

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, June 14, 2019
Timmons Hall, 1100 N. Hampton, within Silver Springs Park
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, Cynthia Lipscomb, Tammy Mast, Sidney Needem, Michele Risdal-Barnes

Members Absent: Dee King

Park Board Staff Present: Bob Belote, Tim Carpenter, Jon Carney, Jeff Cumley, Jenny Filmer Edwards, Jim Fisher, Anne-Mary McGrath, Karen Mellinger, Jerry Mitchell, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Diana Tyndall, Lana Woolsey

Guests: Friends of Timmons Temple members: Paula Ringer, Ralph Plank, David Esslick, Denny Whyne, Betty Ranson.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Randy Blackwood made a motion to approve the May 10, 2019, Park Board Meeting minutes; seconded by Sidney Needem. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTINE PEOPLES, TIMMONS HALL COORDINATOR

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, welcomed everyone, and introduced Christine Peoples, Coordinator of Timmons Hall. Mr. Belote stated that he Save Timmons Temple group, now Friends of Timmons Temple, formed in 2014 with the hopes of preserving the church. Many meetings took place before the site was determined and the building could be moved to Silver Springs Park. It was a collaborative effort among many supporters. Mr. Belote introduced Ms. Paula Ringer, Chair, Friends of Timmons Temple.

Ms. Ringer stated that this project would not have been completed without the involvement of the Park Board. She expressed her appreciation of Mr. Miles Park for identifying an appropriate site within Silver Springs Park that was not in the flood plain. Ms. Ringer shared the history of the Timmons Temple Church, which was built in 1932 and was originally located at the corner of Webster Street and Texas Avenue, overlooking Silver Springs Park. The small church served Springfield's African-American community for more than 80 years before the congregation outgrew the building and relocated. Timmons Temple was later sold and slated for demolition. With a donation from the developer that purchased the site where the Temple was located, the campaign to raise money to move the building into the park was underway. More than \$300,000 was raised to move the building and perform extensive renovations such as a new foundation, roof, front entrance, windows, restrooms, plumbing, electricity, air conditioning,

and restoration with paint and fixtures, and exposing the original heartwood oak floors. Nearly \$100,000 was donated in labor and materials. Mr. David Esslick stated that over 400 people made a donation to assist with the project, including Field Elementary second graders, who sold over \$1,000 of specially designed notecards. The project gained the support of the neighborhood and the community. Mr. Denny Wayne mentioned that he lived across from Timmons Temple growing up, and he has been proud of the project to preserve the building. This project has brought the community together. Ms. Betty Ranson also grew up about a block away from the Temple and recalls the beautiful music that she often heard coming from the church. Mr. Ralph Plank expressed his appreciation for the way that community partners have come together for this meaningful project. Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Parks Public Information Administrator, stated that the dedication of Timmons Hall will be held on Saturday, June 29, from 10 am to 12 noon. Several City Officials will join the festivities, which will include remarks, music, photos, a ribbon-cutting and refreshments.

Ms. Christine Peoples, Timmons Hall Coordinator, stated that she is excited because she is sure that Timmons Hall will bring the community together. The building has a history of reuniting friends and loved ones, so that tradition will continue and benefit the next generation. Ms. Peoples is also excited to work with the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. A digital presentation of 30 Americans, which features American experiences as presented through 30 contemporary African-American artists, spanning four decades, can be viewed at the grand opening event. Ms. Peoples mentioned that she took part in Springfield Public Schools summer academy and provided a special history event for 240 students in conjunction of Black History month. Timmons Hall will be an event center that can provide cultural, historical, and educational opportunities and activities for the community.

Mr. Belote stated that we last year we celebrated Silver Springs Park's 100th anniversary, which included unveiling the first marker of the African-American Heritage Trail. We have made a commitment to soon begin a new master plan for this historic park. Mr. Belote expressed his appreciation to the City of Springfield, Community Foundation of the Ozarks, and Mr. Miles Park for their work in facilitating the many aspects of the moving of the building. Mr. Belote once again thanked the Friends of Timmons Temple group for their vision and cooperation in helping to complete this successful project.

V. COMMITTEE REPORT

a. Future Funding Committee Update

Mr. Belote stated that he has met with the Presiding Greene County Commissioner, City Manager, and Springfield Chamber of Commerce Director to obtain their support about our proposed next steps, as suggested by the Board at our May meeting. The meetings had positive outcomes, and everyone is quite sensitive to our situation and funding challenges. It is recommended that another Future Funding Committee meeting should take place to develop a more formal proposal and strategic plan to share with the Greene County Commission.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services

Mr. Belote mentioned that Jon is a recent graduate of Leadership Springfield, Class 25. Mr. Carney stated that the past month was filled with variety of activities and weather. With rainfall more than eight inches above normal, outside activities and projects were impacted. We discovered that the Westport Pool had a

leaky pool shell, and our staff has spent time trying to patch and test it to see if will hold water and operate appropriately. Mr. Belote stated that with the opening of pool season, there is potential for a significant repair such as this because most of the pool infrastructure is nearly 30 years old.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation

Ms. McGrath mentioned that in the 31 days of May, we hosted 23 athletic tournaments. We hosted the local high school tennis district championships, Missouri State High School Athletic Association Softball and Tennis Championships, along with the collegiate NAIA Baseball Championship opener and 19 games in seven days. The facilities looked great and staff did a great job of welcoming local and out of town teams. There were 84 Masters Level participants in the Senior Games. She thanked Coach Goddard and his wife, along with his Kickapoo Cross Country team who helped to coordinate the track and field events. Ms. Sarah Aimes, a graduate student from University of Arkansas, was welcomed during the meeting. Sarah is an intern in the City Manager's office and will be spending the day in Recreation.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator

Ms. Edwards stated that the last several months, her team has been focused on promoting the Springfield Lasers, pools opening, summer camps, and the Timmons Hall grand opening. Ms. Edwards mentioned that we are a finalist for the Springfield Business Journal's Economic Impact Award. The awards ceremony will take place on Thursday, July 25. More information will be sent to the Board members soon.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CSDP Programs

Mr. Cumley stated that the Spring Figure Skating Show was held on May 3-4, with over 60 skating participants. We also hosted two State Archery tournaments and a Sister Cities event at the Davis House on May 4. The 18th Annual Snowfest event is Saturday, June 22 from 12 pm to 4 pm. There will be live entertainment, arts, and activities for everyone to enjoy. Ms. Carolyn Gerdes, Chair, stated that she was amazed how well the Davis house accommodated the Sister Cities event. Mr. Belote mentioned that we are several years into a 10-year lease of the Davis House from Greene County with the hopes of purchasing it in the future.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations

Mr. Mitchell stated that the month of June is traditionally one of our largest revenue and expenditure months of the year. The June sales tax revenue is up from this same time last year, which will help us as we work to balance out the budget for the year end.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director

Mr. Belote reported that Mike is currently on medical leave. Mr. Crocker's report is in the Board member's packets for review.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director

Mr. Fisher stated that the annual Father's Day promotion for gift card purchases and Patron Plan enrollments or renewals began June 8 through June 16. Mr. Fisher mentioned that Tim Carpenter has been promoted to Park Ranger Administrator replacing Kevin Holle who resigned. Tim has been a Park Ranger for three years, and we look forward to continuing working with him in his new position. Mr. Fisher reported that the firm, Arts Market, has been selected to conduct our Economic Impact Study. We appreciate the work of the evaluation committee throughout the process. Final negotiations

are underway, so we are hopeful for the execution of the contract, with the firm on site sometime in July.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park explained in more detail the difficulty in gaining access to the Westport Pool drains, which are constructed into an underground drainage system. Mr. Park reported that the Botanical Center and Gardens hosted 13 weddings last month. We received a \$100,000 grant through Habitat Through Humanity, thanks to Chelsea Mulholland who wrote the grant. The project was for a playground in Lafayette Park. The neighborhood and Parks staff will have a workday soon in preparation for the installation of the new equipment. The Cooper Tennis Complex tennis court renovations are progressing well and should be completed in early July.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser reported that during the many sporting championships we recently hosted, she helped to coordinate with City networking the capabilities for live streaming of scores and video capabilities. Ms. Reser is working with our security system company to move monitoring feeds from landlines to internet or cell connections due to plans to end landlines support and capability in 2020.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote mentioned that he is working with the Springfield Sports Commission as they conduct a feasibility study on facility strengths and weaknesses in the community. As a significant provider of facilities for numerous events, we are looking forward to reviewing the report findings and recommendations in the next several months. The Missouri Sports Hall of Fame will host their Baseball and Softball Luncheon, in which former Parks employee, Joey Rich, will be recognized for his participation in the Diamond 9 group. Mr. Rich will also be inducted in the National Softball Hall of Fame in the fall, as well.

Next month, we should have a proposal from the Sons of the American Revolution about moving a World War I stone marker from Grant Beach Park to the Springfield National Cemetery. We still need to form a sub-committee to review the hammock policy.

Mr. Belote mentioned that this weekend there are several events honoring the legacy of Randy Blackwood's dad, Byrne, including a special mention at the beginning of the Tent Theater performance this evening. Other activities will be held at Missouri State University and Gilloiz Theater.

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 following upcoming events were mentioned:

- *Monday, June 17 Sports Commission Awards
- *Friday, July 14 Next Park Board Meeting at Cooper Tennis Complex
- *Thursday, July 25 SBJ's Economic Impact Award Ceremony

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Sidney Needem made the motion to adjourn the meeting to Closed Session; seconded by Ms. Tammy Mast. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.