

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD  
Friday, October 13, 2017**

**Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park, 3825 W. Farm Road 146, Springfield, Missouri**

**I. ROLL CALL**

Dr. Sarah McCallister, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:37 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:** Jenny Adams, Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Matt Coats, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Jake Dill, Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Jim Fisher, Tom Highfill, Kevin Holle, Anne-Mary McGrath, Karen Mellinger, Jerry Mitchell, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Diana Tyndall, Lynn Vandenberg, Lana Woolsey

**Guests:** Mr. Eric Pauley, President, Phelps Grove Neighborhood Association; Dr. Jim and Fran Giglio, members of Phelps Grove Neighborhood Association; Mr. Ben Funk, Missouri State University Graduate Intern

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. John Price made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 8, 2017, Park Board meeting; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion passed unanimously.

**III. KEY SPONSOR HIGHLIGHT – ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE CINEMA**

Ms. Diana Tyndall, Marketing and Sponsorship Coordinator, stated that a representative from the new Alamo Drafthouse Cinema reached out to her and Jeff Cumley about a possible community partnership with Parks. We were fortunate to have Alamo Drafthouse underwrite the Movies at Founders Park summer event. Alamo was already involved with SATO 48 films, so the winning films were shown before the Saturday evening movie feature. Additionally, Alamo representatives took up a collection each evening before the movies began and raised \$350.00 for the Parks Scholarship Fund. We appreciate the community's support, and the sponsor support of our new community partner, Alamo Drafthouse Cinema.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director, also recognized three citizens associated with a neighborhood association for their ongoing support in one of our historic parks. Mr. Park mentioned that Jim and Fran Giglio are residents in the Phelps Grove Neighborhood. Over that last several years, Mrs. Giglio has donated trees to help preserve the tree canopy within Phelps Grove Park. She also watered the newly planted trees until they were established. Mr. Park also recognized Mr. Eric Pauley, Phelps Neighborhood Association (PNA) President. Mr. Pauley stated that the PNA decided to fund-raise to purchase a utility vehicle for Phelps Grove Park to

help with gardening and general maintenance tasks. After several events, they had collected nearly 75 percent of the amount needed to purchase the utility vehicle. The Giglio's donated the remaining amount needed, and the newly purchased vehicle was presented to Parks staff at a recent ceremony. Mr. Pauley stated that the neighbors came together to help take care of the park so future generations can enjoy the park. He hopes that this gesture will inspire other neighborhood associations to identify a project that will have a long-term lasting effect in their park. Mr. Belote thanked Mr. Pauley, the Giglio's, and the Phelps Grove Neighborhood Association for being an excellent example of what makes our parks system great. Mr. Park also mentioned that the Neighborhood Works program will be providing funding to better identify and define a parking lot on the east side of the park. We hope to start work on this project in late spring.

#### **IV. INVITATION TO ANNUAL HARVEST FEST CELEBRATION AND INTRODUCTION OF KEY STAFF**

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities, introduced the key staff that help with the preparation, coordination, and operation of the successful Harvest Fest event at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park. Mr. Coats shared each of the staff's responsibility in developing the event including private rentals during Harvest Fest, educational field trips at the Farm, managing the livestock and coordination of the hay bailing operation, making a variety of props for the haunted trail, parking nearly 20,000 cars over five weekends, running electricity around the park for various activities, and providing about 4,000 pony rides throughout Harvest Fest. We employ an additional 52 part-time staff at the Farm specifically for Harvest Fest to help with the many attractions associated with the event. Last year, Harvest Fest welcomed an estimated 50,000 people, and we sold over 13,000 pumpkins. Mr. Belote thanked the Special Facilities staff for their efforts to keep this amazing tradition exciting and fresh each year, along with hosting our annual Parks Employee Appreciation Picnic, which is scheduled for Saturday, October 14, 2017.

#### **V. COMMITTEE REPORT**

##### **Food and Beverage Committee Update**

Mr. Belote stated on behalf of the Food and Beverage Committee, he would like to thank City Council members Ms. Phyllis Ferguson and Mr. Craig Fishel for serving as liaisons to work with the committee. We are in the process of scheduling a meeting with them to review the food and beverage enhancement proposal, and the next steps to move it forward with plans to present it to the Mayor and City Council for their consideration.

#### **VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

##### **Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services**

Mr. Carney stated that September was a warm and dry month, so it allowed mowing crews to get caught up with turf maintenance activities. Labor Day marked the end of outdoor pool season, and the annual closing of each indoor pool for intense cleaning and maintenance tasks. Mr. Carney mentioned that Ben Kellner, Park Supervisor, was recently recognized by the Missouri Conservation Department with the Partnership Award. We are proud of Ben's work with soliciting grants, habitat modification, and his involvement with tree forestry organizations. Mr. Belote thanked Mr. Carney for his coordination of the roof and air conditioning repairs at the main Park Administration office.

**Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations**

Mr. Mitchell stated that there was a decrease in sales tax revenue this past month, but we are hopeful for a rebound in future months. Fees and charges revenue year-to-date are up, including golf revenue. The City's annual financial audit is in progress for the year ended June 30, 2017. Parks staff is assisting in providing departmental information as needed.

**Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator**

Ms. Edwards mentioned that the Community Focus Report will be released at an upcoming event at the Springfield Art Museum on October 24. The report, which is published every other year, recognizes blue ribbons and red flags to identify the community's strengths, as well as its challenges. Ms. Edwards coordinated the Recreation, Sports, and Leisure chapter of the report on behalf of Parks. Ms. Edwards announced that Ms. Brittney Bywater is now working full-time in Parks as our graphic designer. Previously, Ms. Bywater split her duties between the City's Public Information Office and the Parks Department. Mr. Belote appreciated Jeff Cumley's efforts in helping to coordinate new spaces for offices and a small conference room area in the Jordan Valley Maintenance Building.

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

Mr. Cumley also thanked Alamo Drafthouse Cinema for their support with Movies at Founders Park. Their efforts helped to spark audience participation at the movie events. Mr. Cumley stated that Mary Kromrey, with Ozark Greenways, helped to write a grant to gain art sculptures by local artists in Jordan Valley Park. Mr. Cumley thanked the Sculpture Walk Committee, Springfield Regional Arts Council, and Ozark Greenways for their assistance with the grant through the Community Foundation of the Ozarks. As a result, four sculptured pieces will be placed along the greenway trail within Jordan Valley Park. A fifth unique art piece, The Reflective Butterfly, was purchased through the Parks budget to be installed later in November. The Annual CODP Golf Tournament and fund raiser will be held at Rivercut Golf Course on Saturday, October 14. The CODP Athlete of the Year Reception will be held on Sunday, October 15 from 2-4 pm at the Davis House.

**Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation**

Ms. McGrath introduced Ben Funk, a Missouri State University graduate student intern, who is working with our Special Events Division, and has assisted with Springfield Lasers, Zone 1 activities, Cider Days and Turkey Trot events. Ms. McGrath stated that ten Neighborhood Night Outs concluded in September, with over 2,200 participants. Cooper Tennis Complex recently hosted the USTA Over-40 Mixed Doubles Sectionals, with 24 teams from five states and 250 participants. Ms. McGrath mentioned that our Parks Concessions operations originally began with one full-time employee and about 20 part-time employees who provided snacks and drinks in our athletic complexes and outdoor pools during the summer season. The Concessions Division has extended its operation to provide catering to groups utilizing park facilities making it more of a year-round operation. For example, this division has provided concessions to several special events such as Snow Days at Jordan Valley Park, Dog Fest at Chesterfield Family Center, Japanese Fall Festival in Nathanael Greene Park, and cook outs for Miracle League participants and their families. Additionally, Concessions and Catering has hosted athletic championship events and themed dinners such as the CAPRA Accreditation Celebration and the Daddy Daughter Dance at Northview Center. In September, this division with three full-time staff and more part-time employees, catered 16 events serving over 1400 people. Concessions are also

available during Harvest Fest under the yellow tent and featuring a BBQ meal, along with other favorite food treats.

**Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director** Ms. Reser stated she is assembling a Software Task Force Committee to review the strengths and weaknesses of our current point of sale operating system. The 22-member team will review what capabilities we have and what options are available for the future.

**Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director** Mr. Park mentioned that the Gray-Campbell Farmstead staff hosted a successful 1860's Lifestyle Expo event on September 16 and 17. Activities included apple butter and apple cider making, open hearth cooking, music, story-telling and leathercrafting. Mr. Park reported that the Neighborhood Works projects continue to move forward including renovations to the 18-hole disc golf course at Tom Watkins Park. The HUD Program projects are slowly making progress as well, with architectural designs being developed for a new restroom building in Tom Watkins Park. Mr. Park explained that since the daylighting Jordan Valley Creek project was considered no longer a viable project due to the tight timeline constraints, this provided an opportunity for some of our Parks Tier 2 projects to be added to the list of proposed projects. If approved, these projects will add amenities to Nichols Park, Meador Park, Jenny Lincoln Park, Cooper Park, and Tom Watkins Park. Repairs to Rivercut Golf Course golf path should take place in late winter or early spring, in conjunction with the replacement of the wooden bridges. Mr. Belote mentioned that our neighborhood parks are benefitting from the HUD projects and several will receive needed repairs and amenities such as playground improvements, picnic tables and benches, park signage, and walking trails to our neighborhood parks. We have made a commitment since 2013 to begin to restore our neighborhood parks, but with no capital funds available, there are many more projects than dollars.

**Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director** Mr. Crocker announced that for the seventh time in 35 years, the Dickerson Park Zoo was accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). The AZA President, and former US Fish and Wildlife Director, Dan Ashe, was in Springfield for the Wonders of Wildlife Museum grand opening, and agreed to personally present the award to Zoo staff during a ceremony at the zoo.

**Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director** Mr. Fisher reported that with the assistance of our new Human Resource representative, Ms. Aschlea Melton, we are making very good progress with filling open positions.

**Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks** Mr. Belote mentioned that several staff attended the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Annual Congress in New Orleans. He stated that it was one of the most relevant conferences in the last ten years with topics that included eco-tourism, parks' impact on local economies, walking trails, and working with elected officials. Mr. Belote took the opportunity to meet with the researchers who prepared economic impact studies on parks and trail systems for NRPA. Mr. Fisher attended sessions on preparing for re-accreditation over the next several years.

Mr. Belote mentioned that at the CODP Athlete of the Year Reception on Sunday, we will recognize Linda Dollar, who has been the CODP Director since the inception of the program in

2003, and recently retired. Ms. Dollar helped to establish the relationships with the United States Olympic Committee and the various governing bodies associated with our CODP sports. We will also welcome two-time Olympian, Lori Endicott-Vandersnick, who was recently hired as the new CODP Director. Ms. Vandersnick will also remain the CODP Volleyball Coach.

Mr. Belote stated that it is also a busy weekend for our Springfield Sister Cities organization. On Friday evening, October 13, Sister Cities will host the “Day of the Dead” event, a Mexican holiday to remember loved ones who have passed away. On Saturday, October 14, the Springfield Regional Arts Council will host the Ozzie Awards and recognize individuals who have been contributors to arts and cultural activities in the community. Ms. Cindy Jobe, Springfield Sister Cities Coordinator, will receive the Ozzie Award for individual accomplishments. Members of the Isesaki, Japan delegation will also visit Springfield in the coming weeks celebration of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Japanese Stroll Garden.

Mr. Belote mentioned that Ozark Greenways had a dedication ceremony for the Trail of Honor on October 12. The event was well attended and took place in the Missouri Veterans’ Cemetery site near Lake Springfield. This site, which took nearly six years to obtain approval, is the first and only active trail that passes through a National Veterans’ Cemetery. Signs are posted encouraging anyone utilizing the trail to stop and reflect as they pass through the cemetery. At the Ozark Greenways’ annual fund raiser in September, Executive Director, Terry Whaley, announced his retirement. In his 22 years as the Director, Mr. Whaley has worked to develop and integrate trails in our community and gained recognition for Missouri as the United States’ top Trail State. Mary Kromrey will transition in to the Executive Director position beginning December 1. Mary joined Ozark Greenways in 2016 and was instrumental in helping to raise over \$900,000 this past year.

**VII. CHAIR’S REPORT**

The Chair did not have a report.

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss.

**X. CALENDAR**

The next Park Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 9, 2017, at 8:30 am, at the Park Administrative Offices. The meeting is moved due to the observance of the Veteran’s Day Holiday on Friday, November 10.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. John Price. Motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 am.

**XII. CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. John Price made the motion to adjourn to a closed session after a short recess; seconded by Ms. Dee King. Motion passed unanimously.