

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, April 8, 2016
Park Board Administrative Offices
1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri**

I. ROLL CALL

Dr. Sarah McCallister, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:34 am.

Members Present: Matt Bailey, Carolyn Gerdes, Paula Glossip, Sarah McCallister, Vice Chair, Sidney Needem, John Price,

Members Absent: Scott Bailes, Bob Horton, Tim Shryack

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, Tom Moore, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Diana Tyndall, Lana Woolsey

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. John Price made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2016, Park Board Meeting, and the March 11, 2016, Closed Session Meeting as distributed; seconded by Ms. Paula Glossip. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. 2015 PARKS VOLUNTEER REPORT

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation, stated that our Springfield-Greene County Park System has always benefitted from the support of volunteers, but the magnitude and benefits were only fully recognized when we began recording the volunteer hours several years ago. We offer a unique opportunity because of the many diverse volunteer options we have to help match with the volunteer's skills and interests. Additionally, we can offer volunteer options throughout the entire year.

In 2009, we began our Volunteer Management Program in conjunction with the National Recreation and Parks Association. This program includes a recruitment, screening, and identification process. Once a volunteer is cleared and assigned to a specific area, they are also provided a volunteer photo ID badge. Now in our sixth year of the program, 2015 was our most successful year with over 1,019 volunteers screened. Collectively, our volunteers contributed 78,868 hours throughout the park system. The Friends of the Garden volunteers at Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park spent more than 22,000 hours helping our full-time staff maintain the park and its' 20-plus gardens. The volunteers at our Northview Center help prepare and serve meals, assist with special events and activities, and recorded over 17,000 hours. The Dickerson Park Zoo received over 12,000 hours from volunteers who assisted with educational programs and special events. Based upon the Independent Sector, a coalition of non-profits, foundations and corporate giving programs, and the leading authority on volunteer valuation,

the national valuation of a volunteer hour in 2014 was \$23.07 and in Missouri that value is \$21.30. With 75,868 recorded hours from our volunteers, this equates to nearly \$1.7 million dollars of donated labor back to the park system. Another way to review the information is that to achieve this many hours would require nearly 40 more additional staff members. During National Volunteer Week, several of our staff will host a special celebration for our volunteers and recognize the great job that they do for our park system.

IV. 2015 PARKS DONATION UPDATE

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, stated that while our volunteers most definitely help support our park system, we also support a wide variety of organizations and causes whose proceeds benefit Greene County citizens. Due to our funding structure, auditors have advised us that we can support organizations and businesses within Greene County. We do not provide donations for fundraisers where the benefactor is an individual or monetary donations. In 2015, we recorded that we provided 671 donations representing nearly \$80,000 for area organizations. This total represents donations provided by the Parks Administration Office, Park Operations by co-sponsoring the use of the Show Wagon, Dickerson Park Zoo, and Mediacom Ice Park. We also donated more than 17,000 pounds of food to Ozarks Food Harvest through Turkey Trot and the Splash 'N Sizzle events held last summer.

V. CITY STORMWATER PROJECT AT COOPER PARK

Mr. Belote stated that the 2006 Parks Sales Tax initiative allowed us to join efforts with the Public Works' Stormwater Division to address a number of critical areas in the community near parks that repeatedly flooded when heavy rains occurred. Through our partnership, we worked with Public Works to make the necessary improvements and redesign of these areas. Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director, stated that these projects at Doling, Fassnight, and Sequiota Parks were well-received by the public due to the amenities added back into the park, but ultimately, making the areas more efficient to handle heavy rains.

Mr. Chris Dunaway, Stormwater Engineer, stated that the stormwater project within Cooper Park was to reduce flooding, extend the service life of the storm sewer, and improve the water quality. The embankments along Pythian were built up to hold more water, along with 3,000 feet of new pipe, which was installed to replace a significant amount of rusted pipe to ensure better water quality and extend the life of the sewer. The new design did not negatively impact playability of the ball fields or soccer fields. Mr. Dunaway provided several pictures of recent flooding incidents, along with the site plan of the area where improvements were made.

