

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, April 14, 2017
Dickerson Park Zoo – Zoo Keeper Building
1401 W. Norton Road, Springfield, Missouri**

I. ROLL CALL

Dr. Sarah McCallister, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:32 am.

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Dee King, Dr. Sarah McCallister, Sidney Needem, John Price, Michele Risdal-Barnes

Members Absent: Matt Bailey, Carolyn Gerdes, Bob Horton

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Dee King made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 10, 2017, Park Board Meeting; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion passed unanimously.

II. 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. In 2009, our department began our Volunteer Management Program in conjunction with the National Recreation and Parks Association. This program includes a recruitment, screening, and identification process.

During 2016, our volunteers reported 83,050 hours throughout the park system. The Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center recorded 20,528 hours from volunteers with Friends of the Garden, the Dr. Bill Roston Butterfly House, Master Gardeners, and volunteer work in other gardens. Dickerson Park Zoo volunteers recorded 20,431 hours from their assistance at the animal hospital, special events, educational and teen programs. 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 2015 was \$23.56 and in Missouri that value is \$21.31. With 83,050 recorded hours from our volunteers in 2016, this equates to nearly \$1.769 million dollars of donated labor back to the park system. Another way to convey this information is that to achieve this many hours would require more than 40 additional full-time staff members.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director at the Dickerson Park Zoo, commented that the Zoo is fortunate to have consistent on-going volunteers, along with one-time volunteer groups,

throughout the year. Interns, both for college credit and non-credit, and job shadowing, volunteer to work in areas related to their field of study, too. The Zoo facilitates nearly 100 internships annually.

IV. MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT APPROVAL

Ms. Lana Woolsey, Parks Assistant City Attorney, stated that we have the opportunity to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Missouri Department of Conservation, to address the challenging situation that we have with Canadian geese at Drummonds Lake in Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park. The project goal is to first modify the habitat by utilizing landscaping stones, reduce mowing around the lake, and pollinate the habitat to make the site less inviting to the geese. The funds will help with this initial phase to determine what method works best in detouring the geese from the site, so we can implement it around the entire lake and possibly other problem areas throughout our parks. Mr. John Price made the motion to enter in to a cooperative agreement with the Missouri Department of Conservation and authorize the Park Board Chair and Director to sign the agreement; seconded by Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes. Motion passed unanimously.

V. COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Belote stated that we will suggest possible meeting dates for the Park Board's Food and Beverage Committee to meet and review staff recommendations in the very near future.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CODP Programs Mr. Cumley reported that staff is dismantling one sheet of ice as planned each spring and replace with a dry floor to host several events. The Figure Skating Club recently attended an ice skating competition in Kansas City. We had 28 skaters compete in 51 events, and 38 medals were awarded to our team. In two events, we received first, second, and third place. Our CODP 16's Volleyball Team finished first out of 96 teams in Colorado, earning them a bid to nationals. Two of our CODP Tennis players also finished first in three divisions at their recent tournaments. On May 25, Springfield Rotary Southeast will dedicate the shade structure in K-Park. We will soon receive up to five new sculptures for Jordan Valley Park. We appreciate the partnership with the Arts Council, Ozark Greenways, and Sculpture Walk Springfield on this project.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation Ms. McGrath reported that at our Parks Seasonal Job Fair held on March 22, we had over 200 people stop by. Interested participants had the opportunity to talk to hiring supervisors and fill out job applications online or by hard copy. During the recent Spring Break for Springfield Public Schools, we had a 17 percent increase in youth attending our SPARC School's Out session. Ms. McGrath stated that we will be offering new healthier food options at our athletic complex concession stands. We have 195 registered participants for the upcoming Miracle League Program. Monday nights are designated for the youth league, and the adult league will be played on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Family Camping Weekend programs through Outdoor Initiatives are almost full with a capacity of 50 campers. Bark in the Park will be at Nathanael-Greene Close Memorial Park on May 29. World Wide Tai Chi Day is also on May 29 and will be held at the Springfield Art Museum.

