MINUTES
FOOD AND BEVERAGE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Wednesday, August 9, 2017
Park Board Administrative Offices
1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

Dr. Sarah McCallister, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

Committee Members Present: Scott Bailes, Dee King, Dr. Sarah McCallister, John Price

Committee Members Absent: none

Park Board Staff Present: Bob Belote, Mike Crocker, Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Jim Fisher, Karen Herron, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Lana Woolsey

2. REVIEW OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE OPTIONS

Mr. Bob Belote welcomed the Food and Beverage Committee, and thanked them for their time to meet tonight. He stated that the goal for tonight was to review what types of food and beverages options we would like to consider, which venues would be considered, and possible next steps for implementing the enhanced services, along with seeking approval by the Park Board and City Council.

Mr. Belote reviewed the research documentation conducted by staff that was provided in the Committee's meeting packet. The documentation included a review of municipal and county golf courses in Missouri that sell or allow adult beverages on their golf courses. Additionally, the documentation included indicated that our golf courses are the only courses within 50 miles that do not either sell or allow adult beverages on the golf course.

Mr. Belote stated that it is of the utmost importance to fully educate the Park Board, City Council, and the public of the need for seeking additional revenue streams for our park system. The primary reason we are reviewing enhancing our food and beverage options is to meet the increased demands from our patrons who are interested in utilizing specific park locations, but choose not to because adult beverages are not available to them at our facilities. Such events include private rentals like weddings, corporate functions, and golf tournaments, along with potential sponsors and local organizations to conduct fund-raising events. The anticipated additional revenue would then provide funds to reinvest in our park system, which would include addressing critical maintenance and repair items, as well as restoring our neighborhood parks. Our costs to conduct current programs and services continue to rise, and with no new additional identified revenue sources, it will become difficult to offer them without an increase in fees and charges.

Ms. Lana Woolsey, Parks Assistant City Attorney, provided historical background from 2002, when the Park Board previously approved a similar food and beverage concept proposal, which was then presented to City Council. She also explained the process that the Park Board would follow to present a proposal to amend the current City ordinance to allow for adult beverages to be sold and consumed only at specific venues. Ms. Woolsey also stated that City Council has recently approved 12 specific events within the community in which adult beverages have been allowed to be served such as the Ozark Empire Fair and Artsfest. Since the implementation of the adult beverages allowed at these events, there has been no reported incidents, and the event organizers have seen an increase in both attendance and revenue. Ms. Woolsey suggested that we could use a third-party caterer for private rentals who wish to add this component at specified venues only, and the renter would be responsible for an appropriate liquor license and hiring additional security for their events. Should the Park Board approve the proposal, it would then be forwarded to City Council, which would require a majority to amend the ordinance allowing us to implement the new beverage options at specific venues.

Mr. Belote stated that in reviewing where to allow the potential new beverage options, we would propose venues that are most requested and appropriate for this activity, but are not predominately youth oriented venues by nature. The Committee discussed the list of locations for consideration. With over 104 park sites and facilities, we are considering just nine sites, leaving nearly 90 percent of our park facilities, including passive parks, not affected by the proposal.

Mr. Belote discussed the possible timeline of action with the Committee. He proposed conducting a workshop with the Park Board and administrative staff to review the research materials and proposed ideas. Once the proposal has been prepared, we will seek formal Park Board approval, and then, forward it to City Council for consideration of the proposal to amend the City ordinance. Mr. Belote stated that the City Manager suggested soliciting feedback from inviting a council member or two, and perhaps a County Commissioner.

Discussion continued regarding ways to educate the public on our prospective food and beverage proposal. Several Committee members agreed that we should follow the process as discussed, but welcome the opportunity to share more in-depth information supporting our proposal with anyone that is interested in learning more. Committee members also agreed that outside organization supporters and partner groups of the proposal be present at City Council meetings.

The Committee discussed options on how any additional revenues would be distributed or used within our budget. Any additional revenue generated at the golf courses would be used exclusively for the golf courses due to their enterprise funding structure. The Committee decided to discuss the various options with the Park Board at a future workshop.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. John Price made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Scott Bailes. Motion was passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.