

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, January 10, 2020
Park Board Administrative Offices
1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Randy Blackwood, Carolyn Gerdes, Tammy Mast, Michele Risdal-Barnes

Members Absent: Mike Chiles, Cynthia Lipscomb, Sidney Needem

Park Board Staff Present: Bob Belote, Tim Carpenter, Waylon Cavinder, Matt Coats, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Jenny Filmer Edwards, Diana Ellison, Jim Fisher, Anne-Mary McGrath, Karen Mellinger, Jerry Mitchell, Mark Nelson, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Jill Simmons, Diana Tyndall, Lana Woolsey

Guests: Marissa DeClue, Robin Helsel, Alan McKelvey with Developmental Center of the Ozarks; Jennifer Sickinger and Sarah Byrd with Ozark Food Harvest

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Michele Risdal-Barnes made a motion to approve the December 13, 2019, Park Board Minutes; seconded by Mr. Randy Blackwood. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. TURKEY TROT EVENT RECAP AND CHECK PRESENTATION

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation, provided a brief history about how Turkey Trot became the largest walk/run event in Missouri on Thanksgiving morning. Monty Montgomery and Gene Mouldner, both civic minded individuals, wanted to assist with fundraising efforts for the Developmental Center of the Ozarks, and started the event 25 years ago, with 142 participants. This year, we had over 7,400 registered participants. The Turkey Trot Committee meets over 11 months, which includes preparation of required permits, obtaining sponsorships, making arrangements for the many donated refreshments, signage, and media announcements. We appreciate our sponsors who provide financial support such as Brad Bradshaw, our presenting sponsor, Commerce Bank for the foam Turkey Trot hats, and Petsway for the dog bandanas. On the morning of the race, we receive 40 gallons of coffee from Starbucks, 45 dozen donuts from Krispy Kreme, 45 dozen bagels from Panera, 45 cases of bananas, and Hiland Dairy provides yogurt, milk, and chocolate milk. Ozark Mountain Ridge Runners certifies our race course. In addition to our many community sponsors and supporters, members of every Park Board staff division provides assistance either by providing staff to set-up/take down course parameters and inside signage, social media, announcements, website

updates, t-shirts, review of contracts, security, and coordination of over 200 volunteers who provide 900 hours of volunteer service in just two days. We also appreciate the City of Springfield's Police, Fire, Public Works, and Office of Emergency Management departments for working with us throughout the event preparation and race day. Ms. McGrath provided statistical data from this year's event. She also mentioned that Liz Kieger, who won the race for age group 60-64, also achieved a race record for her age group, which was certified by the State.

Jennifer Sickinger, with Ozarks Food Harvest, stated that their partnership with Turkey Trot has helped to raise awareness and helps to fight hunger in our community. This year, over 8,800 pounds of food was collected in conjunction with Turkey Trot, bringing the overall total to more than 300,000 pounds collected at past Turkey Trot events. Our summer promotion, Splash 'n Sizzle, offers admission to our outdoor pools for \$1.00 with a canned food item. In the summer of 2019, we collected over 8,000 pounds of food. Throughout the years, we have collected 130,000 pounds of food from the Splash 'n Sizzle summer events.

Marissa DeClue, with Developmental Center of the Ozarks, stated that DCO offers support to over 1,500 children ages birth to three years old annually. The proceeds from Turkey Trot allows DCO the opportunity to reach more people and do more in the community.

Park Board Chair, Carolyn Gerdes, presented DCO staff with a check in the amount of \$29,563.06, representing 50 percent of the proceeds from Turkey Trot. Ms. McGrath mentioned that our proceeds support the Park Board Youth Recreation Scholarship Fund. To date, we have awarded approximately 7,900 scholarships totaling more than \$300,000.

Both Turkey Trot founders, Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Mouldner, have passed away within the last two years, but their many contributions to grow this event, which provided such a significant impact to our community, will not be forgotten.

