

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, November 9, 2017**

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

I. ROLL CALL

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

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

Members Absent: Carolyn Gerdes, Bob Horton

Park Board Staff Present: Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Matt Coats, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Jim Fisher, Tim Griesse, Kevin Holle, Cindy Jobe, Maria Johnston, Anne-Mary McGrath, Karen Mellinger, Jerry Mitchell, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Diana Tyndall, Lana Woolsey

Guests: Denny Pilant, Vice President, President-Elect, Sister Cities Association; Mr. Tim Smith, Deputy City Manager; Mr. Robert Booker, Missouri State University Graduate Intern

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. John Price made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 13, 2017, Park Board Meeting; October 13, 2017, Closed Park Board Meeting; and October 25, 2017, Food and Beverage Committee Meeting as a group; seconded by Ms. Dee King. Motion passed unanimously.

III. JAPANESE FALL FESTIVAL REPORT AND CHECK PRESENTATION

Ms. Cindy Jobe, Sister Cities Coordinator, stated that the 22nd Annual Japanese Fall Festival was another successful, unique cultural event for our citizens to enjoy. She introduced Mr. Denny Pilant, Vice President and President-Elect of Sister Cities Association, who thanked the Park Board for their partnership throughout the years. Mr. Pilant presented a check in the amount of \$28,540 to Park Board Chair, Dr. Sarah McCallister, which represents 50 percent of the gate admissions from the Japanese Fall Festival held in September. To date, over \$200,000 has been contributed to Parks from past festivals. The Parks portion of the proceeds will be used towards continued maintenance and beautification projects within the Japanese Gardens and Nathanael-Greene Close Memorial Park.

Mr. Bob Belote mentioned that Ms. Jobe recently celebrated 30 years of service with the Park Board. She was also recognized with an Ozzie Award for her individual accomplishments by the Springfield Regional Arts Council at their Flights of Fancy event in October. Mr. Belote also congratulated Mr. Tim Smith, Deputy City Manager, for the City's successful passage of its Level Property Tax initiative. He complimented Greene County on its successful ½ cent sales tax initiative, as well. Mr. Belote stated that he appreciates the support of City and County officials

for Park Board events and activities. Mr. Smith was also recently recognized with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Springfield Contractors Association.

IV. NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Belote introduced Ms. Maria Johnston, Community Administrator of our Special Events Division. Ms. Johnston stated that in 2014, the Special Events Division expanded its programming to work directly with the neighborhood associations to further utilize neighborhood parks. We were already assisting the Grant Beach Neighborhood Association with youth baseball and soccer leagues, which included providing training for officials, field preparations, screening volunteer coaches, and other support as needed. We began meeting with other neighborhood associations about what activities or events they were interested in pursuing. Currently, we actively work with 10 neighborhood associations, and together we have developed several programs and events such as Midtown Mondays in Washington Park, Concert in the Cave in Doling Park, free tennis-play events held in various neighborhood parks, and over 10 Neighborhood Night Out events. Additionally, we have worked with the Tom Watkins Neighborhood Association and the Blues Society of the Ozarks to offer monthly concerts at Tom Watkins Park. With funding from Caring Communities, students at Williams Elementary had the opportunity to join a harmonica club and perform at one of the concerts.

By partnering with other departments such as the Springfield-Greene County Health Department, who was awarded the Healthy Eating Active Living in Local Communities Grant, we purchased portable tennis and soccer equipment, swing set seats, and Imagination Playground blocks. We also replenished playground safety chips and upgraded several basketball courts. Recently, we partnered with the Springfield Fire Department to host a Halloween Truck or Treat event that welcomed over 3,000 participants. Through our partnership with Heart Academy of Music and the Springfield Regional Arts Council, summer music and art camps were offered for kindergarten through 6th grade students at Tom Watkins Park, Grant Beach Park, and Lafayette Park. This summer, we hosted the Summer Solstice Art Show in Lafayette Park with Moon City Creative District and Woodland Heights Neighborhood Association.

