

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, May 11, 2018
Park Board Administrative Offices
1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

Dr. Sarah McCallister, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 am, and welcomed new Park Board Members, Tammy Mast and Mike Chiles.

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Mike Chiles, Carolyn Gerdes, Tammy Mast, Sarah McCallister, Sidney Needem, Michele Risdal-Barnes

Members Absent: Bob Horton, Dee King

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Sidney Needem made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2018, Park Board Meeting and the April 13, 2018, Closed Minutes as distributed; seconded by Mr. Scott Bailes. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. NATIONAL AWARD TO PARK RANGER DIVISION AND RANGER DIVISION UPDATE

Mr. Kevin Holle, Park Ranger Administrator, reviewed the selection criteria for the Platinum Excellence Award that our Park Ranger Division recently received from the National Park Law Enforcement Association. The first area is Sustainability, and Mr. Holle explained that we currently have 7 full-time, commissioned park rangers, with two overlapping shifts. Many park agencies have part-time employees or volunteers to manage their park sites. The second area is Crime Reduction, and Mr. Holle stated that we have detailed cash pick-up and deposit procedures in place, which is one example of how we keep our crime rate within Parks to a minimum. The third criterion is Collaborate with Other Agencies, which Mr. Holle mentioned is something we do especially well with the Springfield Police Department and the Greene County Sheriff's Office. Our Park Rangers work a significant number of special events and help the SPD and GCO on larger cases that take place within parks. The fourth area is Accountability to Taxpayers, and Mr. Holle stated that we minimize the overlap of law enforcement services and the great majority of incidents that occur in parks are handled by our park rangers. The fifth criterion is History/Track Record, and Mr. Holle stated that he appreciates the support of the Park Board in obtaining appropriate body cameras and computer equipment for their ranger vehicles. Using the same regional reporting system as other Greene County agencies helps to provide better communication about crime information updates.

Mr. Holle provided a brief history of the establishment of the Park Ranger Division, including the fact that in the beginning, Rangers did not have any credentials to enforce the park rules or city laws. With the dedicated efforts of former Park Ranger Administrator, Matt Coats, and current Park Supervisor, David Moore, they built the division as a law enforcement agency, with the rangers being city employees, commissioned under Greene County. Through long-term problem-solving situations, working with neighborhood groups, and being visible at special events, the Rangers are now considered Ambassadors of our Park system, who work to alleviate problems and nuisances in our parks and facilities. Mr. Holle introduced the Park Rangers in attendance, sharing their previous work experience, and indicated that collectively our Park Rangers Division has 164 years of law enforcement experience.

Dr. Sarah McCallister, Chair, stated that before we continue with the meeting, she wanted to mention that the Springfield-Greene County Park Board lost an important friend and benefactor, Mr. Harry Cooper, who passed away April 22nd, at the age of 91.

Mr. Cooper was the primary donor and namesake of the 100-acre Cooper Park, established in 1983. Because of his vision and ongoing support, the Park Board was able to develop Cooper Tennis Complex, Lake Country Soccer, and Killian Sports Complex, as well as the ball fields, soccer fields, and neighborhood park amenities all found within Cooper Park. He also purchased the Springfield Lasers Professional Tennis Team for the Park Board in 1996. Mr. Cooper loved nothing more than seeing Cooper Park full of families and kids having fun. He always emphasized that enjoying sports and having a good time is more important than winning. The Cooper Family continues to be foremost in our thoughts and prayers.

Please join us in a moment of silence remembering Mr. Harry Cooper and his legacy of supporting parks, families, and sports in our Springfield community. (A moment of silence was observed on Mr. Cooper's behalf).

IV. FOOD AND BEVERAGE FEE RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD

Mr. Jim Fisher stated that our Food and Beverage Staff Committee has reviewed locally and nationally the cost of alcohol permit fees for private events. Currently, we have a \$250.00 Special Event Permit Fee, and the Staff Committee has proposed to include an additional \$250.00 fee for events in which alcohol will be served. The Staff Committee is working to streamline the process for patrons including limiting the variation of prices for this new option. We are also working on the application process, including providing the event with alcohol permit application online. At the Park Board meeting in June, the Staff Committee will bring forward an updated policy and procedure manual for Board approval. Several Board members commented that they thought the \$250.00 alcohol permit fee was considerably low. Mr. Fisher did explain that a patron will also need to purchase additional insurance and hire commissioned law enforcement for a private event serving alcohol, where as private venues already have these cost items added into their rental fees. Ms. Carolyn Gerdes made a motion to approve the creation of an alcohol permit fee in the amount of \$250.00 per event; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. The motion passed unanimously.

V. COMMITTEE REPORT

- a. Nominating Committee Report – Recommendation to CCDC Group** Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes, Chair, Nominating Committee, stated that bio information about our two newest Board Members, Tammy Mast and Mike Chiles, was included in their packets. Also provided in the packet was information regarding selecting a Park Board representative to serve on the Center City Development Corporation group (CCDC). This is not a new group, but rather a group of organizational representatives and business leaders that worked with the City to help oversee the redevelopment of the downtown area and Jordan Valley Park nearly 18 years ago. While they have not been active in recent years, the City would like to reconvene the group to review developments associated with the John Q. Hammons bankruptcy case, and its implications for the Hammons Field facility. Our Nominating Committee would like to nominate Scott Bailes to serve in this role on our behalf. Scott's extensive background will serve the group very well. Ms. Carolyn Gerdes made a motion to recommend Board member, Scott Bailes, to the Springfield City Council for the purposes of serving as the Park Board's liaison to the Center City Development Corporation group; seconded by Ms. Michele Risdal Barnes. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Matt Coats mentioned with the migrating of birds near Lake Springfield Park, there have been a lot of photographers capturing great pictures. Over 250 native plants have been planted in Lake Springfield Park as part of the Community Conservation Grant project. Canoe, kayak and paddle board season opened April 1, and we had 123 watercraft rentals in one weekend. Mr. Coats mentioned that patrons may also bring their own canoe and launch from the ramp. At Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park, staff welcomed 1,601 children from school field trips to learn more about the farm. Staff is conducting over 90 instructional lessons per week at Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center. The maintenance staff poured a new concrete sidewalk at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation Ms. McGrath mentioned that Lake Country Soccer will host a tournament this month with 600 teams participating. Cooper Tennis hosted the Missouri Valley Conference Championship, in which Missouri State University won the tournament and advanced to the NCAA Championship tournament. At Killian Softball Stadium, the Missouri State Women's Softball Team celebrated senior weekend and won all three games. Last month in conjunction with Volunteer Month, we recognized our volunteers at Northview Center at a special luncheon to celebrate the 15,000 annual hours of service they provide. We have over 200 buddies this year for the 213 Miracle League participants. On April 30, the Springfield Cardinals visited our Miracle League participants for pictures and autographs. Ms. McGrath mentioned that patrons booking pool birthday parties at our family centers may now schedule a mermaid character to appear at the party.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney mentioned that the Botanical Center celebrated Arbor Day by showing the movie, Lorax, in the new Peace for People Pavilion. The event was sponsored by Tree City USA. Mr. Carney stated that the Park Safety Board, comprised of administrators, will begin meeting quarterly. We will also have a Safety Committee that includes our front-line staff members.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards stated that the City of Springfield's Environmental Services department has constructed floating wetlands, using empty plastic bottles, to help remove and maintain the algae growth at Sequiota Lake. Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director, explained more about the floating wetlands and how they remove the algae growth over time. It may take several seasons before we will notice much improvement. This type of project is a first for us, but it has been successful in other communities. Ms. Edwards mentioned that the launching of the wetlands was covered by several news stations and media platforms. Ms. Diana Tyndall, Marketing and Sponsorship Coordinator, made a video promoting Bike Week for Ozark Greenways and conducted a special interview on brand marketing for the Springfield Business Journal. At Artsfest, we revealed the renovated Parks Show Wagon in which Ms. Tyndall coordinated the new look. Brittney Bywater, our Graphic Designer, just completed the summer Park Bench brochure and the Summer Aquatics Guide, which are both available in print and online.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CODP Programs Mr. Cumley mentioned that two of the Youth Hockey league teams won their division State Championship. The Jordan Valley Park landscaping staff have been mulching and cleaning flower beds within the park. Founders Park now features colored lights in the fountain area and the lower pool area has been removed. Mr. Cumley mentioned that Mediacom Ice Park will host the Women's Hockey Show, with 4-5 teams from all over the country, on October 25-27, 2018.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations Mr. Mitchell mentioned that the cold temperatures in April impacted our Zoo and Golf revenues, as they both remain down compared to last year. Overall sales tax revenues remain strong and are up over last year. Additionally, the Recreation revenues are up over the prior year due to revenue increases in the areas of Youth Sports, Family Centers and School-Park. Mr. Mitchell explained that our current revenues are significantly less than total expenditures due to the timing and recognition of some of our revenues in the financial statements. For example, most of our parks property mil tax revenue is not reflected in our accounting records until June.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park stated that in celebration of "Community Gardens Day", the Botanical Center was hosting a free concert on May 11 at the Peace through People Pavilion featuring Melinda Mullens. Additionally, staff will host "Romance in the Garden" May 11 and 12, featuring music and lanterns throughout the Mizumoto Stroll Garden. The Butterfly House opens this weekend, as well. Mr. Park mentioned that he, Bob Belote, Parks Director, and Dennis McMann, Parks Senior Planner, have been working with Nick Nelson, Springfield Art Museum Director, on a master plan that has implications for Phelps Grove Park and the Perry Tennis Courts. Mr. Park appreciated the opportunity for Parks to be involved with the planning process, and stated that the Art Museum Board has invited the Park Board to attend a special meeting to review the master plan. The meeting will be Monday, May 21, 2018, at 5 pm. Mr. Park provided an update of HUD-funded projects at Tom Watkins Park, Nichols Park, and Meador Park. The contractor work is progressing replacing the bridges at Rivercut Golf Course.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker stated that moms receive free admission to Dickerson Park Zoo on Mother's Day. "Art Gone Wild" featuring endangered species education

and activities will be held on May 19. A male giraffe was born at the Zoo and is doing well. A lemur was also born at our zoo for the first time. We now have a swift fox on exhibit, which is a new species at the zoo. The social media fund-raiser, Chillin' at the Zoo, successfully raised the \$10,000 needed to purchase an ultra-low freezer to store biological samples.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director The Software Task Force continues to review the online reservation process, along with reconfiguring the point-of-sale system through Active. We plan to offer an online application process for birthday parties, meeting rooms, and pavilion rentals beginning mid-summer, and then, offer more online opportunities in the fall.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher stated that the three golf courses have begun selling alcohol, which has been well-received by the golf patrons. We have had no reported issues or incidents. All food and beverage equipment has been delivered and most of it has been installed, as well. Mr. Fisher reported that two key positions in the Special Facilities division have been successfully reclassified.

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 Park Board is invited to attend the Art Museum Board meeting on Monday, May 21, 2018, at 5 pm, at the Art Museum. The next regularly scheduled Park Board Meeting is Friday, June 8, 2018, at 8:30 am, at the Park Board Administrative Offices.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Scott Bailes. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 am.