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Coats stated that horse instruction classes are full with 130 lessons provided each week in the outdoor and indoor arenas. A new and easily identifiable logo was adopted for Lake Springfield Park, and a new brochure card was printed and distributed to the Board. The Boathouse Gift Shop has added newly designed t-shirts to their inventory. Thanks to the help of Master Gardeners who volunteer each week, we now have 300 native plants that have been planted around the Boathouse. Canoe, kayak and paddle boards are now available to rent at Lake Springfield. At Rutledge-Wilson Farm, we have had over 200 elementary students visit with school field trips. We welcomed 688 youth for the annual Easter Egg Hunt at the Farm. The day also included an early morning 5K run, along with a special glow-in-the-dark Easter Egg Hunt for a private rental of 2,000 people. The Special Facilities maintenance staff installed a new ADA accessible ramp near the Farm Park playground.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations For several months, our sales tax revenue has been up compared to last year, but currently we are down year-to-date. Mr. Mitchell stated that the August sales tax revenue, which tends to be strong, should hopefully help us recover and balance the budget for the end of the fiscal year. Golf revenue is also down year-to-date. With warmer weather and upcoming seasonal promotions, we are hopeful to see an upward trend. The Recreation Division revenues remain down year-to-date, but we saw an increase from the previous month. Mr. Belote stated that we will continue to monitor our budgets very closely through the final quarter of the fiscal year, especially with sales tax revenue down.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards mentioned that the Miracle League is still looking for additional “buddies” to assist players with batting and running the bases. Sister Cities and Friends of the Garden will host the Cherry Blossom and Kite Festival at Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial Park on Saturday, April 22. Additionally, we will unveil the new sculpture designed by internationally known artist, Rodo Padilla, from Tlaquepaque, Mexico, followed by a free concert. Ms. Pam Montanez, Website Designer, is working on a monthly newsletter to send out to registered participants through our Active point-of-sale program. Ms. Montanez has also been updating athletic and SPARC web pages to provide a better visitor experience.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney mentioned that Park Operations crews have been de-winterizing restroom facilities and pavilions. Recently, our crews also installed a security fence for the new Railroad History Museum in Grant Beach Park. Mr. Carney mentioned that a new irrigation system and fencing were installed at the Japanese Stroll Garden, along with some upgrades to the walkways.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher introduced our new Park Ranger Administrator, Kevin Holle. Mr. Holle is a retired Springfield Police Officer, with a 21-year career. Mr. Fisher mentioned that we appreciated the leadership Mr. David Moore, our Park Ranger Shift Supervisor, provided during the transition as we hired Mr. Holle. Recently, the Horton Smith Golf Course parking lot received an overlay treatment improving the appearance significantly. We had over 200 people in attendance at the Masters Kick Off Party, held at Stewart Golf Course, on April 5. Participants were treated to a golf clinic, a chance to demo new golf products, along with Masters-themed refreshments.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director

Ms. Reser stated that Lake Country Soccer will host a large tournament with 200 teams on April 21-22. Recently, we met with our Active.net software representative, providing more information about our daily operations, to assist them in better serving our needs for our point-of-sale system.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director

Mr. Park mentioned that the Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center and Mizumoto Stroll Garden changed to their summer hours on April 1. Both are open seven days a week. The Master Gardeners will have a plant sale at the Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center on April 29. The Musgrave Foundation, who also provided financial support, will dedicate the new Max Jahn Depot at the Railroad History Museum in Grant Beach Park on April 25. Additionally, an open house for the new depot will be held on April 29, with refreshments provided by our catering staff. David Hutchison, a City Engineer, who recently retired, helped to spearhead the Ward Branch Greenway trail project, which will construct a trail segment this summer through the Twin Oaks electrical substation site owned by City Utilities. Recently, we held a bid opening for the South Dry Sac (Fulbright Springs) Greenway Trail. The project includes a ½-mile section of trail leading east from the David C. Murray Trailhead through property owned by City Utilities. We appreciate our partnership with City Utilities on both projects. A plan has been developed to address security and safety improvements at Founders Park, which will include modification of the water feature. Park Operations will soon begin work towards this project.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director

Mr. Crocker introduced one of his Zookeeper's, Lee Hart, who was attending the meeting as an observer. Mr. Crocker mentioned that the new boardwalk area has received many improvements including new visual art elements, expansion and painting of exhibits, and new fish feeding areas. We will be dedicating that new structure at 10:00 am following the Park Board meeting.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks

Mr. Belote stated that the annual World TeamTennis ownership meetings and player draft were held on March 14. We are excited that Jean-Julien Rojer, Michaela Krajicek, and Benjamin Becker will return to play for the Lasers this season. Our marquee player, Jack Sock, who grew up in Kansas City, Kansas, will be here on July 21. The 2017 Season begins on July 16. The latest edition of the Neighborhood News, featuring several articles and information about parks, contributed by Jenny Edwards, was distributed to the Board members.

Mr. Belote recognized Mr. Bob Stephens, who is retiring as Mayor, as he and his wife, Cindy, have been advocates of our Parks Department programs and events. During his tenure, he attended over 500 City-related dedications, groundbreaking, and special events, which included many park activities. Mr. Belote mentioned that recently Ms. Kim Reser received a United States Tennis Association lifetime achievement award for her past 20 years of service to the organization. During that time, she has worked with the National Tennis in the Parks program, held various elected positions, and served on many committees. Congratulations to Kim on her achievement.

VII. CHAIR'S REPORT

Dr. Sarah McCallister did not have a report to discuss.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

X. CALENDAR

The Dickerson Park Zoo Boardwalk Dedication, will be held immediately following the Park Board meeting, Friday, April 14, 2017, at 10:00 am. The next Park Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 12, 2017, at 8:30 am, at the Railroad History Museum, located in Grant Beach Park, 1300 N. Grant Avenue, Springfield, Missouri.

XI. ADJOURMENT

Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:42 a.m.