

MINUTES
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Wednesday, February 4, 2015

Lake Springfield Boathouse, 5324 S. Kissick Avenue, Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

Tim Shyrack, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:42 pm.

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

Members Absent: None

Park Board Staff: Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Matt Coats, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Karen Herron, Anne-Mary McGrath, Jerry Mitchell, Tom Moore, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Diana Tyndall, John Waldo, Lana Woolsey

II. Review and Discussion of Proposed FY 2015-16 Budget

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, stated that we would review the proposed budget, along with several supplemental handouts, and answer any questions the Board may have regarding the budget. Mr. Belote stated that the FY 2015-2016 budget cycle marks the third year that Parks has experienced financial sustainability. As with the current budget cycle, Parks no longer receives any General Fund financial support from the City of Springfield nor any General Revenue support from Greene County either.

DEPARTMENTAL PRIORITIES

Mr. Belote reviewed the proposed FY 2015-2016 budget document with the Board, along with discussion of the following departmental priorities:

- It is imperative to identify and secure a long-term capital fund source to successfully address the community's needs and expectations for the park system already identified in the Vision 2020 and Field Guide 2030 documents.
- We will continue our renewed commitment to restore some of the older and under-utilized parks. Progress was made the past two years at Westport School-Park, Tom Watkins Park, and Washington Park.
- The Park Board recently entered into a cooperative agreement with Greene County to utilize the Davis House/Property. We have begun renovations to establish the site as the Community Olympic Development Program headquarters and house the CODP Archery Program.
- As we complete our first year of operation of the Springfield Skatepark, the proposed budget for FY 2015-16 includes necessary funding for the facility staff, equipment, and other related costs.

- We will continue to bring high level quality athletic events to our community, as we are committed to hosting unique opportunities for our local athletes.
- The proposed budget includes funding for Year Two of pursuing national accreditation for the Park Board through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies.
- With the Federal Affordable Care Act changes in the rules for the seasonal employees, we have reviewed different options to continue providing programs and services at a similarly-high level. Additionally, with the increase of minimum wage rates effective January, 2015, we anticipate a significant increase in employee costs proposed for the upcoming budget cycle.
- We propose to upgrade the Park Board's website, with a parks-specific version of the City of Springfield's CivicPlus platform, which was recently adopted by city departments. This upgrade should make the site far more user-friendly, and allow for additional on-line registration opportunities for park programs and services.
- The proposed budget includes funding for an additional public restroom facility at the Dickerson Park Zoo. As one of the few remaining projects from the 2006 Parks Sales Tax initiative, we look forward to the construction of this much-needed amenity.
- We are fortunate to have many partnerships with groups, organizations and businesses throughout the community. With no future capital project fund available at this time, it continues to be increasingly important to pursue new collaborative opportunities and cost-share scenarios whenever possible. Notably, we are working with several like-minded groups for new amenities at the McDaniel/George Moore Park. We will also continue sponsoring additional program opportunities through the City of Springfield's InBalance Employee Wellness Program.

Parks General Fund

The proposed budget includes restoring an accounting clerk position at Northview Center, which was part of the City's budget cuts from 2008. Over the past three years, we have participated in lease-purchase options using extremely favorable interest rates for much-needed capital equipment through the assistance of the City of Springfield. We will continue this trend to replace fitness equipment at Chesterfield Family Center, replace equipment for field preparation at sports complexes, and a new refrigerated truck for our concessions operations.

As previously mentioned, we will also use general funds to support the enhancement of the Parks website to make it more user-friendly and offer on-line registrations in the future.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations, stated he appreciated the efforts of staff in helping us to report a positive cash balance at the end of June, 2014. Due to Parks being a recipient of grant funds, it is sometimes difficult to receive our reimbursements by the close the fiscal year, but staff did a good job working with our agency partners to make this happen in a timely manner.

2001 Parks Sales Tax Fund

As Mr. Belote mentioned, the Federal Affordable Care Act required us to review different options to provide our programs and services. For

example, we combined seasonal staff costs to make one FTE position for a much needed gardener position at the Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park, who will help facilitate the efforts of the many volunteers and coordinate the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the grounds and gardens.