IV. FY 2020 PARKS BUDGET PREPARATION UPDATE

Mr. Bob Belote stated that our Parks staff has been working on developing the budget and supporting documents for the past three months. There will be a Future Funding Committee meeting following today's Board meeting to discuss and prepare for next week's budget update meeting with the Greene County Commissioners. The Commissioners have been made aware of our budget challenges several times over the last 18 months, including proposed budget cuts, closing of facilities, and adjustments in facility hours, so the budget information presented will not be new information to them. Mr. Belote has also shared our financial struggles with Deputy City Manager, Maurice Jones. Mr. Belote will have a budget review meeting with the City Manager, Jason Gage, on February 28, 2020. On March 24, 2020, he will make a "Parks Update" presentation to City Council. We plan to have a budget workshop meeting with the Board, and then we will request the Board to formally adopt the proposed budget at the February Board meeting and forward it to City Council for approval. Mr. Belote stated that there are a few new fees and charges to consider, but there are also new costs to absorb. We have adjusted our revenue projections to be more in line with historical data. Our staff has been reviewing programs and line items to assist with the process of presenting a balanced budget, but just funding our current operations has become increasingly more difficult without a new funding source. We would like to be considering new programs, events, and amenities for our citizens,

but we are instead preparing for budget cuts and appealing to our elected officials to allow us to ask the community for help in providing a long-term funding solution.

V. COMMITTEE REPORT

a. Future Funding Committee Report Mr. Scott Bailes, Chair, Future Funding Committee Chair, stated that for several years the Board has reviewed the financial struggles the Park Board has faced. The Board has approved raising fees and charges in several areas as much as we feel our community will accept and implemented the offering of alcohol for selected Park Board sites for private rentals and events, but still we lack the funds needed to provide the overall necessary maintenance and repairs of our aging infrastructure and cover the costs of the new minimum wage increases. The Future Funding Committee will meet today to discuss other options of how to convince our Greene County Commissioners to allow the Park Board an opportunity to ask our citizens for support through a Parks ballot initiative.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CSDP Programs Mr. Cumley mentioned that Jordan Valley Ice Park staff, in conjunction with Mayor Ken McClure and the City's Public Information Office, hosted 350 military troops from Ft. Leonard Wood over the holidays. The soldiers were treated to a warm welcome at Bass Pro, including a visit to Wonders of Wildlife, along with the choice of bowling or a movie. We covered one sheet of ice and set up dining tables to provide the troops with a meal and entertainment, including a dance floor, to complete the day. The experience was very well received by the troops and organizers. Mr. Cumley stated that the Police vs Fire Ice Hockey event was scheduled for Saturday, January 11, 2020, beginning at 7 pm. Proceeds from the event benefit the Greene County 100 Club, which provides immediate financial assistance to surviving families of firefighters and law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.

Ms. Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards stated that the latest publication of the Park Bench was in circulation and provided to the Board today. Ms. Edwards stated that her staff coordinated the booth set up for a recent wedding show and provided support for our Parks Employee Holiday Luncheon. Mr. Belote commented that the Parks Employee Holiday Luncheon, which was coordinated by Karen Mellinger and a departmental Planning Committee, was a great success thanks to the help of many staff in several Parks divisions.

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Coats reported that Rutledge-Wilson staff recorded 2,800 cars that drove through Candy Cane Lane in three weekends. The 3-D glasses that were offered for purchase to view the lights were a great success, with over 600 pairs of glasses sold. Eagle Days is scheduled for next weekend, which includes a visit of 5th graders from several area schools next Friday, January 17. We appreciate the partnership with Missouri Department of Conservation to provide this unique opportunity to the community. Ms. Christine Peoples, Coordinator at Timmons Hall, hosted a mock City Council meeting with eight international students from Drury, with the help of the City of Springfield's Finance Department. Staff at Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center hosted a horse camp during the holiday break for the first time. Our Special Facilities maintenance staff built hay feeders to help keep hay dry and protected from the weather.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation

Ms. McGrath reported that SPARC staff hosted 758 children during the holiday break at Harrison Elementary. Kids were treated to games, activities, arts and crafts. Fitness Expos were held at Chesterfield and Dan Kinney Family Centers, which featured 20-minute segments of different types of classes offered at the centers. Doling Family Center will host their Fitness Expo on Saturday, January 11 at 10 am. We are offering a special promotion that offers participants a free month once they join before the end of January. Ms. McGrath mentioned that newly-leased fitness equipment has also arrived at the family centers. Daddy Daughter Dance tickets go on sale January 13 for this very popular event, which is scheduled for February 22. On February 8, 2020, we will host an indoor tri-athlon, which includes 10 minutes of swimming, 30 minutes of spin, and 20 minutes of treadmill walking. As a reminder, when Springfield Public Schools are closed for inclement weather, SPARC is in session from 7 am to 6 pm, with registration available onsite only.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services

