership allows youth golfers to play beginning at 12 noon at Payne Stewart and Horton Smith Golf Courses Monday through Friday and on Mondays at Rivercut Golf Course. Before a youth can purchase this summer membership, they must complete an etiquette/playing clinic. Mr. King mentioned that the daily greens fees are proposed to increase by approximately $1.00-$2.00 at each golf course. Even with the needed increase, our rates remain competitive and below industry and local averages.

Ms. Paula Glossip made the motion to recommend that the proposed fees and charges for the 2014-2015 budget year, be forwarded to the Board for review and approval at the January Board Meeting; seconded by Mr. Tim Shryack. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. John Price complimented the Park Board staff for their efforts in preparing the fees and charges documents in a format easy to understand.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Having no other business to discuss, Mr. Price adjourned the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm.