MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Monday, December 15, 2014, 5:30 p.m.
Park Board Administrative Offices, 1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri.

I. ROLL CALL

Tim Shryack, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

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

Members Absent: Matt Bailey, Phyllis Ferguson, Paula Glossip

Park Board Staff: Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Alan Cummins, Shawn Freeman, Karen Herron, Steve King, Anne-Mary McGrath, Jerry Mitchell, Tom Moore, Kim Reser, John Waldo, Lana Woolsey

II. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2015-2016 BUDGET YEAR

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, explained the documents available in the Board's packet of materials. A detailed document of the proposed fees and charges with comments provided for clarity was included. Over the last few years, we have worked to add fee ranges to many of our programs and services. This year we added an additional column entitled "Proposed Fee" to better show the proposed fee within the range. While raising a fee within a previously adopted range may not require additional Board approval, we feel this provides better information to the Board and anyone reviewing the Fee and Charges schedule also. Several divisions conducted research to identify regional and local fee information for similar programs.

Summary of Projected Expenditures Increase for Proposed 2015-2016 Budget One of the documents lists the projected new expenditures that we already know at this time and will impact our budget next year. For example, we are responsible for covering the cost of providing on-going step increases and any designated cost of living adjustment raise. Beginning January 1, 2015, the minimum wage will also increase. City Utilities has planned utility rate increases for commercial use, so we are planning for the estimated increase. The City of Springfield recently developed a new self-insurance plan, which Parks is now covered through the plan and will pay a portion of the premium for increased coverage. We also plan to set aside funding to increase the Parks Reserve account and funding for critical projects, emergency expenditures, and neighborhood park restoration.

Proposed Fees and Charges Document Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations, stated that the sales tax collection has been trending upward, but we still remain conservative in our budget predictions. He also reviewed a handout, which was a summary of projected revenue increases for the proposed 2015-2016 budget.

Archery Staff proposed additional options within the fee structure. The fees will increase as a student progresses through the archery upper levels of instruction.

Botanical Center Staff offered summer camps last year for the first time and request to adjust the camp rate range to offer a variety of summer camps. We are proposing a first-time rate range for after-hours access to the Mizumoto Stroll Garden, which will allow us to extend the service for a variety of groups. Staff proposes to adjust the range rate for guided field trips and tours to accommodate larger groups and offer a regularly scheduled tour. The Botanical Center staff plan to offer symposia of regional interest, including inviting nationally known speakers and have proposed an expanded range rate to secure that level of talent.

Dan Kinney Family Center Staff proposes adjusting the room rental rate downward at Dan Kinney Family Center to better reflect the amenities available in the community room as compared to other community room rental spaces within the park system.

Dickerson Park Zoo Zoo staff recommends increasing the adult, youth, and senior rates by $1.00 each to help defer some of the costs associated with maintenance, along with animal and safety welfare requirements, as required by their accreditation agency, Association of Zoos and Aquariums. A comparison study of Zoo admission prices was included for the Board's review. Mr. Belote noted that the Friends of the Zoo organization continues to be a major funding source providing funds of nearly 30 percent of the Zoo's operating budget.

Lake Springfield Park Special Facilities staff proposed increasing the fee for half-day and full-day rentals at the Boathouse, but remains within the current approved range.

Pools Aquatics staff proposes updating the appropriate rate for the youth coupon book, which was approved last year, but did not get changed formally in the fees and charges document. The coupon book still offers 20 percent discount on pool admissions.

Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park Special Facilities staff recommends a new fee structure for outreach programs and seasonal activities at the farm such as hayrides and fishing rentals. The fee will be slightly higher for participants who reside outside of Greene County. Staff also recommends a new urban garden prep fee for individuals who require assistance before planting in the community garden at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park.

School-Park Staff proposes rewording the fee structure for clarity regarding the cost of registering children for SPARC programs.

Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center Staff recommends a new hourly rate for horse riding lessons within the current approved range.

Golf Courses Golf staff recommends a $1.00 greens fee increase at Bill and Payne Stewart and Horton Smith Golf Courses, and a $2.00 increase for greens fees at Rivercut Golf Course. The increase in fees will allow us to start building a fund to address several improvements needed at the courses, finish repaying a previous golf debt, and build a Golf Reserve Fund. In reviewing a market study, we are still a solid value and even below the costs to play at other nearby courses. Staff is researching upgrading current software to promote more play during off-peak hours. The Fairways and Greens program is available and offers up to a 25 percent discount based upon the patron's level of investment.

Mr. Belote mentioned that staff reviewed and discussed rates for a variety of other services, but at this time, chose to keep the rates in question the same. Staff is diligent in providing a quality parks program and a fair price, making it affordable for most families. The Park Board Scholarship Program is also available for those families in need. However, without a long-term capital funding source, it remains difficult to restore and repair aging facilities without fully recovering the cost of providing the service or program.

With no further questions or discussions, the Board agreed to recommend the Proposed Fees and Charges for the 2015-2016 Budget to the Board for approval at the January 9, 2015, meeting.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Scott Bailes made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Dr. Sarah McCallister. Motion was approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.