

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, August 11, 2017**

Park Board Administrative Offices, 1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

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

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

Members Absent: Scott Bailes, Matt Bailey, Bob Horton

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

Guests: Leslie Forrester and Brett Johnson, Springfield Regional Arts Council

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Dee King made a motion to approve the minutes as distributed from the July 14, 2017, Park Board Meeting and the July 14, 2017, Closed Meeting; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion passed unanimously.

III. SPRINGFIELD ARTS AND CULTURE ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, introduced Ms. Leslie Forrester, Director of the Springfield Regional Arts Council (SRAC), who presented the results of their recent Arts and Economic Prosperity Study, in which Springfield's SRAC recently participated. This is the fifth time the study has been completed, and it was considered the most comprehensive study about how arts impact local communities and their economies. SRAC was part of 341 study regions, with representation from all 50 states, and included only non-profit organizations in the arts and cultural industry. Springfield was one of nine communities in Missouri that participated. SRAC surveyed 24 active organizations out of a total of 85 local organizations. Ms. Forrester stated that SRAC reviewed 600 surveys from 23 arts and cultural events and determined that \$26.9 million dollars were spent by arts and culture organizations and their audiences. Additionally, their research found that 1,065 jobs were supported by the arts in Springfield. The jobs included more than the actors and musicians, but accountants, plumbers, and electricians for example. State and local Government revenue is estimated to be \$2.3 million dollars. Ms. Forrester stated that the study showed that arts and cultural event attendees spend \$24.03 per person, per event. Sixty-nine percent of the event attendees were local and 31 percent were non-local. The study also showed that 83.9 percent of the non-local attendees indicated that the arts event was the primary purpose for their trip to our community. Ms. Forrester stated that the study showed that 82 percent of Americans believe arts and culture are important to local businesses and the economy, and 87 percent of Americans believe arts and culture are

important to the quality of life. The study also revealed that in 2015, Springfield's SRAC benefitted from 1,678 volunteers, who provided 98,237 hours of service, with a value of \$2.3 million, based on estimate of \$23.56 for a volunteer hour. Ms. Forrester stated that all U.S. Arts Industries was estimated to be \$730 billion dollars, which represents 4.2 percent of the gross domestic product. Mr. Belote thanked Ms. Forrester for sharing the research study information with the Board and for our ongoing partnership with the Springfield Regional Arts Council.

IV. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Food and Beverage Committee

Mr. John Price, Chair, Food and Beverage Committee, stated that the committee, which consists of Dr. Sarah McCallister, Scott Bailes, Dee King, and himself, recently met with a goal of studying various possibilities for enhancing food and beverage options in the park system. The committee reviewed data collected by staff that would help to better serve our patron's requests, enhance revenue and provide additional funds for deferred maintenance projects and long-term capital needs, and enhance the overall experience of patrons visiting our park system. Administrative staff will compile the recommendations from the Food and Beverage Committee to share with the entire Park Board at an upcoming workshop.

V. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CODP Programs

Mr. Cumley mentioned that he and Ms. Forrester work closely together, along with the other organizations housed in the Creamery, located in Jordan Valley Park. Mr. Cumley mentioned that the new Rangers office space has been completed and includes a small conference room within the Jordan Valley Maintenance Facility. Mr. Cumley stated that the parade kicks off the Route 66 festival at 5:30 pm that evening. Our Concessions Administrator and staff will provide catering to parade participants. The Movies at Founders Park event will be held inside Jordan Valley Park for the August 11 evening showing in conjunction with the Route 66 festivities.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation

Ms. McGrath mentioned that during heat advisory alerts, we extend our hours at designated pools, and offer \$1 admission or a canned food item. We also monitor the temperatures at the Skate Park, and have mandatory cooling and water breaks inside our air-conditioned community room. On July 21, Jack Sock was our featured marquee player for the Springfield Lasers. During the VIP meet and greet event with season ticket holders and sponsors, Mr. Sock mentioned that he won his first national tournament at Cooper Tennis Complex. We also hosted a special event just for kids with bubble soccer, inflatables, tennis with Springfield Lasers players, dinner, dance party, and t-shirt. We had 156 kids participate in this fun event. National Night Out was held at Nichols Park this year for the first time on August 1. There were over 40 booths featuring local organizations, including the Springfield Police and Fire Departments, and our Park Rangers. Event organizers estimated that over 2,800 people attended and stayed at the event longer than in past years. Over the next six weeks, 12 neighborhoods will host their own Neighborhood Night Out in parks throughout the community. Mr. Belote stated his appreciation to Park Operations and Maria Johnston for the preparation work completed to host National Night Out in Nichols Park. We are hosting the USA BMX Mid-America Nationals at the Spokes BMX Park at Ewing Park August 11-13. With an estimated 700 riders planning to participate, it is estimated that this event will have a economic impact of \$580,000 for our community.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney mentioned that Park Operations crews spent a significant amount of time getting ready for Lasers season at Cooper Tennis Complex, including painting hand-rails, landscaping details, and painting of the tennis ball on the side of the building. Mr. Carney mentioned that Mr. Peter Longley, Horticulture Interpreter, retired from the Botanical Center on July 31. Mr. Longley was instrumental in the development of the Botanical Center since it opened in 2010. We will miss Mr. Longley and his many talents. Overall, the golf courses fared well with the hot temperatures this past month due to special care taken to make sure all irrigation systems were operating properly.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards mentioned that we recently converted the 50/50 shared Graphic Designer position with the City PIO department to a full-time Parks position. Ms. Brittney Bywater will assist the City PIO department with the transition, with plans to move to the Jordan Valley Maintenance Facility in September. Ms. Edwards stated that during Lasers season, we stepped up our social media presence on Facebook and Instagram, and live tweeted the matches, even when the Lasers were on the road. The largest attendance night was the last match, with approximately 1800 people in attendance. Ms. Edwards congratulated Ms. Diana Tyndall, Marketing Coordinator, for doing a great job as the first female announcer in 22 years to emcee a Springfield Lasers match. Ms. Tyndall also was responsible for working with 417 Tickets to make online tickets sales possible for Lasers matches. Ms. Edwards also thanked the efforts of Pam Montanez, our Web Designer, for reaching new audiences through our social media connections. Ms. Montanez is currently updating the Botanical Center web pages, along with sound bites and descriptions of the gardens to be included within the website.