VI. MIRACLE LEAGUE DONATION APPROVAL

Mr. Belote stated that recently we met with Mr. Bobby Allison who is interested in further enhancing the experience for both players and spectators at the Miracle Field. Mr. Allison has agreed to provide chair-back seats for the spectators, but also replace the field surface in which the game is played. Due to weather elements, it is typical for the field to become worn within 5-10 years and need to be replaced. We are trying to complete the work in between the spring and fall leagues, which would be between June and mid-August. Mr. John Price made the motion that the Park Board accepts Mr. Bobby Allison's donation up to \$350,000 for the resurfacing of the Miracle Field ballfield and installing chair back seats in the bleacher seating

area; seconded by Ms. Carolyn Gerdes. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Belote stated that Mr. Allison's donation is another great example of community partnership and reminded the Board that the Miracle Field facility is virtually 100 percent created and funded by donations.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports to discuss.

VIII. DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Operations Mr. Carney stated that March was a warmer than average month, which kicked off spring activities such as mowing, watering grass areas, and turning on water fountains, about a month earlier than normal. For the Cherry Blossom Kite Festival, there were approximately 2,500 cars and Sister Cities sold out of the 400 kites that they had available. All the golf courses have been aerated for the spring season, except for Betty Allison at Oscar Blom. Mr. Carney reported that the litter collection was up 23 percent in March from February. Mr. Carney stated that Ms. Ellen Painter, Administrative Secretary for Park Operations, retired on April 1. We wish Ellen much happiness in her retirement. Ms. Painter's replacement will start on April 18.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations Mr. Mitchell reported that with the strong Recreation Division revenues, this has contributed to our overall revenues being up, which helps to offset the increase in year-to-date expenditures. April sales tax collections are also up compared to April of 2015. Mr. Mitchell stated that expenditures and revenues can fluctuate significantly over the next three months due to the increase in seasonal activity. Our management staff is kept abreast of any such changes, so we can adjust budgets accordingly.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards reported that we have seen an increase of job applications submitted after the recent Parks Job Fair. We are preparing for the Web Designer interviews next week, but continue moving forward with redesign of the Parks webpage. Ms. Edwards stated Ms. Diana Tyndall, Marketing Coordinator, has recorded several messages that patrons will hear when they are put "on hold" on several Parks main phone numbers. Ms. Tyndall has also recently recorded several commercials that are currently playing on the radio. Ms. Tyndall coordinated the Golf Appreciation Event held on April 6. There are several features about recent projects, new staff hires and promotions in the current MPRA magazine.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation Ms. McGrath stated that staff was pleased with the results of the first Parks Job Fair. With the help of the Missouri Career Center, staff is making plans to conduct another Job Fair next year as part of the seasonal hiring process. Sports complexes have already begun their busy season with Missouri State University, Drury, and Evangel, and local high schools conducting tennis practices and matches at several of our facilities. The baseball and softball fields are also home sites for Drury and practices/games have begun for their teams. The Outdoor Initiatives Division has had full cave boat tours in March, hosting 130 kids, teachers, and parents at Gibony Cave at Doling Park. The Skatepark staff held their first bike camp, which was overwhelmingly successful. The instructor provided warm-up exercises, along with classroom and physical activities for the campers. The Miracle

Field Leagues start on April 18 for the youth leagues and April 21 for the adult leagues. We currently have 153 players signed up to play. Registration is also open for SPARC day camp.

Mr. Belote stated that on behalf of Parks, Ms. McGrath coordinates the one-day tour of the Parks Department for the City of Springfield employees who are involved with the Camp Springfield program. Campers visit a variety of City Departments to learn more about each specific department. Next week, campers will visit Parks and have the opportunity to learn about the Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center, Cooper Tennis Complex, Dickerson Park Zoo, Chesterfield Family Center, Davis Property, and Rivercut Golf Course. Various activities and fun Park trivia, along with a lunch catered by Robert Uckele and his concessions staff, are part of the campers' experience.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CODP Programs Mr. Cumley stated that the 417 Express team finished 2nd in their division to advance to the finals. Unfortunately, they lost the three-game series 2 games to 1 game. The Junior Olympic Archery Development Club's Hunter Hogan, has earned his Bronze, Silver, and Gold Olympian awards in the JOAD Club. He also finished 2nd out of 300 archers in a recent National Indoor Tournament in the Adult Male Freestyle Compound division.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher reported that we are finishing the final review of the accreditation document to submit to our internal reviewers. A final copy will be available for the Park Board at the May meeting. The Masters Golf Kick-off and Customer Appreciation event at Rivercut was successful with over 175 people in attendance. We offered a Masters themed-menu of appetizers, golf demonstrations, and a few special giveaways from vendors. Mr. Fisher thanked the Park Operations crews for the recent renovations at the Horton Smith Clubhouse.

