

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, May 13, 2016
Park Board Administrative Offices
1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri**

I. ROLL CALL

Tim Shryack, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Matt Bailey, Carolyn Gerdes, Paula Glossip, Bob Horton, Sidney Needem, John Price, Tim Shryack, Chair

Members Absent: Sarah McCallister

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

Guests: Tim Smith, Deputy City Manager, Leslie Forrester, Director, Springfield Regional Arts Council; David Burton and Pam Duitsman, University of Missouri Extension Center,

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. John Price made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2016, Park Board Meeting, as distributed; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION UPDATE AND ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, stated that we have a great working relationship with the University of Missouri Extension Center as they are one of the primary tenants of the Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center. Mr. Belote mentioned that he recently attended the Extension Center's annual meeting and was updated about the programs and activities offered by their staff and volunteers.

Mr. David Burton, Site Director for the Extension Center, stated that Extension has been in Greene County for 100 years, nearly as long as the Park Board. Mr. Burton explained that thirty percent of their funding comes from Greene County. In 2010, Greene County Commission provided \$400,000 towards the building of the Botanical Center, and the Extension Center raised nearly \$100,000. Mr. Burton mentioned that they train 50 volunteers annually, and their 225 active volunteers provided 22,761 documented hours in 2015. Through the Master Gardener hotline, they responded to 6,000 calls. The Master Gardeners and Naturalist volunteers provide service to the Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center and the Springfield Nature Center. Mr. Burton appreciates the opportunity to work with Friends of the Garden members and Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park staff on various educational programs and garden events. Mr. John Price stated that on behalf of the Springfield Sister Cities Board, they

appreciated the Extension Center's efforts to accommodate office space for the Springfield Sister Cities Association.

IV. OZARK GREENWAYS TRAIL NAMING REQUEST

Mr. Terry Whaley, Executive Director, Ozark Greenways, provided a quick update on several trail projects such as the new Farm Road 141 underpass that was completed near the South Dry Sac Trail. This is important to Ozark Greenways because it is a key connection toward continuing the trail east to Lost Hill Farm Park and existing trail that heads east to Truman Elementary School. The Springfield-Greene County Park Board was recently awarded a federal grant to extend the trail a half-mile further from FR141 through the former Fulbright Landfill and closer to Lost Hill Farm Park. Some day we hope to connect the trail all the way east to Valley Water Mill Park.

Mr. Whaley referred to a letter in the Park Board members' packets requesting to change the name of the South Dry Sac Greenway, which is actually on the north side of town. The name causes some confusion of the trail's location, so the Ozark Greenways Board is requesting to change the name to Fulbright Springs Greenway. The Fulbright Spring still provides water to City Utilities and serves an environmental and cultural connection. Mr. Bob Horton made the motion to accept the name change of the South Dry Sac Greenway to the Fulbright Springs Greenway; seconded by Ms. Carolyn Gerdes. Motion approved unanimously.

Mr. Whaley also invited everyone to the dedication of the new 1.5 mile trail section that now joins South Creek and Wilson's Creek Greenways on June 4 at 10 am. We will also be celebrating National Trails Day, along with Ozark Greenways 25th Anniversary. Attendees are encouraged to walk or bike to the event. The Greater Springfield Board of Realtors recently awarded Ozark Greenways with \$5,200 for the economic impact that trails bring to the community. Their donation will provide a trail kiosk and benches on the new section of Wilson's Creek Greenway.