Mr. Carney reported that over 12,000 people visited the Gardens A Glow event this year. Mr. Belote commented that the lights were beautiful and thanked the Park Operations and Friends of the Garden staff for their creativity in decorating the park. Park Board Chair, Carolyn Gerdes, mentioned that she thought the display was very tasteful and appropriate for the park facility. Mr. Belote stated that we will invite the Friends of the Garden to show their drone video of the event and make a check presentation for the shared proceeds from the event, which is similar to the partnership agreement we have with Springfield Sister Cities for the Japanese Fall Festival event. Mr. Carney mentioned that the weather in December was dry and warm for the season, but we did have one winter event.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations

Mr. Mitchell reported that sales tax revenue was up compared to one year ago, which helps to offset any unanticipated expenditures. Overall expenditures are up over the last year as we expected due to the increase of the implementation of the new minimum wage rates. It will be significantly higher over the next six months as the minimum wage rate increased from \$8.60 per hour to \$9.45 per hour effective January 1, 2020. We are also experiencing increased costs from vendors due to increased minimum wage rates. Revenue for the Dickerson Park Zoo is up compared to this period last year, but still trending below for year-to-date totals. Golf revenues continue to be strong due to an increase in both rounds played, as well as growth in participation in the Parks Patron Plan. We received a good report from the City's audit firm, RSM, with no issues related to the Park Board.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director

Mr. Fisher mentioned that the Annual Chili Classic Two-Person Best Ball Scramble was held on January 2, 2020, with over 140 golfers in attendance for the tournament. We are waiting for final approval of the contract documents from the City's Finance Department for the new Golf Point-of-Sale system, foreUp. A new Contract Park Ranger Recruit position classification was created to provide an employment entry point into Park Law Enforcement. We have hired two new recruits, Chris Farthing and Zach Sawyer, to fulfill these positions. We appreciate the efficiency of our Human Resources representative, Amie Davis, who completed 53 full-time and contract employee hires, along with 548 seasonal and temporary employee hires, last year. Due to unforeseen circumstances, our timeline to receive a preliminary report from Arts Market for our economic study will need to be adjusted. CAPRA re-accreditation work will begin soon as our supporting documents will need to be

submitted by December 2020 as part of the five-year renewal process. Part of the re-accreditation process will include an updated Parks Master Plan.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker mentioned that the Zoo educational staff and docents are also involved with Eagle Days programs around the state in partnership with the Missouri Department of Conservation from mid-December through February. Mr. Crocker appreciates the assistance of Park Operations crews, who are working on several repair projects at the Zoo. Mr. Crocker expressed concern that some Zoo structures are between 30 and 100 years old and how considerably difficult it is to continue making repairs without a new funding source.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park mentioned that Friends of the Garden (FOG) staff made an excellent presentation highlighting their accomplishments over the past year at the recent FOG Annual Meeting. There were approximately 90 people in attendance. Mr. Park commented that we simply could not maintain all the gardens at Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park without the assistance of the FOG volunteers who provide 17,000 hours of service annually. Park Operations staff completed repairs to the outdoor surfaces at the Skate Park in time to open it back up for the holiday break. Field maintenance crews are preparing the softball fields for the four tournaments scheduled in February. Construction of a new 1.5-mile segment of the Fulbright Springs Trail will be completed soon to provide a connection between Lost Hill Park and the David C. Murray Trailhead. The trail segment is funded through a Recreation Trail Program grant, which included a local match by Ozark Greenways.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser reported that the Lake Country Soccer Steering Committee continues to work with Cogeo, a consultant firm hired to assist with fundraising efforts for the Cooper Soccer Complex. Ms. Tammy Mast, Park Board member, has volunteered to be a member of the Steering Committee. Ms. Reser mentioned that there will be a Neogov refresh training session for staff in preparation of our temporary and seasonal employee hiring season.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote mentioned that we are working with Ms. Tammy Mast to pursue additional grant opportunities through community organizations and thanked her for her time and involvement. Mr. Belote invited the Park Board to attend one of the upcoming forums on January 28 and January 29, as part of the Forward SGF Comp Plan initiative. The City is interested in our citizen's ideas and what plans the city should make for our community in the future. Mr. Belote mentioned that the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame Enshrinement Ceremony will be Sunday, January 26. Several Parks partners will be inducted with this year's class including Don West, Sharyn Waggoner, Jim Morris, and Killian Construction, along with Kansas City Chiefs and St. Louis Cardinals players.

VIII. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair did not have a report.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business to discuss.

X. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business to discuss.

XI. CALENDAR

The next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting will be Friday, February 14, 2020, at 8:30 am, at the Park Board Administrative Offices.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

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