

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, September 14, 2018
Park Board Administrative Offices
1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri**

I. ROLL CALL

Carolyn Gerdes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:32 am.

Members Present: Randy Blackwood, Mike Chiles, Carolyn Gerdes, Dee King, Sidney Needem, Michele Risdal-Barnes

Members Absent: Scott Bailes, Bob Horton, Tammy Mast

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2018, Park Board Meeting as distributed; seconded by Mr. Mike Chiles. Motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, welcomed Ms. Carolyn Gerdes and Mr. Sidney Needem in their new roles as Chair and Vice Chair. He also introduced Mr. Randy Blackwood, our newly added Board Member. Mr. Blackwood's application was included in Board members' packets for review.

III. NEIGHBORHOOD WORKS PROGRAM UPDATE

Mr. Belote stated that the City's Neighborhood Works Program has had a significant impact on our neighborhood park revitalization efforts. During the past three years, there have been 16 funded projects at 11 park sites. Most recently, a ribbon cutting was held for a new pavilion at LA Wise/Bissett School-Park site. The second phase will include a basketball sport court, a trail connection to the school, picnic tables, BBQ grills, and soccer field markings. Mr. Miles Park stated that we have received great participation from the neighborhoods, which signifies how important parks are in our community. We appreciate the Neighborhood Advisory Council that reviews, scores, and makes recommendations to the City Manager's office on which proposals to fund. The level of financial support that our neighborhood parks has received in two years from this program represents a decade of funding through our normal budgeting process. We have not had a separate capital funding source since the sunset of the 2006 parks sales tax. Mr. Belote explained that since our centennial in 2013, we have tried to set aside \$100,000 each budget cycle for neighborhood park restoration projects. The Neighborhood Works Program has sped up this process and completed priority projects that were important to the

neighborhood associations. Mr. Belote also thanked Mr. Park for his considerable work as the program manager for each of the funded projects.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Belote stated that on behalf of the Park Board Nominating Committee, we have received a resignation letter from Board Member Bob Horton. Mr. Horton resigned due to scheduling conflicts with the Park Board meeting schedule. Mr. Belote mentioned that since the Nominating Committee just completed the candidate interview process, in which Mr. Blackwood was selected, we are fortunate to have another excellent candidate to recommend to the City Manager's office. The Committee's recommendation will move forward, and we are hopeful the individual can join the Board at the November meeting.

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards mentioned that the latest publication of the Park Bench was distributed to the Park Board members. Ms. Diana Tyndall, Marketing and Sponsorship Coordinator, has been working with the Special Events staff on the upcoming Dogfest event. Ms. Tyndall introduced, Sarah Sabo, a recent public relations and marketing Missouri State graduate, who is working part-time to assist with sponsored events and securing vendors for future events.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney mentioned that weather was a factor in August, with extreme heat to wet and chilly days, which affected the grass growth, specifically goose grass. It is rampant in this region and difficult to control. Mr. Carney stated that Park Operations staff worked on various maintenance projects in anticipation of the six Neighborhood Night Out events that took place in August, with two more scheduled in September.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation Ms. McGrath mentioned that the Family Center staff hosted the 16th Annual Kid'Athlon for 5-12 year-olds at Meador Park. The 90 participants competed in swimming, biking, and running events of various lengths depending upon their age group. The seventh season of the Miracle League is underway with 184 participants. This three-night a week league for youth and adults started with just 12 participants in the first season. We appreciate the community's support to serve as Buddies for the players. The 24th annual Turkey Trot will honor one of its founders, Monty Montgomery, who passed away in August. Mr. Montgomery and Gene Moulner, along with several individuals from Development Center of the Ozarks, began the race concept with just over 100 participants. Last year, we had over 8,000 registered participants. We appreciate the commitment, dedication, and support that Mr. Montgomery provided each year for the Turkey Trot including providing course marshals for the event. Mr. Montgomery was also an avid runner and biker and active supporter of Ozark Greenways. His presence and passion will be missed.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations Mr. Mitchell reported that sales tax revenue is up, which will offset some of our areas where revenue is down. The weather helped to increase golf revenue in July and August more than projected. The City Finance

Department is finalizing their end of the year reporting, and our Business Operations is assisting with the process as needed.

