

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, April 13, 2018
Northview Center
301 E Talmage, Springfield, Missouri**

I. ROLL CALL

Dr. Sarah McCallister, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:36 am.

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

Members Absent: Scott Bailes, Matt Bailey, Carolyn Gerdes, Bob Horton

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

Guests: Gail Mitchell, Betty Maples and Peggy Mahan

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2018, Park Board Meeting; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. DOLING PARK HISTORY PROJECT & INVITATION TO DOLING HISTORY MUSEUM

Ms. Sheri Davis, Northview Center Coordinator, provided an overview of the Center's programs and activities conducted through the Accessible Recreation Program and Senior Program. The Accessible Recreation Program was primarily geared towards adults with disabilities, but more youth activities have recently been added. The Miracle League program started with just 13 participants in 2011, and now there are 213 participants registered to play this spring season. Doling Park now offers the Doling History Museum, which opened in 2006. It was constructed near the site of the old skating rink and designed to record and preserve the history of the park. Several museum volunteers, specifically, Betty Maples and Gail Mitchell, have strong ties and timeless stories about growing up in Doling Park. They remembered the skating rink, the amusement park, school and company picnics, so they decided to write a book to capture those memories for generations to enjoy. Many citizens in the community have donated items to the museum and shared stories and information for the book. Peggy Mahan, who has worked at the museum since it opened, works with volunteers to coordinate family-oriented events and activities at the museum. Ms. Mahan shared information about upcoming events to be held in conjunction with the museum such as a museum anniversary celebration and a car show.

IV. 2017 PARK BOARD VOLUNTEER REPORT

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath stated that each year we celebrate Volunteer Week in April. 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 Park Association. This program includes a recruitment, screening, and identification process for general park safety purposes.

During 2017, our volunteers reported 80,539 hours throughout the park system. The Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center recorded over 15,000 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 over 20,000 hours from volunteers. Although the overall volunteer hours are down slightly for the department, we saw large increases in the number of volunteer hours with Miracle League (124 percent) and School-Park (41 percent). Based upon a coalition of non-profits, foundations and corporate giving programs, the national valuation of a volunteer hour in 2016 was \$24.14 and in Missouri that value is \$21.57. With 80,539 recorded hours from our volunteers in 2017, this equates to nearly \$1.74 million dollars of donated labor back to the park system. Another way to convey this information is that it would require more than 43 additional full-time staff members to work this many hours on behalf of the department.

V. COMMITTEE REPORT

a. Nominating Committee Update Mr. Belote stated that the Nominating Committee, consisting of Michele Risdal-Barnes, Chair, Sarah McCallister and Bob Horton, along with himself, recently conducted several interviews to replace two county representatives. The Committee selected two representatives and submitted their recommendations to the Greene County Commission. Once we receive an affirmative response from the Commission, we will move forward with the next step of the process.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney mentioned that the wet saturated soils presented a few challenges for outside maintenance projects. The fluctuation of temperatures required crews to de-winterize restrooms and fountains, and then, re-winterize these areas again due to freezing temperatures. Golf maintenance crews are preparing courses for spring play and the upcoming tournament season.

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Coats reported that we welcomed three new baby goats at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park. The Recreation and Special Facilities staff hosted Easter at the Farm and over 900 children attended the event. The grant project to remove invasive species at Lake Springfield Park has begun. Local author and photographer, Matt Miles, delivered copies of his book, "Missouri Wild and Wonderful", for purchase at the Boathouse. The Horseshoe Class 1 and 2 are filled at Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center. All 28 horses received their annual wellness check and are in good health.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CODP Programs Mr. Cumley stated that the MSU Ice Bears made the Division 1 playoffs for the first time, as did the Springfield Express Team. Three of the Springfield Youth Hockey Association teams won their State championship division. Staff built a new pergola from existing materials at the Davis House, where we recently hosted our first wedding at the venue.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards mentioned that a recent ribbon-cutting was held at the Fulbright Springs Greenway Trail. Ms. Diana Tyndall, Marketing and Sponsorship Coordinator, worked with our graphics team and supervisors to develop a new birthday party brochure, which is also available online. Brittney Bywater, our Graphics Assistant, is working on a new sign for Cruse Dog Park in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the park. Ms. Edwards mentioned that 37 percent of our referrals come from Facebook.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations Mr. Mitchell reported that sales tax revenues continue to increase compared to this time last year. Although our Recreation revenues are up, especially in the SPARC and Concessions divisions, the weather has presented challenges for zoo revenues and the Golf Fund.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation Ms. McGrath mentioned that during Springfield Public Schools Spring Break week, our staff hosted over 1,100 children in Schools Out camp programs. The National Christian Home School Basketball Championships were held in Springfield for the 10th consecutive year, with over 350 teams participating. The games were played in 23 gyms, including three of the Park Board's gymnasiums. For 16 years, our Park Board Scholarship Fund has been a recipient of the Price Cutter Championships fund-raising efforts, due to our tournament participation and supplying volunteers for the event. The PCCC also has a grant program for tournament participating agencies, and this year they awarded over \$76,000 in total. Twenty-two grants were approved, including our SPARC division, that received a grant to help fund an after-school program at Williams Elementary. Ms. McGrath mentioned that the Senior Games brochure was recently redesigned in time for this year's competition. On April 28, we will host World Tai Chi Day and Bark in the Park in the Phelps Grove Park area.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser mentioned that the Software Task Force is reviewing the operational efficiency of our facility rental process, along with what part of the process can be provided online. We will test the online process on smaller room rentals this summer, and the Task Force hopes to provide more online opportunities in the fall. The City's Information Systems Department has found that the addition of the guest network passwords has helped to stabilize the bandwidth for employees who work inside City facilities.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park provided an update about the HUD-funded projects, specifically that the restroom project in Tom Watkins Park is nearly completed and playground concrete work is scheduled to begin soon. Playground equipment installation has begun at Meador and Nichols Parks. Mr. Park mentioned that the next round of Neighborhood Works applications has been submitted, and the project review process is underway. Mr. Park thanked Greene County and Ozark Greenways for their local match to complete the new section of the Fulbright Spring Greenway. Ozark Greenways is continuing to raise money to take the trail

to Lost Hill Park and connect to Truman School. Public Works will be making some bridge repairs near the driveway of Cruse Dog Park, but the Dog Park will remain open.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher mentioned that the new interior furniture for Rivercut Golf course has been delivered and installed. The new food and beverage equipment has also been delivered to all three golf courses. The Masters Kick-Off Customer Appreciation event was a great success with nearly 200 attendees. The Park Rangers were recently honored with the Park Law Enforcement Association's Platinum Excellence Award. We will highlight our Rangers Division at the May Park Board meeting.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker mentioned that remodeling of the spider monkey exhibit continues, and the remodeling of the tortoise exhibits has begun. Friends of the Zoo was one of 20 organizations selected by the Community Foundation of the Ozarks to participate in an online fundraising drive.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote thanked Parks Caretaker, Roger McCormack, for his extra efforts in preparing Phelps Grove Park for the Victim's Memorial Observation. Mr. Belote shared an article about bicycling contributing \$137 million in economic benefits to Northwest Arkansas. We hope to continue assisting Ozark Greenways in expanding trail use, and possibly bring new activities to our community such as more cycling and mountain bike opportunities. Mr. Belote will be speaking at the Public Policy forum at the Springfield Chamber of Commerce in late April, in which he will highlight what projects and activities we are doing even with limited funding, but while also emphasizing the need for a long-term sustainable funding source. Mr. Belote will provide an update on Founders Park at the City Council luncheon on May 1. We have made several safety-oriented improvements at the park to make it a much safer park using a combination of funds provided by City Council and our own operating budget. This season of Miracle League begins next week with games on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Mr. Sidney Needem, Park Board Member, thanked the staff who helped prepare Silver Springs Park for an Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by several local churches.

VII. CHAIR'S REPORT

Dr. Sarah McCallister, Chair, presented Mr. John Price a plaque, and thanked him for his expertise and leadership during his tenure on the Park Board. Mr. Belote stated that he appreciated Mr. Price's and Mr. Bailey's extended service on the Board to help oversee the Food and Beverage initiative, which was successfully adopted by the Park Board and City Council unanimously. Mr. Price stated that he found the Park Board staff to be very dedicated and motivated for a wonderful community purpose. He stated that he felt lucky to be a part of the Board, and it was a pleasure to serve. (Mr. Matt Bailey was not in attendance to receive his plaque.)

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

X. CALENDAR

The next regular scheduled Park Board meeting is Friday, May 11, 2018, at the Park Board Administrative Offices.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Dee King made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. The motion was passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m.