V. CAPRA SELF-ASSESSMENT AND VISITATION REPORT

Mr. Belote commended staff, in particular Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director, for the completion of the accreditation document, which is evidence of two years of collaborative work. Mr. Fisher stated that the document has 1,100 electronic links within it and is 245 pages in length. It has been mailed to the National Recreation and Park Association CAPRA Commissioners and to our assigned review team. We successfully completed our conference call review and were approved for a site visit June 27-30. The site visit is for the reviewers to see in person the work we do as stated in the document. The reviewers will likely want to visit our facilities as well as talk to staff and the Park Board. Mr. Fisher stated that there are 10,000 park systems in the United States, but less than 150 are accredited. There are only four park systems in Missouri that are accredited, and they are Clayton, Chesterfield, Kansas City, and Lee's Summit. Mr. Fisher stated that he would have the reviewer's resumes available for the Board's review, along with information about tours and meet and greet sessions with the review team.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports to discuss. Mr. Belote stated that we are accepting applications for Park Board members as several members are winding up their terms on the Board.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Tim Smith, Deputy City Manager Mr. Belote provided an update regarding the Founder's Park proposal we submitted in seeking funds from the City of Springfield surplus funding. Parks Administration felt that the Founder's Park proposal, which had the support of the Springfield Police Department, Springfield Fire Department, and several other downtown businesses, would address several security and safety issues for the park. It is a park that depicts the history of Springfield, but there are some challenges with the original design. The proposal would include freshening up the design, including the fountain and landscaping of the area, and address the security issues with the addition of security cameras and lights. The Park Board's Founder's Park proposal requested \$500,000 to complete all the suggested updates, making the park more functional and safe, along with adding more educational and recreational programming opportunities. City Council asked for us to pare down the proposal. We came back to City Council with a proposal in the amount of \$328,000, which included security cameras, lighting, new function for the fountain area, architectural, engineering, and permitting expenses, but no funding for beautification of the park. Those elements, along with additional programming, would have to be part of a Phase 2 proposal. The reduced proposal amount includes \$28,000 from our Parks operational budget. As a reminder, Mr. Belote mentioned that we just completed the budget process for next year, and we had an extensive list of unfunded projects. Mr. Belote was informed by the City Manager that the Founder's Park proposal has been removed from the second reading at City Council's next meeting until they have more information.

Mr. Smith stated that there are many different thoughts surrounding how the City's surplus funding should be distributed. With the Founder's Park Proposal now being taken out of the carryover readings, it will be sent to Council Committee for further review. It is likely that the original Committee group that designed Founder's Park may be called upon to express their concern and passion for the park that depicts the history of the founding fathers of Springfield, along with other groups such as the Jordan Valley Advisory Committee, who are concerned about safety in the park. Mr. Smith stated that the Founder's Park proposal did have support from the City Manager's Office and the Finance Director as it was thought to be an appropriate one-time funding project.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CODP Programs Mr. Cumley stated that Ms. Leslie Forrester, Director of Springfield Regional Arts Council, was attending the Park Board meeting today as an observer and will be a guest speaker at the June Park Board meeting. This year the Mediacom Ice Park staff had a booth at the Rock N' Ribs event at the Springfield E-plex in April to promote programs at the Ice Park. The event welcomed over 30,000 people. Mr. Cumley stated that the CODP Volleyball program began with just 20 players in 2005. Over the past 10 years, the program has grown to 300 players. The players receive top level training from our two-time Olympian Coach, Lori Endicott-Vandersnick, and many CODP

volleyball players have been selected to play for collegiate programs. The CODP golf tournament is moving to the fall to be held in combination with the CODP Awards Program.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation

Ms. McGrath stated that 12 college dual matches were played at Cooper Tennis Complex in April, along with several high schools and junior high school invitational matches. The Springfield Cardinals' players served as Miracle League buddies at a recent Miracle League game. The Cardinal players pitched and ran bases with the Miracle League players and signed autographs making it a special evening for everyone involved. Ms. McGrath stated her appreciation to the Park Operations crews for the field preparation work at all the complexes. The Skatepark held their second camp which was full with participants. The Skatepark staff received many positive comments and feedback from the parents and the students. The Outdoor Initiative (OI) staff hosted their first family weekend camping event with 25 participants. The OI staff is partnering with Maria Johnston, our neighborhood liaison, to coordinate some camping experiences with our neighborhood partners. We will be hosting the Missouri High School State Tennis Championships at Cooper Tennis Complex on May 26-28. Outdoor pools open May 28. The Southwest Missouri Senior Games begin May 25. Ms. McGrath mentioned that our new Aquatics Brochure was distributed to the Board members today. Mr. Belote thanked Mr. Scott Bailes, Board Member, for the on-going partnership with the Springfield Cardinals and helping to coordinate the amazing opportunity for the Miracle League players. Mr. Bailes stated that he believes the Cardinals' players equally enjoy the experience.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator

Ms. Edwards mentioned that the design of the new Aquatics Brochure was done by Brittany Bywater, our graphic designer. Second interviews are underway for the web designer position. We participated in the second Give Ozarks 24-hour online campaign. We raised \$938 for the Miracle League and \$601 for the Park Board Scholarship Fund, which makes our grand total nearly \$900 more than last year. Several park partners such as Friends of the Garden, Friends of the Zoo, Ozark Greenways, and Sister Cities also participated in the online fund-raising event. Ms. Diana Tyndall, Marketing Coordinator, was accepted in to Leadership Springfield Class 32. The Springfield Lasers summer schedule is out, so mark your calendars for July 31 through August 13. The lunch time concert series begins May 18-June 29 sponsored by the Downtown Springfield Association in Founder's Park.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations

Mr. Mitchell reported that the Dickerson Park Zoo's revenue is up \$67,000 from last year at this time. With the great weather recently, golf revenue is also up approximately \$42,000 from April of last year. Mr. Mitchell explained that we use the additional revenue to offset unforeseen expenditures that we experience throughout the year. July and August revenues are actually recorded in this accounting year cycle.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of Park Operations

Mr. Carney stated that the Park Operations staff welcomed Ms. Becca Fleming as their new Administrative Assistant on April 18, replacing Ms. Ellen Painter, who retired. The Master Gardener's plant sale was held at the Springfield Botanical Gardens on April 30. Pool crews have been testing and monitoring all the mechanical pool systems as they gear up for the pool season to begin in late May. All the pools are filled, except for Fassnight Pool, as it being repainted. Horton Smith Golf Course Pro Shop

received some new siding, painting and trim work. Lake Country Soccer hosted 180 teams for a tournament on April 22-24.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Belote stated that Mr. Fisher would report on behalf of Special Facilities as Mr. Tom Moore recently announced his retirement after nine years with the Park Board. The Special Facilities Division has experienced tremendous growth during this time along with their team work approach. Mr. Moore will be missed. Mr. Fisher mentioned that Mr. Nick Breithaupt, who was the Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park Coordinator, recently resigned and took a position with Silver Dollar City. At Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park, it is field trip season. The Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center hosted a high school outdoor interpreter's program with 300 kids participating. In the Golf Division, Rivercut Golf Course hosted the National Home School Championships with 50 players from six states. The organizing committee has already booked Rivercut for next year's championship. The Park Rangers have been busy as the warmer weather increases activities in the parks. The hiring process to hire two new Rangers is progressing well.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park mentioned that the Botanical Center, Sequiota Park and the Living Memorial Park have also hosted many field trips this spring. Mr. Park stated that Mizumoto Stroll Garden has had 2,500 visitors already this spring. The Federated Gardens Club will host their state conference at the Botanical Center on May 17, which will include garden tours and classes. Mr. Park reported that the 1.5 mile extension of the Wilson's Creek Trail is near completion. The project is partially funded with a Recreational Trail Program in the amount of \$100,000. We also received a donation of base stone from Conco, along with assistance of Public Works and Parks crews, to help prepare the new trail section for asphalt paving. The Peace Through People Pavilion is under contract with Nesbitt Construction. The contractor for the Lake Country Soccer/Cooper Soccer Press Box is making good progress on the project. Mr. Park mentioned that Dan Jones, an 11-year employee who worked at Chesterfield Family Center as a pool technician and maintenance worker, recently retired. Mr. Jones will be missed.

Mr. Belote mentioned that Lake Country Soccer will host a press conference on June 7 to announce their capital campaign for additional improvements.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker stated that it is school field trip season through the end of May at the Dickerson Park Zoo. On May 20 and 21, there will be a going away party for Henry the Hippo, which includes free feeding opportunities. Henry has been one of the most popular animals at the Dickerson Park Zoo since the 1980's. He will be moving to the Cincinnati Zoo where he will have a new larger home and the ability to interact with other hippos. National Dream Night will be held on June 3. This is a private, invitation only event for children with chronic illness or disabilities and their immediate family members. The bid opening date for the Zoo's Boardwalk project is scheduled for May 25.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director As part of the Zone 1 Blitz Initiative, Ms. Reser reported that a new free program will be held on Saturday mornings in June and July called Run for Fun Club. There will be interactive games offered centered around running. The transition of the new Parks website is scheduled to be reviewed in June and tentatively be available to the public in August. The new Parks website is designed to be more "parks" friendly while still maintaining an affiliation with the city's overall site as well.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks

Mr. Belote mentioned that the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame Baseball Enthusiast Luncheon will be held on May 18, 2016. Park Board members are welcome to attend. Mr. Belote stated that he was requested to provide more information to City Council regarding the Founder's Park proposal. Several Board members stated they felt the Park Administration has done a good job providing information and educating our officials about the full scope of work and economic impact we provide to the community. Mr. Belote stated we will continue to remind our community officials that we do not receive any general funds from the City or financial support from the County. We are a self-sustained parks department in most respects. We rely on our joint efforts with community partners and private donors, but that is not nearly enough to take on improvement projects or significant repairs or even identify matching funds for grant projects. Mr. Belote plans to provide more information to city officials about the types of projects we complete and programs we offer despite our financial challenges, but also show the areas that are in need of long-term financial support.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

X. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. John Price made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:14 am.

XII. CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Bob Horton made a motion to proceed into Closed Session; seconded by Ms. Paula Glossip. Motion passed unanimously.