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Coats reported that staff is making preparations for Harvest Fest at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park, which includes hiring over 50 part-time staff to assist with the event. The Farm Park will begin selling mums on Friday, September 21. Last year, the 300 mums that were for sale sold in 45 minutes. This year, we have 500 mums to sell. With the planting of over 200 milkweed plants, there have been hundreds of butterflies at Lake Springfield Park. Photographers have been at the park taking photos of the caterpillar to butterfly process. Mr. Coats stated that Lake Springfield staff hosted their first private rental with alcohol, which went smoothly. The Special Facilities Division now has a barn to store hay and keep it dry. We received a donation of a horse, Thea, to work with children at Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CODP Programs Mr. Cumley mentioned that Missouri State Ice Hockey had an exhibition game last weekend, which included beer sales for the first time at the Ice Park since 2001. The new beverage option was well received by patrons, and there were no reported incidents. On February 2, 2019, there will be an ice hockey game between the Police and Fire Departments, with all proceeds benefitting the Greene County 100 Club, which provides immediate financial assistance to surviving families of fallen law enforcement officers. Our CODP Archery Coach, Amy Francka, was successful in securing three State Archery Championship Tournaments in 2019.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher thanked the Park Rangers staff for assisting Greene County with covering shifts this week after the death of one their deputies, Mr. Aaron Roberts. Park Ranger Administrator, Kevin Holle, has been coordinating the off-duty officers working at the Ice Park during scheduled hockey games. Mr. Fisher reported that Mr. Robert Uckele, Concessions and Catering Administrator, oversaw the alcohol sales during Lasers season without incident and will do the same at the Ice Park. Mr. Fisher stated that for this first year we are featuring products from both beer distributors in Springfield. We will then review beverage sales and determine how to best proceed in the future. Mr. Fisher mentioned that golf rounds are down nationally because it is becoming more difficult to obtain new golfers to start playing the sport. We provide a good value for golf, and we believe that the enhanced beverage options are keeping our golf round numbers more consistent. The golf market is focusing on families and junior players.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker reported that the remodeling project of the spider monkey exhibit is completed, and the animals are enjoying their new home, which includes artificial rocks and trees that were constructed by Zoo staff. Staff also rebuilt the zebra viewing exhibit after a severe storm in July damaged the structure. The first "Brew at the Zoo" event was held after-hours on September 8. Over 450 guests attended the event. The Zoo will host a dedication of the new Media Center, which was made possible through a Titus Foundation grant. The new Media Center will allow staff to conduct distance learning programs anywhere in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park reported the number of guests visiting the Japanese Fall Festival on September 7-9 were down due to inclement weather, but the

performers were entertaining to the guests who attended. The Gray/Campbell Farmstead will host the 27th Annual Lifestyle Expo at Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park on September 14-16. Volunteers will be dressed in period costumes and providing demonstrations of making apple butter, candles, and sewing. The event is free, but donations are welcomed. Mr. Belote thanked Mr. Park for his coordination in completing the north road project within the park.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser mentioned that the City's Information Systems Department is still working to fully restore the computer system, but the remaining restoration process is proving to be more difficult to resolve. Ms. Reser reported that Lake Country Soccer has purchased a new registration software program, and they have been assisting the soccer patrons with the new program.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote mentioned that staff is working with Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Sports Commission in preparing the Missouri State High School Athletic Association (MSHSAA) bid documents for the State Championships in soccer, softball, and golf. Our MSHSAA agreement was renewed for an additional four years for the Tennis State Championships. These championship events significantly impact our community's economy and provide helpful data in preparing our next Parks Economic Impact Study. Mr. Belote mentioned that the City of Springfield is conducting a Transportation and Capital Improvement Survey and provided a copy for the Board's review. Mr. Belote invited the Board Members to attend our Annual Employee Appreciation Picnic, at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park, on October 13. Staff and their families are treated to a catered BBQ meal and a chance to enjoy all the Farm Park amenities during Harvest Fest event. Mr. Belote mentioned that Senior Park Planner, Dennis McMan, will retire on September 28 after nearly 10 years of service. Mr. McMan moved to Springfield after retiring from a distinguished career with the Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department. We appreciate the projects that Mr. McMan worked on with Parks, Ozark Greenways, the Art Museum, and many others. His retirement reception is from 2-4 pm, on September 28, at the Botanical Center.

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes reported that she appreciated the work of the volunteers and the Park Board staff who assisted with the Japanese Fall Festival event. Each year the festival organizers provide entertaining performers and crafters to a diverse crowd. Ms. Gerdes mentioned that the Park Board will receive half of the gate proceeds from the event, which will be presented to the Board at a future meeting.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss

IX. CALENDAR

The next Park Board Meeting will be Friday, October 12, 2018, at 8:30 am. We will meet at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes made a motion to close this session and move into Closed Session; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.