

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, July 10, 2020**

Timmons Hall within Silver Springs Park, 1055 E. Webster Street, Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

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

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Mike Chiles, Carolyn Gerdes, Curtis Jared, Tammy Mast, Sidney Needem, Heather Noggle (via phone)

Members Absent: Randy Blackwood, Cynthia Lipscomb

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Sidney Needem made a motion to approve the June 12, 2020, Park Board Meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. Scott Bailes. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. TIMMONS HALL UPDATE

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, welcomed everyone to Timmons Hall, located within Silver Springs Park, one of our ten historic parks. Mr. Belote stated it is remarkable how much this facility has changed since it was opened to the public just one year ago. Timmons Hall is one of the properties within the Special Facilities Division, and Mr. Belote complimented the Superintendent, Matt Coats, and their staff for the exceptional job they have done blending this added amenity into the landscape of the park.

Ms. Christine Peoples, Timmons Hall Coordinator, thanked the Friends of Timmons Temple for pursuing the idea of preserving this historical facility, along with the Park Board for their support in placing the facility in Silver Springs Park, and Miles Park for his behind the scenes work in executing this project. The Friends of Timmons Temple group, along with local businessman, Mr. Sam Hamra, recently provided funding to refurbish the wood floors. Mr. Hamra also donated funds for the new blinds and the rug displayed on the floor.

Ms. Peoples shared information about the programs conducted in the Hall over the past year, such as the Milly Project, Black History Summer Academy, and the Explore Program with Springfield Public Schools, along with the recent virtual Juneteenth Program through SPS's Explorer program. Ms. Peoples stated that she was proud to provide an authentic experience in an authentic building for area students and the community. Ms. Peoples mentioned that she has recently formed an Advisory Committee to assist in future programming and preserving historical information for our community. Ms. Peoples stated that the facility is available to

rent for corporate meetings, presentations, or family gatherings. Mr. Belote stated that he was proud of the Friends of Timmons Temple and their dedicated fund-raising efforts to save the Timmons Temple and the importance of this project in our community. Two years ago, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Silver Springs Park. We do have plans to develop a Master Plan for this historic park, which will include input from the community, our neighborhood groups and organizations, and our partner group, the Springfield Reunion Committee, who has organized the Park Days weekend event for more than 50 years. We look forward to finding out what amenities and suggestions the community would like to see in Silver Springs Park in the next 100 years.

IV. DEPARTMENTAL COVID-19 UPDATE

Mr. Belote stated that amid the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen an increase in visitation in our neighborhood parks and greenway trails, along with more people participating in outdoor lifestyle activities such as canoe/kayak rentals and playing golf. We have worked through some of our Aquatics Division staffing challenges, so we plan to open Fassnight Pool and McGee-McGregor Pool within the week. The popular Jordan Valley Park fountain and stream are now open, as well.

Mr. Belote stated that City Council will review a proposal for a mandated mask ordinance within the City on Monday, July 13. Should the ordinance pass, City front line employees will be required to wear a mask, which has already been informally implemented by the City's Police and Fire Departments, the Art Museum, and Airport personnel, and by our front-line staff as of earlier this week. We have worked with Risk Management and Park Operations staff to provide personal protection equipment to our staff, along with installing safety-glass panels at public entry access areas. Mr. Belote stated that we have followed proper health protocols to offer programs and camps, but despite our preparations, we are still dealing with challenges to minimize the spread among staff and participants. Along with Risk Management, we are looking at the next 12 months and preparing to obtain appropriate PPE for our employees.

One thing we have heard from our citizens is their renewed appreciation for what we do, which includes providing opportunities to get outside to enjoy our parks and trails, visit the Zoo, and participate in sports, etc. The News-Leader has featured our parks and various activities several times in the weekend section of the newspaper. We continue to post Parks Pick-Me-Up features on social media, as this activity has been very well-received by our community. Board Member Scott Bailes inquired if we are experiencing difficulties in hiring staff. Mr. Belote stated that the City instituted a hiring freeze in March to deal with COVID-19 budget deficiencies just as we were starting to ramp up our hiring process. Though we did not receive approval to hire for all positions, we are grateful that the City approved for us to renew our contract employees and begin hiring part-time seasonal employees who are needed to provide essential duties such as mowing, ballfield preparation and maintenance, and lifeguards. Our Northview facility is still closed for the safety of the participants, along with the staff who work with two very health-sensitive populations.