As previously stated, we have participated in lease-purchase options with favorable interest rates for much-needed capital equipment and will continue this trend to replace fitness equipment at Doling Family Center, three mowers for Park Operations, a horse transport trailer for Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center, and replace vehicles in the Parks Administration and Park Rangers Divisions.

As we have identified increasing our departmental Reserve fund as a critical need to address, we are proposing \$100,000 in additional funds be set aside to help cover unforeseen emergencies and repairs.

2006 Parks Sales Tax We will also incur additional employee costs due to the Federal Affordable Care Act within the 2006 Parks Sales Tax Fund. The additional restrooms for the Dickerson Park Zoo remain as one of the few improvement projects still left from this initiative.

2006 Parks Sales Tax & Capital Projects Fund To help further the Park Board's objectives and opportunities for the park system, we will continue to solicit community donations and charitable gifts. This type of funding could be utilized for park and trail acquisitions, facility upgrades, and new programs and services.

Golf Enterprise Fund We propose in the upcoming budget to include a significant payment to the City of Springfield to pay off a long-term debt related to improvements at Rivercut Golf Course. With favorable weather conditions and minimal emergency expenditures, we anticipate resolving the debt by the end of June, 2016.

Using the lease-purchase options to replace much needed capital equipment, we will participate in this trend to purchase two tee box mowers, one triplex mower, and one rough area mower to continue maintain the Park Board's four golf courses at the highest level.

General Budget Issues and Discussion Mr. Belote reviewed the remaining pages of the proposed FY 2015-2016 budget, which includes proposed revenues and expenditures, along with a variety of handouts that further explain the priorities and line item aspects of the budget already discussed in more detail. Mr. Jerry Mitchell is projecting a 5 percent increase in the 2001 and 2006 Parks Sales Tax collection as it mirrors the current trend this year. Mr. Belote mentioned that although personnel costs are our top expenditure category, we still remain low compared to industry standards.

Mr. Belote explained further our participation in the City's Employee Wellness Program, and the new benefits hopefully added in the coming year including additional discounts on programs, golf, ice skating, and canoe/kayak rentals. The InBalance program will reimburse Parks for instructor costs associated with program offerings. Mr. Belote hopes that the new offerings will entice more employees to take advantage of the health risk assessment screening and participate in more programs either individually or as a family. The last two years we have extended a discounted rate to join one of our family centers or tennis complex to Greene County Employees who completed an HRA. We will also offer Greene County employees a discounted rate for golf, ice skating, and canoe/kayak rentals.

The Board expressed continued concern about the overall transfer cost for City services and the way the City works to determine those costs. Mr. Belote stated that a revised study will likely be conducted to review the direct and indirect charges and associated formulas, so we are hopeful for an opportunity to review our itemized costs for services rendered to the City and our partnership in the City Employee Wellness Program at that time, as well.

With no further discussion, the Board recommended forwarding the proposed FY 2015-2016 budget document for approval at the February meeting.

Joint City/County Task Force Presentation

Mr. Belote provided an update on the recent stormwater presentation that the Task Force shared with City Council and the County Commissioners. Although information was shared about the past success Parks/Stormwater had together with the passage of the 2006 Parks Sales Tax, which included completion of stormwater improvements at Fassnight Park, Sequiota Park, Doling Park, and the Dickerson Park Zoo, significant support for moving forward in this direction was not displayed during that meeting. Mr. Belote would like the opportunity to participate in further dialogue on how Parks could assist Stormwater in achieving a successful campaign to address their federal mandate issues, but also to continue with the park development ideas already established. The Board expressed their willingness to lend their support and share their concerns with county officials that they continue to research the feasibility of a successful campaign without Parks at the table. Additionally, the Board requested an informational sheet on past successful projects Parks completed when Stormwater partnered with us for the 2006 Parks Sales Tax initiative and other contributing information.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. John Price made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Kevin Hogan. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.