MINUTES
BUDGET MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Thursday, January 31, 2019
Park Board Administrative Offices
1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm.

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Mike Chiles, Carolyn Gerdes, Dee King, Cynthia Lipscomb, Tammy Mast, Sidney Needem

Members Absent: Randy Blackwood, Michele Risdal-Barnes

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

II. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED FY 2019-2020 BUDGET

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, stated that the goal for the workshop is to present the proposed FY 2019-20 Parks Budget document, including proposed fees and charges, Funded and Unfunded Items, along with additional documents that make our budget easy to discuss, review, and understand. We will also review the budgetary impact of the new minimum wage laws, and the affect this will have on the current and future budget cycles. After approval and any suggestions from tonight's meeting, the budget document would then be presented and formally recommend to the Board at the next Park Board meeting on February 8.

Mr. Belote stated that the FY 2019-20 Budget Proposal focuses upon several areas of special emphasis. Some of these priorities are the same as last year, but we also included new items such as conducting a full Economic Impact Study of our Parks and Trails System. Mr. Belote reviewed the priorities in brief detail which includes identifying a long-term capital funding source, greenway trail development, continued emphasis on sports tourism, neighborhood park restoration, park safety and security, address critical staff issues, assessment of food and beverage options, golf division planning efforts, and continued collaborations and partnerships wherever possible.

Organization Chart Mr. Belote stated that the organizational chart remains the same including several areas of administrative responsibility that still need to be addressed. At the Board's request, we updated the current chart identifying administrative staff in the appropriate positions.

DEPARTMENTAL FUNDED PRIORITIES

Mr. Belote reviewed the department funded priorities and where they will be funded within our budget accounts. He reminded the Board that we receive no City General Fund allocation and

no revenue from Greene County. Mr. Belote stated that during the budget process, it is always a challenge to keep our fees and charges reasonable and offer a good value to our patrons, while still recovering a majority of our costs to do business.

Expenditures Summary Mr. Belote stated that we have minimal debt service and our personnel services are at the low-end of the industry standards. We hope to review our transfers back to the City with the City Manager's Office in the very near future.

Mr. Belote mentioned that we were able to address one of our budget priorities due to the financial support of the John Cooper Trust. We had budgeted $80,000 over two budget cycles to purchase the last parcel near the Hovey House. Mr. Cooper's Trust was able to provide the funding for this purchase, completing our Grant Beach/Weaver School-Park concept.

Mr. Belote mentioned that that City has a $4.8 million City Surplus this year. We have submitted several budgetary items for consideration of the City's distribution of those carry-over funds. One of those items is the replacement of the Jordan Valley Ice Park Cooling Tower at a cost of $450,000. Mr. Chiles mentioned that although we maintain Jordan Valley Ice Park, it is a City building, and he believes the City should provide maintenance funding and assistance with the replacement of this equipment.

Proposed Fees and Charges for FY 2019-2020 Mr. Belote stated that as in the past, we reviewed budget requests from our staff in the field, which are submitted to the appropriate Supervisor, Superintendent, and Assistant Director. Additionally, we try to be responsive to citizens' requests when possible. The changes in the proposed fees and charges are further supported through actual costs and market comparisons. Mr. Belote, along with appropriate staff, reviewed the fees and charges recommendations within the document, which include the following:

*We are proposing fees for the Archery JOAD Membership that are more in line with industry standards. Additional proposed items such as individual and small class options are the result of consumer requests.
*Patrons have requested rental rates for smaller parties at the Botanical Center, so we are proposing a rate for the roof plaza. We are also including complimentary passes to the Stroll Garden with a 4-hour rental of the Mizumoto Pavilion.
*We are including a more consistent cancellation policy at several of our facilities.
*At Cooper Tennis Complex, we request to expand the fee range of the private and semi-private lessons to accommodate high profile coaches who visit and conduct lessons on site. We are also moving the academy rates into tennis programs/lessons fees to accommodate a broader range of fees for a variety of activities.
* We are requesting an increase in the Cruse Dog Park registration fee, which is the first increase since the Park opened ten years ago. Recently, we have increased the number of amenities at the park, with future agility equipment planned to be added soon.
*We are proposing to increase to the adult, youth, and senior rates, along with the military rates, for Dickerson Park Zoo by $1.00 in each category to assist us with complying to governing regulations, licenses, and standards in the areas of animal welfare and their safety, facilities, and staffing requirements.
*We are requesting to minimally increase several entry level classes for ice skating and hockey to be more in line with industry standards.

*We are proposing to add a gazebo rental opportunity at Lake Springfield Park. Additionally, we are adding an updated cancellation policy for Lake Springfield Park activities.
*We are providing an updated fee, which is still within in the range, for extended trip camps in our Outdoor Initiatives Division.
*Currently, our swim team, private and semi-private lessons in our Aquatics division are considerably below market prices and do not cover all of our costs. Additionally, we request a minimal increase for birthday party rentals.
*We included the new alcohol permit fee in our fees and charges for the first time.
*A new late pick-up fee for parents of children in programs or camps is being proposed at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park.
*We are requesting an increase in fees, along with an increase in the proposed range, for SPARC programs. For camps, we are increasing the fee, but it is still within the proposed range.
*We are requesting a small increase for a daily helmet rental at the Skate Park to assist with the ability to purchase new helmets more frequently.
*We are requesting a slight increase in fees at the Bill and Payne Stewart Golf Course, which will assist in covering the additional costs we will incur due to the implementation of the new minimum wage law.

Ms. Lana Woolsey shared the importance of including a statement on our Fees and Charges schedule that recognizes the authority the Park Board gives to Administration to reduce the charge for a facility or location. Mr. Scott Bailes made the motion that the Park Board amend the proposed Fees and Charges by adding the following language at the bottom of the Fees and Charges Schedule: The Park Board has the authority and discretion to reduce the charge for any facility or location rental based upon a mutual benefit, direct or indirect, to or for the Park System, size of the group and/or the type of rental, including but not limited to rentals for not-for-profit and/or groups that support the Park Board mission, and may waive any or all of said rental fees, as determined by the Park Board or its designee; seconded by Mr. Mike Chiles. Motion passed, with two abstentions from Tammy Mast and Sidney Needem, due to their affiliations with non-profit organizations.

Funded Priorities with Proposed FY 2019-2020 Budget Mr. Belote reviewed the handout of the priorities that will be funded in the next budget cycle, which includes mandatory items such as funding parks portion of the City self-insurance plan, reimbursement payment to the City for internal services, funding for prospective cost of living, merit, and occupational series increases, annual funding to update department computer software licenses, and funding for the minimum wage increase. Additionally, we will provide funding for the Parks portion of our Department Safety Coordinator position and the operational cost for Timmons Hall. Other funded critical needs include our annual contribution to the Parks Reserve Fund, neighborhood park improvements including a new pavilion roof at Smith Park and a new Master Plan for Silver Springs Park, the planning and design of the Dickerson Park Zoo African Primate Exhibit, a shade structure for the Skate Park, replacement of ice skates at Jordan Valley Ice Park, taser batteries for Park Rangers, supplies and training resources for our Parks Safety Coordinator, and additional safety materials and equipment for Parks employees were presented. Items listed under capital equipment lease-purchase and personnel were discussed.

Unfunded Priorities with Proposed FY 2018-2019 Budget Mr. Belote mentioned the Unfunded Priorities handout, which lists items of critical need, efficiency or enhancement, capital equipment lease-purchase, and personnel that cannot be funded within our next budget

cycle. Most of the items on the list are to maintain the current facilities; they do not include future land acquisition or development or innovative programing options and best management practices. We do our best to maintain our facilities and programs at a high level, but it remains an ongoing challenge without a capital funding source. Mr. Belote asked for suggestions from the Board on what avenues staff should be pursuing at this time to address these needs. It was suggested by the Board to categorize the unfunded items to show the critical and non-critical items, along with deferred maintenance type of projects and those that have either City or Golf Fund implications.