Mr. Fisher stated that he will begin including an update on monthly activities involving the Park Rangers. Recently, Park Ranger Administrator, Matt Coats, has made several safety presentations to seasonal staff. He is also conducting interviews with our Human Resources representative to fill three vacancies in the Ranger division. Last month, Park Ranger staff participated in an opportunity to properly dispose of evidence.

Mr. Belote mentioned that at the end of the Masters Kick-off event, several golf patrons participated in a question and answer session about future golf plans and offered suggestions on what they would like to see in the master plan.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker stated that the Zoo is heading into their busy season. As the weather begins to warm up, more animals are outside for patrons to see. Educational program staff is quite busy during the spring and summer months too. The Springfield Public School system has expanded their summer school program and have partnered with the Zoo for a special program for 2nd graders. The new restroom facility in the west end of the park is nearly complete.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park reported that the staff inspected 59 playground areas last month, which resulted in only minor equipment repairs. The Mizumoto Stroll Garden opened on April 1. The Masters Gardeners' annual plant sale will be April 30 at the Botanical Center. The Lake Country Soccer press box project is underway with an expected

completion date of sometime in the fall. Mr. Park stated that the design for the interior renovation in Timmons Temple has been agreed upon, but there is still much work to be done before the facility can be used by the public. The Friends of the Garden are continuing to raise funds for a sensory garden. Sufficient funds are currently in place to start the initial phase of construction. Dennis McMan, our Senior Park Planner, is preparing the drawings for the new garden.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser reported that we are currently awaiting the software upgrade to our point of sale credit card system. This PCI compliance upgrade is necessary for our readers to process cards with “chips”. We are currently in Phase 2, Layout Proposal stage, of the new Parks website, which will be more parks friendly, while still remaining compatible with the City’s website.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote reported on behalf of Mr. Tom Moore, Superintendent of Special Facilities, that Rutledge-Wilson Farm hosted a successful Easter at the Farm event, which included a large corporate rental during the weekend. There were several new animals born at the Farm last month.

Mr. Belote stated that last month the Board approved the name for the new pavilion near the Botanical Center, Peace Through People Pavilion. Sister Cities had their annual meeting last month and were proud to announce the name had been approved. Sister Cities will host a special screening of a video prepared by MSU students from their recent trip to Tlaquapaque, Mexico, on May 6 at the Community Foundation Offices.

Mr. Belote stated that he attended the World TeamTennis draft on March 25, and we were successful in signing John Isner, the Top American Player. We were fortunate to be able to draft each of the players we had targeted for the 2016 season. Because of the Summer Olympics, the league starts later beginning July 31-August 13.

Mr. Belote and Mr. Jerry Mitchell recently met with Greene County Commissioners to update them on our budget document for next year, along with budget priorities and highlights. Also included in the discussion was a detailed list of projects that we cannot complete as we do not have a capital funding source or parks sales tax.

On April 29, the Boys and Girls Club will host the Steak ‘n Steak event featuring Kurt Warner as the guest speaker. Mr. Sidney Needem, Board Member, is also on the Boys and Girls Club Board and encouraged everyone to attend this event.

IX. CHAIR’S REPORT

Dr. Sarah McCallister did not have a report.

X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes asked if staff would review the guidelines regarding when lights are turned off in parks and on the tennis courts during the winter months. Mr. Belote and Mr. Park indicated that they would indeed do so.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

XII. CALENDAR

The next regularly scheduled Park Board Meeting is Friday, May 13, 2016, at the Park Board Administrative Offices.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Sidney Needem made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Paula Glossip. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:05 am.