

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, April 12, 2019
Park Board Administrative Offices
1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Randy Blackwood, Mike Chiles, Carolyn Gerdes, Dee King, Cynthia Lipscomb, Tammy Mast, Sidney Needem, Michele Risdal-Barnes

Members Absent: None

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes made a motion to approve the March 8, 2019, Park Board Minutes; seconded Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Randy Blackwood made a motion to approve the April 4, 2019, Funding Workshop Minutes; seconded by Ms. Dee King. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. 2018 VOLUNTEER REPORT & OTHER KEY COLLABORATION NUMBERS

2018 Volunteer Report Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath stated that we celebrate National Volunteer Week every April at several of our Park Board facilities. These events recognize and honor our volunteers who provide service in a variety of ways such as serving as a Miracle League Buddy, performing landscaping duties and maintaining gardens, and conducting educational programs at the Dickerson Park Zoo. The Park Board worked with the National Recreation and Parks Association to develop and implement a comprehensive Volunteer Management Program in 2009. The program established a consistent process and strict protocol for screening, identifying, training, and tracking all our volunteers. In 2018, we screened 915 volunteers and recorded 73,567 hours of service. According to the Independent Sector, the leading authority on volunteer valuation, the national valuation of a volunteer hour in 2017 was \$24.69 and \$23.21 in Missouri. This equates to more than \$1.7 million dollars of valued volunteer service. It would require us to hire approximately 43 employees to support this number of hours of volunteer service. Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director, stated that Dickerson Park Zoo has five different volunteer programs including programs for youth, teens, docents, Special Event Ambassadors, and internship programs.

Park Board Youth Recreation Scholarship Fund

The Park Board Youth Recreation Scholarship Fund offers opportunities for youth in Springfield and Greene County, ages 18 and under, to participate in sports, summer camps, before and after school programs, swim lessons and other programs, whom might not otherwise participate due to household financial constraints. Since 2004, the Park Board has awarded 8,823 youth scholarships, totaling more than \$339,000. The Youth Recreation Scholarship Fund is supported through several events with a fund-raising component such as Turkey Trot, the Price Cutter Charity Championship Web.com Tour, Springfield Lasers Silent Auction, the School-Park Division Annual Basketball Tournament, and private donations. Ms. McGrath explained the process and indicated that a child can receive up to \$170.00 per calendar year. The recipient's family does not incur any tax consequences when awarded the scholarship. Interested applicants can find the Scholarship Fund application and guidelines on our website.

Donations to Community Organizations

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, stated that we appreciate the long history we have of working with our community groups and organizations for our Park Board special events, activities, and assistance of maintaining specific park sites. In 2018, over 175 groups asked us to support their benefit events and worthwhile causes with passes for Park Board facilities for their charity car shows, athletic events, contests, dances, galas, golf tournaments and walks, along with a variety of other school and PTA-related events. We are proud to partner with them and assist in their fund-raising efforts, so they can continue with their work in the community.

United Way Campaign

Mr. Belote stated that our Park Board employees have consistently given back to our community through the City's participation in the United Way Campaign. Karen Mellinger, our Parks United Way Coordinator, meets with over 20 small Parks employee groups within a 30-day period to share information about the campaign, answer questions, and offer different ways for our employees to participate. The last three years have been record-setting years for the Parks Department. In 2018, the Parks Department contributed over \$15,000, making it the sixth year in a row of Parks' employees pledging more than \$10,000. The United Way's Day of Caring event, which allows volunteer groups to complete community projects, has allowed our Park Operations and Dickerson Park Zoo areas to work with groups and complete painting, landscaping, and other specific park projects.

Board Member, Randy Blackwood, mentioned that hearing about the many ways that our Park Board gives back to the community, makes him very proud to be a part of this group.

IV. APRIL 4 PARK BOARD FUNDING WORKSHOP REPORT & NEXT STEPS

Park Board Chair, Carolyn Gerdes, stated that she appreciated the Board's participation in the Funding Workshop on April 4 and believed that everyone had very similar thoughts and suggestions. She explained that because of the minimum wage impact, deferred maintenance projects, and unfunded priorities, which were discussed in detail at the meeting, it was the consensus of the Board that we move forward with pursuing a capital funding source as soon as possible. Timing is incredibly important, because we will not be able to offer the programs and services we currently have available without a new funding source. It was also decided to form a Future Funding Committee with Scott Bailes serving as the Chair, along with Board Members Randy Blackwood, Mike Chiles, and Michele Risdal-Barnes. The Committee will consider all

options discussed at the workshop in more detail and report back at a future Board meeting. All Board members are welcome to attend the Future Funding Committee meetings. Mr. Belote stated that we have been good stewards of the countywide parks sales tax dollars and continue to preserve our historic parks as best as we can, but that is not without issues and challenges. We usually tell the positive, good feeling stories about what the Park Board offers to the community, but with over \$47 million in Unfunded Priorities and the over \$1.32 million impact of minimum wage increases over the next five-year period, conducting our current activities and operations is overwhelming. Ms. Gerdes suggested that we conduct another Park Board facility tour with the Board members to see in person the true funding needs of the Parks department.

V. COMMITTEE REPORT

- a. Park Board Funding Committee The first Committee meeting will be Tuesday, April 16, at 9 am, at JK Investments.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CSDP Program Mr. Cumley stated that Jordan Valley Ice Park hosted a regional gymnastics event on one of the sheets of ice, which was covered with flooring. The group, who also rented the Springfield Expo area, brought in their own equipment for the 466 participants. The covered ice area is 17,000 square feet, with high ceilings and no columns, and works great for trade shows and other events such as the gymnastics meet. The MoNASP Archery Tournament was held in Branson with over 3,200 archers competing in the event. Our CSDP Archery Coach, Amy Francka, is on the MoNASP Board and set up a booth promoting the Parks Archery Complex and programs.