Future Funding Memo In 2016, the Park Board held a special workshop to address future funding options and to review all available resources. That memo outlined short-term and long-term strategies and was distributed for the Board's review.

Debt Issuance Summary Overall, we have minimum debt for a park system of our size. Mr. Mitchell mentioned that we did include in our budget the Jordan Valley Park Cooling Tower and listed it on our debt service schedule if we have to finance it.

Impact of Minimum Wage Mr. Belote shared with the Board a summary of the impact the new Missouri Minimum Wage law will have on our budget. It will be imperative that we figure a long-term solution in the next 12-18 months to address the magnitude of how it will financially impact our budget. Mr. Belote stated that from January 2019 to June 2019, over $73,000 is needed to bring the salary of our temporary and seasonal workers to $8.60. Next year, it will cost $272,013. In 2021, the amount will be $534,976 to fund the minimum wage amount at $9.45. Once the minimum wage is at $12.00/hour in FY 24, the cost to our budget will be approximately $1.3 million dollars. Mr. Belote does not believe we can increase our fees and charges enough to cover these significant amounts without cutting services. Mr. Belote mentioned that we are appreciative of the financial support we will receive from the City Manager to cover the $73,000 needed for the current budget cycle. It was suggested by several Board members that we negotiate our payback amount to the City for internal services due to the significant impact the minimal wage law will have on our budget.

IBEW Contract Mr. Jim Fisher is our representative on the IBEW contract negotiation committee. If the contract proposal moves forward and is approved, there are serious budgetary concerns as we have 96 CTL level positions in Park Operations and the Golf Division that may be affected in the amount of $230,000 the first year, $250,000 and $254,000 in the second and third years. With the impact of the new minimum wage laws and the three-year labor contract, our budget could be impacted by more than one million dollars in the next three years.

Mr. Scott Bailes mentioned that perhaps we should review our policy about providing a minimal pay raise to returning seasonal and temporary employees. Mr. Belote stated we will also have to consider the impact of when seasonal and temporary employees are making $12.00/hour and how that will impact the salaries of our full-time employees. The dramatic impact of the new minimum wage law and the labor contract is a real issue that we will only be able to manage for a short time before we will have to increase fees and/or start diminishing services. Mr. Belote believes that is not what the public wants and not how we should move forward. Mr. Belote's recommendation is that the Board revisit the Future Funding Memo to see the items we have accomplished and develop new short-term and long-term strategies at an upcoming workshop.

Now is probably the best window of opportunity to formally discuss a future parks sales tax. The magnitude of a Parks sales tax is how we may be able to address deferred maintenance, the increase in personnel costs going up, the next phases of trail development or new facilities, or a land acquisition fund. To our Parks staff, these are all items we should be working towards as good stewards of the park system.

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes asked about the possibility of pursuing an increase in the property mil tax. Mr. Mitchell indicated that there has not been an increase in decades, and it would require approval of the City, which is not pursuing any additional or new tax increases at this time.

Ms. Jenny Edwards mentioned that it might be difficult to sponsor a ballot initiative in 2020 as it is a Presidential election year. Ms. Edwards also stated that Greene County determines ballot agendas and when they can take place.

Mr. Belote indicated that the suggestions are good topics for a future funding workshop. Hearing no objections, Ms. Carolyn Gerdes, Chair, suggested that the budget more forward for formal vote and recommendation at the next Park Board Meeting on Friday, February 8.

Ms. Dee King commented that she was impressed by the preparation work that goes into the budget document. It is prepared in a format that is easy to understand, but detailed information is also available to review.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Sidney Needem made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Scott Bailes. Motion was passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm.