

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, October 12, 2012, 8:30 a.m.
Dickerson Park Zoo, 1401 W. Norton Road, Springfield, Missouri**

I. ROLL CALL

John Price, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Members Present: Jerry Clark, Kevin Hogan, Sarah McCallister, John Price, Chair, Tim Shryack

Members Absent: Matt Bailey, Phyllis Ferguson, Howard Garrett, Paula Glossip

Park Board Staff: Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Matt Coats, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Karen Herron, Blanche Jones, Dennis McMan, Jerry Mitchell, Tom Moore, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Terry Whaley, Lana Woolsey

Guests: Melinda Arnold, Friends of the Zoo
Don Tillman, Friends of the Zoo
Bill Houser, Railroad History Museum
Ralph Rognstad and Vern Morgan, City of Springfield Planning Department

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Tim Shryack made the motion to approve the minutes listed below as distributed; seconded by Ms. Jerry Clark. Minutes were approved unanimously.

September 7, 2012 Park Board Meeting
September 7, 2012 Park Board Closed Meeting

III. RAILROAD HISTORY MUSEUM PRESENTATION AND UPDATE

Mr. Bill Houser stated he appreciated the partnership with the Park Board and the Railroad History Museum volunteers. Mr. Houser shared pictures of the recent restoration of the nearly 60-year-old locomotive that was given to the City of Springfield in 1953. The sheet metal restoration and painting was completed by volunteers. A lighted covered shelter was also upgraded over the locomotive to provide better protection.

The Museum recently received a Burlington Northern San Francisco grant to complete restoration on all of the Museum train cars. The train cars were hand-sanded and painted by the volunteers. With the recent upgrades to the Grant Beach Pool and Park area, the Museum has seen an increase of visitors. The Museum is open on Saturdays from 2-4 pm, May to October, and has welcomed 3,878 visitors during the 2012 season so far. Private group tours are also available by contacting the Museum. The Board complimented Mr. Houser and the other museum volunteers for their ongoing restoration efforts and service to the community.

IV. COLLEGE STREET CORRIDOR PLANS FOR ROUTE 66 PARK

Mr. Ralph Rognstad stated that the College Street Corridor Project was initiated by City Council 18 months ago, and the concept has recently been adopted by City Council. The plan for the city-owned property near Fort Avenue and College Street includes a “street-scape” design with a pedestrian walk-way, retail space, parking area, and a proposed “roadside park” area with an anticipated historical tribute to the “Route 66” Highway that ran through Springfield.

Mr. Vern Morgan stated that Planning Staff has conducted nine public meetings to discuss the proposed plans of a live/work district. Phase 1 of the project would include relocating the railroad lines in the West Meadows area, making any necessary improvements to the land, and then begin exploring economic development activity in the area. Mr. Morgan indicated that plans for a “Route 66 Roadside Park” are still in the discussion stages and no plans have been finalized. Public Works has begun cleaning up the space for the proposed roadside park site, including native plantings for a possible open space area, too. Mr. Morgan commented that the History Museum and Historic Preservation groups have been involved in the planning meetings, as well, and the concept plan can be reviewed on the City of Springfield’s website. Mr. Morgan stated that funds to implement the project have not been fully identified; therefore, some departments will absorb the project costs into their existing budgets, while other parts of the proposed project may remain unfunded. It is possible that the street-scape design may receive funding from grants. Mr. Belote stated that Parks does support the concept and is glad to assist in the design of a “roadside park” area; however, Parks funding sources are already identified and dedicated for the current budget year, and the City is no longer supplying any General Fund revenue to the Parks budget. In order for the Park Board to contemplate ownership or operation of this new facility, additional funding sources for operations and maintenance will need to be identified.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports to discuss.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker welcomed the Board to the Keeper Building at the Dickerson Park Zoo. In the Keeper Building, qualified personnel are responsible for the examination and treatment of the animals within the on-location hospital, along with dorm-style housing provided to several student interns throughout the year. The Zoo houses 162 different species of wild animals, and is the only known zoo that has its own custom-built giraffe trailer.

Mr. Crocker mentioned that the Zoo recently received notification that they were reaccredited for the sixth time since 1986. The accreditation site inspection team was impressed with the longevity of the Zoo staff, the low turn-over rate, and how well the staff work together. Mr. Crocker stated that he has thoroughly enjoyed his 36 years at the Zoo and commented that no two days are alike. Mr. Crocker provided a special introduction to one of the long-time loyal employees, Ms. Blanche Jones, who has been with the Zoo for 40 years. Ms. Jones maintains detailed and accurate records, and knows just how to prepare information the best way for Mr. Crocker. Ms. Jones stated that in 40 years, she has worked for just 3 directors.

Halloween Spooktacular, one of the Zoo's biggest fund-raisers, runs nightly October 19 through October 31 and is sponsored by First Simmons Bank.

Mr. Tom Moore, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Moore reported that the Harvest Fest weekend event was the largest opening crowd to date. Harvest Fest will feature themed-weekends throughout the month of October. The Farm hosted Wholesale Grocers' and Mercy employees and families at the farm recently, and both groups enjoyed the festivities.

Lake Springfield Park staff hosted nearly 1000 high school runners for a recent cross country race. Mr. Moore mentioned a variety of events that the Special Facilities staff hosted at Lake Springfield Park, including the Bass Pro Fitness Festival and the Missouri Park and Recreation Association's Workshop and Southwest Regional Meeting.

At Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center, we recently hired an additional riding instructor to ensure a high quality and safe experience for the students, along with assisting with event coordination. This individual has extensive international riding experience and is currently a member of the MSU Equestrian Team. She has worked with many local equine professionals and brings a wide variety of riding disciplines to Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center.