Ms. Johnston is also the Co-Chair of the City's Zone Blitz Wellness Committee. Working alongside representatives from the City of Springfield, Springfield Public Schools, the Springfield-Greene County Library District, Community Partnership of the Ozarks, and other community partners, the Committee was designed to bring wellness programs to Zone 1 neighborhoods. Activities such as Run for Fun at Westport Park and Tai Chi at Midtown Carnegie Branch and the Library Station were offered. The 2017 World Wide Tai Chi Day was held at the Art Museum, and now classes are offered on a weekly basis at the Art Museum and the Library locations because of the Zone Blitz partnership.

Ms. Johnston stated that outdoor education has been a popular topic of interest with our neighborhood associations. Under the leadership of our Outdoor Initiatives Division, we have started an annual Neighborhood Camp Out at Ritter Springs Park. With sponsorship from Great Southern Bank, campers enjoyed camping, canoeing, fishing, nature hikes, and cooking meals with a Dutch oven. Ms. Johnston stated that in the last several years, she has seen a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and cooperation from our neighborhood associations. They truly enjoy using their neighborhood parks as a central location for activities and have

appreciated the support the Park Board has provided to help them organize fun, family-oriented activities for their neighborhoods.

Mr. Belote introduced Mr. Tim Griesse, who works as our Parks Warehouse Manager and as an announcer at Springfield Lasers home matches. Mr. Griesse also coordinates volunteer groups who offer to perform general maintenance and landscaping tasks in our neighborhood parks for community service projects such as United Way's Day of Caring events or Eagle Scout badge projects. Over the last four years, he has coordinated various projects at 25 different parks with over 450 volunteers. Projects include painting benches or fences, cleaning out garden beds, replacing safety chips in playgrounds, trimming trees and overgrown brush, and assembling back boards for tennis courts. Mr. Belote stated that we appreciate all of the volunteer groups who have taken time to give back to their community by performing a variety of tasks in our neighborhood parks.

Mr. Belote stated that we also look forward to the completion of the HUD funded projects as these projects will make a dramatic impact in our parks. We were fortunate that we were able to identify park projects that qualified for HUD funding and could be completed within the stringent timeline. Although we set aside funds each year to try and address the most critical issues within our parks, many identified projects go unmet.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director, mentioned that the Neighborhood Works program is designed to provide \$500,000 each year for the next three years for approved neighborhood projects. A variety of projects were identified by the neighborhood associations reflecting their priorities, and include new or upgraded electrical service, lighting improvements, a picnic shelter, picnic tables and park benches, basketball and tennis court improvements, and a restroom renovation. Several of these projects have been on our own needs list for some time, so we appreciate the opportunity to address these important issues.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Food and Beverage Committee On behalf of the Food and Beverage Committee, Mr. Belote mentioned that the Committee met on October 25 to carefully review the Park Board's proposal in detail. The Deputy City Manager and two City Council members attended the meeting to provide input and discussion about what information and materials should be included in our proposal as we continue to move it forward. A tentative schedule of when the proposal would need to be prepared and submitted for consideration of the Community Involvement Committee and City Council was discussed. The Committee also discussed at length an implementation timeline should the City Code be amended and our proposal were to be approved.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney mentioned that the Parks Administration building roof repair and air-conditioning unit replacement project is currently underway. The landfill report is down approximately 10 percent from the month of September.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations

Mr. Mitchell stated that the State of Missouri has a new accounting reporting system, so some of the tax revenue reports have been delayed. Our revenues-to-date are down compared to last year due mostly to a decrease in sales tax revenue, but also because of a timing difference related to when we record our property mil tax revenue. The mil tax revenue is typically recorded in the months of January and February. Fees and charges for the year are up compared to last year.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation

Ms. McGrath stated that Cooper Tennis Complex staff hosted the Missouri State High School Activities Association Girls Tennis Championship, with 32 teams participating, on October 12-14. Two local high school teams competed and both finished fourth in their respective classes. Two local athletes also placed 5th in the singles competition. Ms. McGrath mentioned that Dan Kinney Family Center staff hosted three biking events that included a bike safety program, a Stroll-a-Thon sponsored by Parents as Teachers, and a clinic to offer modified bicycles for disabled youth. With the help of an experienced professional who modifies bicycles and the MSU Physical Therapy doctoral students, they worked to customize the bikes making them assessible for participants who wanted to learn how to ride a bike. Turkey Trot registration is well underway, but there is still time to register. Participants are encouraged to bring five canned items to the event.