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Coats stated that new recyclable trash cans were placed at all Special Facilities locations. The Watershed Committee is completing the removal of the invasive bush honeysuckle at Lake Springfield Park. The Master Naturalists had 176 volunteers attend their first volunteer day of the season at the Lake Springfield Boathouse. Rutledge-Wilson Farm and the Special Events Division staff will host Easter at the Farm on April 13. Our Maintenance staff did a great job painting the playground structure at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park. Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center staff is preparing for the Horse Tales Literacy Program. Over 100 first and second grade students from Mark Twain elementary will come to the Equestrian Center and read to a pony on May 1.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation Ms. McGrath stated that our Catering and Concessions Division oversaw the implementation of the enhanced food and beverage operations at Jordan Valley Ice Park and Cooper Tennis Complex during the Springfield Lasers season. Their records indicated an increase in sales of concession food items, along with the newly offered beverage options. We have seen a recent uptick of online applications for our two largest sections that hire seasonal employees; however, there are still positions available for lifeguards and concession employees. Our spring Miracle League season begins next week. Groups or individuals interested in serving as a Buddy for one night or several nights should contact Cyrus Taylor at Northview. Bark in the Park will be held on Saturday, April 27, at Phelps Grove Park. Ms. McGrath appreciated the support of the Board members and staff who attended the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame Women's Luncheon and stated that it was an honor to receive the Wynn Award.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards introduced Kara Remington, who is our new Web Designer. Kara previously worked at the Springfield-Branson Airport and an advertising agency before joining our Parks team. She has already begun reviewing and updating our park website to make it more user-friendly. Brittney Bywater recently completed the latest edition of the Aquatics Guide. Ms. Edwards stated that the grand re-opening date for Timmons Hall will be at 10 am on Saturday, June 29.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney stated that staff retiled the gym floor at Oak Grove Community Center. Mr. Wayne Zelnik, one of our second shift Park Operations employees, recently retired. Wayne was very talented and took pride in mentoring some of the younger crew members. Linda Shipman, our new Parks Safety Coordinator, has been busy with scheduling training sessions in CPR and AED for all Parks staff, along with developing a Safety Newsletter. Mr. Mel Waldron, Golf Superintendent, recently participated in the 2019 Membership Recruitment and Retention Task Group for the Golf Superintendents Association of America.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations Mr. Mitchell reported that sales tax revenue for March 2019 was down slightly, but still up from the previous year. April 2019 sales tax revenue was up compared to this time last year. Overall revenues are down year-to-date due mainly to poor weather conditions. We will continue to watch our budget closely during the final quarter of the fiscal year and adjust our expenditures as needed.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser stated that she was conducting interviews soon for summer internships in Parks. We had three interns during the spring semester. We have begun implementation of offering an online rental process at Chesterfield Family Center. If the testing period goes well, we hope to expand to other locations later this summer or in the fall.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park stated that Operations staff has begun the process of de-winterizing the restrooms and water fountains throughout our park system. They uncovered a few water leaks and are working to repair them, which is just an example of an overdue maintenance project that we sometimes defer due to lack of funding to completely repair a maintenance issue. With several buildings more than 50 years old, avoiding maintenance issues has become increasingly difficult. The annual Cherry Blossom Kite Festival event held at Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park was very well attended partly due to the beautiful weather including a perfect breeze for kite flying. Mr. Park provided a brief update about the Neighborhood Works project at Zagonyi Park. Our new Senior Park Planner, Jeff Smith, has been reviewing our park inventory in preparation of the Economic Impact Study.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker provided an interesting update about the various animals that will soon be on exhibit and the new animals recently born at the Dickerson Park Zoo. The Zoo was one of two Zoo's that responded to a software development company to test a new phone app especially designed for them, which will provide Zoo updates to the user.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher stated that the Economic Impact Study Evaluation Committee is meeting to review and score the proposals. Installation of the

ventilation hood system has been completed at the Rivercut Golf Course Grille. The Masters Kick-off and Customer Appreciation Event was held on April 10 with over 200 people in attendance.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote stated that we are appreciative of the City Manager and City Council's approval to use carry over funds for a new cooling tower for Jordan Valley Ice Park, ventilation improvements for the Jordan Valley Park Fountain, and funding for re-design work at Founders Park. The discussions regarding the Galloway Corridor continue, both externally and internally within the City. The Galloway group remains concerned about maintaining the "village feel" and care of the Galloway Creek Greenway Trail and Sequiota Park. An updated report will be provided to City Council in August. On May 1, a group from Ozark Greenways, along with several Board and staff members, will travel to Northwest Arkansas to review their trails and linear parks and how it has increased economic development in this area. Mr. Belote mentioned that the Victims Memorial event was held in Phelps Grove Park last night. It is humbling and an honor to play a role and help with the healing of those who lost a loved one due to a violent crime. The new parking lot, which was completed as one of the Neighborhood Works projects, was a welcomed improvement, particularly for special events such as this one.

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 next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting will be Friday, May 10. In lieu of a traditional Park Board meeting, we will conduct a bus tour of Park Board facilities, which will begin at 8:00 am.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Sidney Needem made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.