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Coats stated that the new design for the corn maze is now posted on the Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park Facebook page, and it had 8,000 views in just two days. Staff welcomed 24 baby piglets at the Farm. The last Family Fishing night at RW Farm had 80 participants. We hosted the Accessible Recreation T.E.A.M, and they enjoyed dinner and a group art project. The Boathouse rented 847 canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards last month. The Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center hosted three summer camps in July, along with a Horse Show for the Ozark Dressage Society. The Special Facilities maintenance staff replaced the lumber and hardware on five fishing piers located at the Henshaw Access on Lake Springfield. Staff baled 1600 bails of hay in July. Mr. Belote thanked the Special Facilities division for their assistance with parking duties during the BMX event.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations Mr. Mitchell reported that sales tax revenue for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, was up more than \$55,000 from last year. Fees and charges revenues started this new fiscal year strong and are up over this same time last year. Golf expenditures were down in July as compared to last year due to the timing of expenditures. Mr. Belote stated that we monitor and track our budget expenditures carefully and make necessary adjustments to ensure the budget is balanced by the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher mentioned that the new RFP for our golf point-of-sale and administrative software was recently closed. The six proposals are being reviewed by a committee, and they plan to make a recommendation shortly. Rivercut Golf Course will host a "Black Out Golf" event, which features \$5 off green fees and free lunch, in celebration of the solar eclipse on August 21.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker mentioned that “Art Gone Wild” and “Go Grey for World Elephant Day” events are scheduled for August 12. World Elephant Day is celebrated to relay our conservation efforts to save elephants from being illegally killed in Africa. Recently, Dickerson Park Zoo was asked to participate in a Facebook Live event with Animal Planet to discuss tiger conservation efforts, along with four other zoos in Omaha, Minnesota, Topeka, and Houston. Two of our zoo keepers made the presentation, which had 943,000 views and reached 4.5 million people around the world. Attendance at the zoo has been strong, and the zoo has received many positive reviews on social media, including Trip Advisor. A new giraffe, Clementine, was born at the zoo and is doing well.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park provided an update on the new pavilion being constructed at the Gray Campbell Farmstead. City Council will review the HUD projects as part of the Capital Improvement Projects review process, and then bids will be secured. Mr. Park and Mr. Todd Cox, Purchasing Buyer, have already prepared much of the background work to assist the projects moving forward. The materials for the Neighborhood Works projects have been ordered. Mr. Park stated that the Park Days event was well attended and guests appreciated visiting Timmons Temple to share photos and stories. Mr. Sidney Needem, Park Board Member and Park Days Committee Member, provided a detailed booklet of the events’ history and the many activities scheduled for the weekend. Mr. Needem thanked the Park Board for their support.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director On behalf of Ms. Reser, Mr. Belote reported that there were a variety of activities that took place as part of the efforts from the Zone 1 Blitz initiatives. Examples included a baseball program in Grant Beach Park, a run-for-fun program in Westport Park, a tennis clinic in Tom Watkins Park, a July 4th parade at Washington Park, and art classes at Tom Watkins Park.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote stated that we have completed the conversion of six pickleball courts at Meador Park, which was funded by a pickleball enthusiast group. The second reading at City Council for approval of a loan to convert the three bridges at Rivercut Golf Course is scheduled for August 14. The new steel bridges should help us recover from flood damages in days instead of months. This will be an off-season project at the golf course. We recently attended the One Awards event, which recognizes the best high school athletes, and is sponsored by the Springfield Sports Commission. The Route 66 Festival is August 11 and 12, with a lot of activities scheduled including an outdoor concert on Friday night and a concert with Three Dog Night at the Gillioz Theater on Saturday.

VI. CHAIR’S REPORT

Dr. Sarah McCallister, Chair, congratulated Mr. Bob Belote, who was selected as one the Springfield Business Journal’s Men of the Year. A luncheon is scheduled for Friday, August 18. Mr. Belote stated this it was an honor to be selected and a reflection of the teamwork we utilize daily throughout the park system.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss

IX. CALENDAR

A Board Workshop will be scheduled within the next couple of weeks based upon Board member availability. The next Park Board Meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 8, 2017, at 8:30 am, at the Mizumoto Stroll Garden Pavilion in Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. John Price. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.