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

Mr. Cumley mentioned that the annual Athlete of the Year reception was well-attended and a great event for the local athletes and their families. We also had the opportunity to thank Ms. Linda Dollar, who was our first CODP Director that recently retired. With Ms. Dollar's retirement, we also welcomed Ms. Lori Endicott-Vandersnick, an Olympic athlete and medalist, who is now the new CODP Director. Ms. Vandersnick will also remain the CODP Volleyball Coach. The annual Mayor's Tree Lighting ceremony will take place on Saturday, November 18 in Park Central Square.

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities

Mr. Belote thanked the Special Facilities staff for hosting our Employee Appreciation Picnic last month. Mr. Coats stated that we welcomed over 38,000 visitors to Harvest Fest at Rutledge-Wilson Farm, and we sold more than 13,000 pumpkins. We also had nearly 7,400 elementary students who participated in educational programs at the Farm during Harvest Fest. At Lake Springfield, the Master Naturalist volunteers planted 200 milkweed plants to help improve the monarch butterfly population.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator

Ms. Edwards mentioned that Ms. Diana Tyndall, Marketing Coordinator, has been working on rebranding the logo for the Park Board Youth Scholarship Fund. Ms. Brittany Bywater, graphic assistant, is working on a kiosk for the new Trail of Honor. Ms. Edwards assisted with the Halloween Trunk or Treat event with the Springfield Fire Department. It was a great success with over 3,000 participants who enjoyed food, games, and activities.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director

Ms. Reser provided an update about the Software Task Force committee. Several software demonstrations are scheduled over the next few weeks.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park stated that Park Operations staff has been working on winterization tasks such as adjusting the park light timers and turning off water in several park locations. A new half-mile 10-foot-wide concrete trail section of the Fulbright Trail leading east from the David C. Murray Trailhead is being constructed with plans to be completed by the end of the year.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker stated that some of the animals have been moved inside or are off-exhibit due to the colder temperatures. The Zoo remains open, however, throughout the winter. A Celebration of Life event for Henry the Hippo, who recently passed away while on exhibit at the Cincinnati Zoo, will be held on Sunday, November 11, at Dickerson Park Zoo. Henry was a resident of our zoo for more than 30 years and was considered one of our most popular animals of all time.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher stated that the process for selecting a new golf point-of-sale system is nearly complete. We are working with Tee-Snap to finalize the details and begin data migration, with plans to go live with the new software on February 1. The Park Rangers Division welcomed a new Park Ranger, Kevin Sweckard. Mr. Fisher reported that seven park employee positions were filled in October. Mr. Fisher stated that retired or current Veterans can golf for free at the Park Board golf courses on Saturday, November 11. A golf flyer with information about the upcoming golf sale was distributed. The golf sale takes place on November 30 through December 2.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote stated that we received a unique proposal from Ozark Greenways to reformat a trailhead kiosk modification in honor of Terry Whaley's retirement after 22 years as Director of Ozark Greenways. Mr. Belote stated that our staff was supportive of the proposal. Mr. Belote also mentioned the recent retirement of Mr. Kevin Gipson, Springfield-Greene County Health Department, who is retiring after 13 years as Director and 24 years with the City. Mr. Gipson has been a collaborative partner and supportive of InBalance initiatives, community gardens, and park programs and opportunities.

Mr. Belote mentioned that we recently held a Parks Employee Department Wide Staff meeting, which allowed us a chance to share our budget, the latest park projects and initiatives, and recognize park employee service milestones and retirements. Our Parks Department also had another record-setting year with over \$14,300 in United Way pledge donations, making this the fifth year in a row that park employees have collectively pledged in excess of \$10,000 towards the campaign. Mr. Belote stated that he is proud of how park employees have given back to their community and appreciated the efforts made by Ms. Karen Mellinger to coordinate the campaign on behalf of Parks.

VII. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair 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 next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 8, 2017, at 8:30 am, at the Park Administrative Offices. We will host a Parks Department Holiday Luncheon, Wednesday, December 13, 2017, at Northview Center. Park Board members are invited to join us.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Sidney Needem made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes. Motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.