

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD**

Friday, November 8, 2013, 8:30 a.m.

Park Board Administrative Offices, 1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri.

I. ROLL CALL

John Price, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

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

Members Absent: Matt Bailey, Kevin Hogan

Park Board Staff: Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Karen Herron, Jerry Mitchell, Tom Moore, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Lana Woolsey

Guests: George Williams, Citizen

Mr. John Price welcomed Mr. Scott Bailes as our newest Park Board member.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Tim Shryack made the motion to approve the minutes from the October 11, 2013, Park Board Meeting, as distributed; seconded by Ms. Paula Glossip. Motion was approved unanimously.

- III. LIFETIME GOLF PASS RECIPIENT** Mr. Bob Belote recognized Mr. George Williams as a recent recipient of the Lifetime Golf Pass which is awarded to golfers who achieve the milestone of their 90th birthday. A new resident to our community, Mr. Williams thanked the Park Board for his golf pass.

IV. UPCOMING PARK BOARD BUDGET PREPARATION PROCESS

Mr. Belote stated that Park Board staff has already begun the budget preparation process for the 2014-2015 budget cycle. Each division conducts a thorough internal review of their current revenue streams and ideas to enhance services. Next year's budget marks the third year Parks will operate as a fully sustainable department, and we will not receive any general fund transfer support from the City. Park Board Administration will meet with Greene County officials next week to discuss our current priorities as part of their annual budget process.

Mr. Belote stated that as part of the budget process, we will schedule a review of fees and charges workshop with the Board in December. At the January Park Board meeting, the Board will formally adopt the fees and charges portion of the budget. Later in January, another workshop meeting will be held to review the overall departmental budget proposal. At the February Park Board meeting, the Board will formally adopt the overall budget. In February or

March, the proposed departmental budget will be discussed with the City Manager and Finance Director.

Mr. Belote reviewed our fiscal year 2014-2015 budget priorities and considerations with the Board. Our budget is comprised of dedicated funding sources from the Parks property mill tax, Parks Sales Tax funds, fees and charges, and grants and donations. With known rising costs such as utilities and employee benefits, we will look from within to address our budget priorities and considerations.

The budget implementation timeline is mandated by the City. The Business Operations staff work together to provide a budget document that is easy to read and understand. Mr. Belote stated that we are conducting a review of those City services that have been charged to us as it significantly impacts our budget. We also account for any services we provide to the City to offset a portion of this amount.

An updated list of projects and their status from the 2001 and 2006 countywide parks sales tax was also distributed for review. Mr. John Price, Chair, stated that over 100 projects were completed as a result of the countywide parks sales tax initiatives in 2001 and 2006. The document represents the projects that voters approved and Parks completed. There are just a few projects left that are either underway or scheduled to be completed within the next year. Parks has a solid track record of completing promises made to the community.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports to discuss.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Belote stated that at the same time of the October 11th Park Board meeting, a tragic accident at the Dickerson Park Zoo claimed the life of John Bradford, a Senior Zoo Keeper, and 30-year employee. Mr. Bradford was highly respected in the community and in his field. He was part of an awarding winning elephant breeding program. Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director, stated that Mr. Bradford was good with animals and had a natural ability to work with elephants. Other zoos and institutions utilized Mr. Bradford's knowledge and experience in their elephant breeding programs. Grief counselors have been made available for all Zoo staff and staff continues to work in teams to help one another through this difficult situation.

Mr. Belote stated that the Park Board and Zoo Administration are working with the City's investigation team and preparing the appropriate required reports that will be sent to AZA. Mr. Belote thanked Ms. Jenny Edwards, Parks Public Information Administrator, along with the staff at the City's Public Information Office for assisting with media inquiries immediately following the accident.

Mr. Price mentioned that he received a phone call from the Louisville Zoo Director who expressed his condolences, which is an example of how well known Mr. Bradford was in the Zoo community. Mr. Price asked for a moment in silence to honor Mr. Bradford. Mr. Bradford will definitely be missed, but not forgotten.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director

Mr. Crocker stated that 2013 attendance numbers are estimated to reach 232,000 visitors by the end of the year. The Dickerson Park Zoo Spooktacular event celebrated its 30th year anniversary and approximately 16,000 people attended. A Veterans' Appreciation Day, a new event this year, was offered with free admission to Veterans on Sunday, November 10.

Mr. Tom Moore, Superintendent of Special Facilities

Mr. Moore reported that an estimated 55,613 people visited Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park during the annual Fall Fest event that spans over six themed weekends. The Farm Park hosted the Parks Appreciation Picnic on October 27 and nearly 400 employees and their families attended. The Farm Park welcomed 21 piglets recently, and Dottie, the Cow, is due to give birth soon, too. A drive-thru holiday-lights display will be available on Friday and Saturday evenings in December at the Farm Park. Lake Springfield Park hosted seven major cross country meets in October. The Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center is keeping busy offering riding instruction lessons and pony rides. Fishing activity has slowed down and bird watching activity has picked up at Valley Water Mill Park. Hay was baled at Lost Hill Park which provides feed for the horses and play/sitting areas at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services

Mr. Carney stated that the safety workshop topic this month was about fire extinguishers taught by Gerry Koeneman, Training Captain for the Springfield Fire Department. With a cooler, wetter season, the golf courses are in superb condition. Park Operations staff continues to winterize irrigation systems and perform other seasonal maintenance tasks. Mr. Carney mentioned that we hosted over 3,500 league softball and baseball games, which does not include any tournaments or special events. Litter collection from the parks in September was over 60,000 pounds.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator

Ms. Edwards mentioned that the November "Know Your Parks" television show will feature Mediacom Ice Park with Jeff Cumley, Jordan Valley Park Manager, and Amy Torcasso, Figure Skating Director. Additionally, Anne-Mary McGrath will share information about Turkey Trot, Missouri's largest walk/run event on Thanksgiving Day. Mr. Belote thanked staff involved with each month's production of the "Know Your Parks" show, including Mediacom. Board members were encouraged to participate in future productions of the show.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Jordan Valley Park Manager

Mr. Cumley reported that the Missouri State Ice Bears' Pink Ice event was well attended, and they raised over \$6,000 from the auction of the players' pink jerseys. Proceeds benefitted the Breast Cancer Foundation of the Ozarks. The Mayor's Tree Lighting Ceremony is scheduled for November 23 at 5:30 pm in Jordan Valley Park. Mr. Cumley mentioned that the Springfield Regional Arts Council Executive Director position has been filled. The necessary paperwork is in the process, and we hope to have the new Director begin in early December. Mr. Cumley stated that Mediacom Ice Park hosted the "Crossfit Games" with over 800 participants, mostly from out of town. We will also host the Show-Me Figure Skating competition at Mediacom Ice Park. This is the first time Springfield has hosted this event. We have hosted a similar event for ice hockey in the summer.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director

Mr. Park mentioned that the Botanical Center staff, hosted Harvest for Habitats Earth Stewardship Fair for Springfield's home school community, partnering with MU Extension Center, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Missouri

Department of Conservation, and Friends of the Garden. This fun day of outdoor learning activities included flint-knapping, Dutch oven cooking, and vermicomposting. Additional programs were presented on pond ecology, endangered species, and tours of the butterfly house and prairie at Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park. Approximately 170 homeschooled students participated. Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park continues to be a popular destination for weddings and garden tours.

Mr. Park reported that the foundation has been prepared for the Liberty Schoolhouse project. A contractor will begin framing work as weather permits. Site work has begun on the repair of Drummond Lake and construction of a new retaining wall along South Creek is progressing well. The Route 66 Roadside Park Committee is ready for the scope of work of the consultant to be prepared including preparation of park construction contract documents and schematic planning services for the western extent of the Jordan Valley West Meadows site. A proposal will soon be requested from the consultant to define a cost for professional services. The Talmage Trail section of the LINK Trail at Doling Park is progressing well. A ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the trail will be held in early spring. The renovated park pavilion at Westport School-Park site is one of the last remaining 2006 parks sales tax projects and bids were opened on November 12.

Mr. Belote mentioned that Parks is proud to have Doling Park be the northern anchor spot of the LINK Trail. This will open up Doling Park to many surrounding neighborhoods.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser mentioned that we recently hosted the Missouri State High School Activities Association Championships for tennis and softball. Ms. Reser thanked all the divisions that assisted in the success of these two events, including staff in Park Operations, Community Sports, Park Rangers, and Concessions. MSHSAA officials were pleased with both events.

Ms. Reser stated that we were recognized by the Amateur Softball Association with the James Ferrell Award of Excellence award. To receive this award, cities must attain an overall rating of 95 percent or greater from the officials for an outstanding job of hosting ASA National Championship tournaments. This is the 23rd time that we have received this award. Ms. Reser thanked Mr. Mark Nelson for his continued efforts in providing outstanding softball programs and events. Ms. Reser mentioned that Mr. Cyrus Taylor accepted the Community Partner of the Year Award on behalf of the Springfield-Greene County Accessible Recreation programs. This award was presented at the Southwest Missouri Developmental Disabilities Banquet.

The 19th Annual Turkey Trot walk/run event is scheduled for Thanksgiving morning. We have nearly 1,000 registrations already. Proceeds from the event are divided equally between the Developmental Center of the Ozarks and the Park Board's Scholarship Fund.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote mentioned that MSHSAA also recognized Ms. Linda Peters for her dedicated service with the USTA's Missouri District Tennis Office. Recently, the City of Springfield's Golden Goose award for outstanding service was awarded to Ms. Cindy Mayshark in the Business Operations Division. Melinda Arnold, Public Information Administrator with Dickerson Park Zoo, has also been presented this award.

Mr. Belote mentioned that he presented highlights from the Recreation and Leisure Chapter of Field Guide 2030 to City Council. Our Chapter was co-chaired by former Parks Director Jodie Adams and Bob Belote. Our Chapter is unique in that we are 10 years into a 20-year plan; a plan that has been successful and effective due to Parks Sales Tax Initiatives in 2001 and 2006. Within our Chapter, we included that we are obtaining feedback from citizens on what they would like to see for our parks in the future with the hopes that we will have an opportunity to continue with the second 10-year portion of our plan.

Mr. Belote distributed the 2013 Community Focus Report for the Board's review. The report identifies areas that the community is recognized as doing well with blue ribbons and areas of concern with red flags.

Mr. Belote mentioned that we are at long last seeking accreditation at the national level for the department. There are currently only four Parks and Recreation Departments in the state of Missouri that have received accreditation. It is an 18-24 month process in which we will be reviewed in ten major areas. The process will identify areas where we are strong and areas where we need improvement. At the December Park Board meeting, we will provide the Board with an overview of the accreditation process.

VIII. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Price mentioned that Greene County's use tax proposal was not approved by voters this past week. He also noted that it is important to recognize the support we receive from over 200 partner organizations and volunteers who enhance our services and assist us financially in our overall operational efforts and programs. There are plenty of opportunities for individuals or families to volunteer or assist the Parks Department financially. Mr. Belote mentioned that it is imperative that we continue to pursue and work cooperatively with like-minded community groups and organizations as funding streams continue to tighten for the future.

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 will be held at the Park Board Administrative Offices on Friday, December 13, 2013, at 8:30 a.m.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Tim Shryack made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Phyllis Ferguson. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 9:53 am.