Local schools and colleges have conducted field trips to Lost Hill Park to review the various unique features at the park.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Jordan Valley Park Manager Mr. Cumley thanked the Park Board members who attended the various Community Olympic Development (CODP) meetings and events during the United States Olympic Committee's CODP Director's Conference October 3-5. The USOC was very pleased with the conference and impressed with the Park Board's facilities. Mr. Belote also thanked the Park Board staff and CODP Coaches who helped to organize and coordinate the workshop sessions, facility tours, and social events. The USOC and other CODP coaches enjoyed their visit while learning about the scope of our Park Board activities and facilities, and reviewing opportunities for future growth within the Parks system.

Mr. Cumley reported that the Jordan Valley Park fountain is closed for the season. Staff is preparing Jordan Valley Park for the winter season, which includes trimming trees with holiday lights and decorating the Mayor's Tree for the annual lighting of the Mayor's Tree Ceremony in November.

Mr. Terry Whaley, Executive Director of Ozark Greenways Mr. Whaley reported that construction of a new section of the South Dry Sac Greenway is underway and on schedule. This section is near the former Carpet Barn and will go under Hwy.13 connecting to the David C. Murray Trailhead, where a small parking lot is being developed as a trailhead. Construction will be completed by the end of the year. Mr. Whaley stated that after three years of being closed due to Highway 60/65 construction, the Galloway Creek Trail reopened on October 19 and an informal gathering of trail users and Ozark Greenways members was held on Saturday, October 20, 2012.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser reported that the 2012 outdoor pool attendance was a record-breaking 98,331 visitors, which is a 10 percent increase from the 2011 outdoor pool season. This season, we offered the outdoor pool admission rates at the Chesterfield Family Center's indoor pool. We also adjusted the outdoor pool maintenance

schedules to ensure at least three outdoor pools were open every day of the week. Both of these adjustments were well received by citizens in the community. Through the Splash 'n Sizzle program, we collected 13,754 pounds of food donations for Ozarks Food Harvest.

Ms. Reser mentioned that we hosted the MSU Softball Bears and the National Pro Fast-Pitch All-Stars at Killian Softball Complex in late September, including over 300 guests in the stands to watch the games. In conjunction with the MSU Softball team, we also offered a softball clinic for girls ages 10-14 years old.

Ms. Reser announced that Brad Stulce was recently promoted to Community Recreation Services Administrator of the School-Park program, replacing Ms. Sandra Pratt, who recently retired. Mr. Stulce has over nine years experience in the School-Park area with the Park Board, and we are confident that he will continue to move the School-Park Program forward.

Ms. Jenny Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards reported that the October "Know Your Parks" show features Mike Crocker and Melinda Arnold with the Dickerson Park Zoo, as well as Mr. John Price, our Park Board Chair. Ms. Edwards has also started recording the "Garden Minute" with Peter Longley from our Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center featuring information about various gardens found in Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park. Mr. Longley's unique past work experiences allows him to provide interesting narration and detailed facts about the gardens. His expertise is also utilized by conducting a variety of seasonal table decorating demonstration classes at the Botanical Center.

Ms. Edwards reported that the RecreateParks.com survey is underway online. Staff recently set up the program's special tree display at the Mediacom Ice Park during a MSU Ice Bears hockey game to visit with patrons about Park programs and facilities. Using the I-Pad stations connected to the tree, staff collected data that indicated 58 percent of the citizens surveyed preferred to receive information via email, Facebook, and twitter, and approximately 25 percent of the citizens surveyed stated they obtained information through our website, flyers, TV and radio.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park introduced Mr. Jon Carney, new Superintendent of General Services in the Park Operations Division. Mr. Carney recently worked for Topeka's consolidated City/County Park System which provided him with experience similar in scope and scale to our Parks System. We welcome Jon and his family to Springfield.

Mr. Park reported that staff is currently performing preventive maintenance tasks on pool pumps, along with preparing fields and complexes to host the National Home School Soccer Championships and the Missouri State High School Activities Association Softball and Tennis Championships. Mr. Park mentioned that staff removed 52,180 pounds of refuse from the parks during the month of September.

Mr. Park mentioned that the interior work and outside site grading are still being performed at the Dan Kinney Family Center. It appears that we are on schedule to open the facility in January, 2013. Mr. Park reported on the project updates of the Doling Aquatics Center and the Chesterfield Family Center Aquatics area, although the repairs at the CFC indoor pool are not affecting the current use of the pool.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote and other administrative staff have been attending meetings with Greene County officials hosted by other Greene County municipalities.

One common sentiment among the county representatives is the pride they feel for their local park systems, as the park programs have benefited greatly from the 2001 and 2006 County-Wide Parks Sales Tax initiatives.

Mr. Belote commented that this fall has been a good season for our golf courses. A coupon for Tuesday and Thursday afternoons is currently available on the Park Board website.

Mr. Belote invited the Park Board to join our Employee Appreciation Picnic on Sunday, October 21 at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park.

In early November, we will conduct a Park Board workshop, along with a Park Board tour of a variety of projects currently underway.

VII. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. John Price, Chair, stated he appreciated Jenny Edwards' preparation for his participation in the "Know Your Parks" television show. Mr. Price mentioned that he, along with Tim Shryack and Jerry Clark, will be continuing with their collaborative meetings with the YMCA Board.

Mr. Price reported that we will invite Mr. Matt O'Reilly to the November Board meeting to discuss collaborative work on trails.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There is no unfinished business to discuss.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

There is no new business to discuss.

X. CALENDAR

The next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting is Friday, November 9, 2012, at 8:30 am. We will meet at the Park Board Administrative Offices.

XI. CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Tim Shryack made the motion to adjourn to Closed Session pursuant to Section 610.021(1); seconded by Ms. Jerry Clark. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.