V. COMMITTEE REPORT

There were no Committee Reports.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Coats stated that nearly 1,000 canoe and kayaks were rented in June. Outdoor Initiatives and Lake Springfield staff hosted the first Introduction to Kayak class. The Valley Water Mill Equestrian staff are conducting 80 lessons per week, along with their summer camp programs. We recently received several donated horses for our programs at the Equestrian Center. We had 76 participants in the Kids Fishing Day event at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park. We appreciate City Utilities storing our equipment after the Lake Springfield Park maintenance building caught fire in June.

Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations Mr. Mitchell reported that our revenues improved by over \$300,000 in June; however, we still anticipate our deficit could be \$1,100,000 to \$1,300,000 for the year ending June 30, 2020. June sales tax was down by 3.4 percent, which was better than expected. August sales tax revenue will be added to the year ending June 30, 2020.

Mr. Mitchell mentioned that the final True Interest Rate of the bonds for the Dan Kinney Park refinancing project were issued at 2.139 percent, which was within the parameters approved by the Park Board at its June 12, 2020, meeting. The average estimated savings is \$75,189 annually from FY 2020-2021 through FY 2025-2026, which was also within the parameters of the approved resolution. The closing and issuance of the new bonds will take place on July 21, 2020. Mr. Mitchell stated that we have been tracking all expenditures associated with the COVID-19 situation, which total \$432,311, as of June 30, 2020. Mr. Mitchell stated that this total includes staff costs from working with COVID-19 related issues, indirect costs, along with any equipment or supplies used to help contain the spread of the virus. The Golf Fund total for June reached a record high and total rounds of golf played during the past fiscal year were up nearly 5 percent over last year. The Dickerson Park Zoo reported strong revenue for June but remain down compared to the same period last year due to the lack of revenue from school field trips and closure of the Zoo for several weeks.

Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney stated that he was proud of his staff for their adaptability during varying weather conditions this past month and collaborative work to continue following the updated health and safety protocols. Mr. Carney mentioned that during a storm on June 4, 13 utility poles were blown down on Pythian Street. City Utilities crews worked quickly to repair the poles and return power to our park facilities located in the area. Mr. Carney responded to Board member, Mike Chiles, about the use of UV lights, indicating that he has reviewed the research, but we have not implemented changes at this time.

Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation Ms. McGrath stated that our Family Centers have returned to normal pre-COVID-19 operational hours, including offering classes in different parts of the buildings to continue practicing physical distancing. We are also promoting programming at Cooper Tennis Complex. Adult and youth sports leagues returned to practicing and playing games on June 15. We will open Fassnacht Pool and McGee-McGregor Pool on Tuesday, July 14 at 1 pm. Staff will be monitoring capacity levels within these facilities. Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director, stated that we have not reached maximum capacity at our indoor pools. We do have a plan in place to adjust as needed should we reach capacity numbers

at our outdoor pools. Staff hosted National Teddy Bear Day at the Botanical Center, with small groups enjoying story time and a variety of activities. Our Accessible Recreation participants have been meeting at park pavilions in very small groups to enjoy craft activities. The World TeamTennis season has all matches being played in one location, the Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. The Springfield Lasers will kick-off the season on Sunday, July 12 at 11 am. Mediacom will be streaming most, if not all, of the matches.

Mr. Belote mentioned that although we are not doing daily temperature checks in our City buildings, we are following all required protocols and check-in frequently with the Springfield-Greene County Health Department regarding any questions or unique situations. He mentioned that Monday, July 13, City Council will be reviewing a city-wide ordinance to require that masks be worn in public, including City buildings. City employees, too, will be required to wear masks when visiting transitional areas such as break rooms or restrooms. The proposed ordinance includes some flexibility for individuals who are swimming, exercising, or participating in sports activities.

Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards mentioned that the most updated Springfield Lasers schedule will be featured on www.springfieldlasers.com noting that it has already changed several times in the last couple of days. Ms. Edwards mentioned that her division is working on the Fall Park Bench publication. During heat advisory events, we will have designated relief areas available within our Family Centers.

Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CSDP Mr. Cumley reported that summer training camps are being conducted for both ice skating and hockey. Coaches utilize the ice, along with park grounds, for workouts as part of their training. Our Community Sports Development Program camps have seen higher participation numbers this summer. The Jordan Valley Park fountain has been busy with a lot of patrons enjoying this amenity. Mr. Cumley mentioned that the CSDP and Cooper Tennis Academy received the USTA Missouri Valley Section Youth Tennis Provider of the Month Award. The award recognizes safety protocols the program has put in place while continuing to offer high quality programming for all ages and skill levels.

Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park mentioned that the new Fulbright Spring Trail segment of 1.4 miles was recently completed. Ozark Greenways secured a Recreational Trail Grant in the amount of \$150,000 and raised additional capital funds to construct the \$387,282 project, which completes the connection from Ritter Springs Park through Lost Hill Park, all the way to Truman Elementary School. Conco donated more than 2,350 tons of base stone for the project. We appreciate our financial partners, along with the many other contributors such as staff from Greene County Planning Office, City's Public Works Department, Emory Sapp, the contractor, Ozark Greenway volunteers, and our Senior Park Planner, Jeff Smith, who prepared the contract and performed quality inspections and reports.

Mr. Park reported that the City's Planning and Zoning Committee will review a development proposal for land located across from Sequiota Park on Thursday, July 16. Mr. Park will continue to attend the meetings and monitor the project discussions. Mr. Belote stated that the developer has met with Parks Administration in the past to include our input and discuss possible ways that we can work together. The developer has also met with the Galloway

Neighborhood Association and has been responsive to their input and suggestions. There are plans to improve the road infrastructure on Galloway Street, along with some additional improvements for the frontage of the property. Mr. Park stated that the City may need to look at road improvements on Lone Pine in the future. As there is considerable interest in this area, Mr. Belote suggested including the Sequiota/Galloway Corridor as a discussion item for a future Park Board meeting.

Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser reported that Lake Country Soccer postponed their 1st Annual Soccer Golf Tournament, which was a fund-raising event scheduled for July 18-19. The Parks Department is scheduled to receive updated computers as part of the City's computer replacement schedule. Ms. Reser appreciates the work of the Recreation staff in bringing our patrons back together as best as they can, as well as those patrons for participating in our programs.

Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker stated that Dickerson Park Zoo was awarded the 2020 Conservation Prize by the SaveNature.Org organization for their leadership role in saving critical biological diversity and creating a conservation partnership with FOZ members, staff and guests to save endangered and threatened rainforest habitats. The award will be presented at the virtual American Association of Zoo Keepers conference in September. Mr. Crocker mentioned that the Zoo is up for re-accreditation in 2022, which is reviewed every five years. Since the accreditation committee is unable to do site inspections at this time, their reaccreditation consideration has been moved back to 2023.

Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher mentioned that we are in the process of reviewing the initial draft of the Economic Impact Study. We will share an updated draft with the Board once revisions are made. The City's Forward SGF consulting firm, Houseal Lavigne, will be in Springfield to meet with our Parks Administrative Team to gain input for the development of our Parks Master Plan on July 22. Staff continues to make progress on the compliance documentation needed for our CAPRA reaccreditation application, which will be completed by the end of the year. Golf rounds and revenue continue to be strong during the month of June.

Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote reminded the Board that we will make a Parks Update presentation to City Council at their luncheon on July 21 at 12 noon. Board members may attend in person, while physically distancing, or request an invitation to virtually participate in the meeting.

VII. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair did not have a report to discuss.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

X. CALENDAR

Mr. Sidney Needem, Board Member, and long-time member of the Springfield Reunion Club, mentioned that with the current health situation, they have decided not to host the annual Park Days event, which takes place in Silver Springs Park. There will be a fish fry on Sunday, August 2 at Pitts Methodist Church as part of their capital campaign, and everyone is welcome to attend.

Mr. Scott Bailes personally welcomed Curtis and Heather to the Park Board since he was not in attendance when they attended their first meeting in June. Mr. Bailes stated that he was deeply disappointed that the Greene County Commissioners did not reappoint Board Member, Michele Risdal-Barnes, to a second term, as she has been an exceptional community volunteer and active leader on the Park Board. As a Board, we were not given an opportunity to formally, and in-person, recognize Michele, who served on the Board for four years. Additionally, Mr. Bailes stated that this was the first time in its history that the Park Board and the Director of Parks' Office was not a part of the appointment consideration process. Mr. Bailes again congratulated Curtis and Heather on their appointment and mentioned that the Park Board is a very involved and supportive group, and they are fortunate to work with a dedicated staff. Together we work to make the park system and our community better.

- a. Parks Update Presentation to Mayor and City Council: Tuesday, July 21, 2020, at 12 noon, City Council Chambers and virtually by invitation
- b. Park Board Meeting: Friday, August 14, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. Location to be determined and possibly virtually

XI. CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Curtis Jared made a motion to go into Closed Session after a brief recess; seconded by Ms. Tammy Mast. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Sidney Needem made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Curtis Jared. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.