

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Friday, August 14, 2020**

Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center, 2400 S. Scenic, Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. Carolyn Gerdes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Randy Blackwood, Mike Chiles, Carolyn Gerdes, Curtis Jared, Tammy Mast, Sidney Needem, Heather Noggle

Members Absent: Cynthia Lipscomb

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

Guest: Trenton Roebke, Intern with Scott Bailes, Board Member, from Ballparks of America

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Sidney Needem made a motion to approve the July 10, 2020, Park Board Meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. Curtis Jared. Motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Curtis Jared made a motion to approve the July 10, 2020, Closed Park Board Meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. Scott Bailes. Motion was approved unanimously.

III. GRANT ACCEPTANCE – GREENE COUNTY SENIOR CITIZENS SERVICES BOARD

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation, stated that our Northview Center staff applied for a grant through the Greene County Senior Citizens Services Board (GCSCSB) to replace outdated computer equipment and software used in computer technology classes for seniors. In May 2020, we received written confirmation from GCSCSB that we were awarded the grant in the amount of \$9,736.00. The grant is intended for eight computers, a one-time Microsoft Office license for each computer, and a four-year warranty. The computers will be used to offer computer technology programs for seniors including basic email, social media, posting photos, and communication options with family members. Mr. Randy Blackwood made a motion to authorize a resolution for the Park Board to accept the grant from the Greene County Senior Citizens Services Fund Board; seconded by Mr. Curtis Jared. Motion was approved unanimously.

IV. LONE PINE/SEQUIOTA PARK AREA DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Mr. Belote provided a brief update regarding the Lone Pine area development proposed directly across from Sequiota Park. The plan, along with a request for a Zoning Change, is currently under review by the Springfield City Council. Key exhibits from the developer's proposal were

distributed to the Board for review. Mr. Belote reviewed the activities and discussions that have taken place over nearly two years. The proposed plan has received support from the City Planning Staff and the Zoning Commission, but the Galloway Neighborhood Association has concerns regarding the impact the proposed development will have on Sequiota Park and Galloway Corridor and preserving the village-like feel of the area. Mr. Belote and Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director, have met with Mr. Mitchell Jenkins, the developer, to discuss possible park improvements and new programs that we may jointly develop. Mr. Jenkins has met with the neighborhood association several times, as well, to discuss ways to preserve some of the historic buildings and restore buildings into usable retail space. Mr. Belote mentioned that he believes the proposed multi-family housing development will increase the pedestrian and bicyclist traffic more than vehicles at the park. Mr. Belote stated that we are thankful that the developer and Galloway Neighborhood Association have both included Sequiota Park and Galloway Creek Greenway in their long-term plans, and we will continue to work to keep the integrity of the park intact, while working together with the City and others to make the area better, including addressing long-term infrastructure needs. Several Board members including Curtis Jared, Carolyn Gerdes, Randy Blackwood, and Mike Chiles expressed the importance of supporting new developments in our community, as it also increases the property values for the residential neighborhoods that are closer to parks and trails. Revitalizing the Galloway area could create a blueprint for future developments near parks and trails in other areas of our community.

V. DEPARTMENTAL COVID-19 UPDATE

Mr. Belote reviewed a recent press release which stated a potential high-risk of COVID-19 exposure at the Dan Kinney Family Center. We had a patron visit the facility, who was considered infectious, both symptomatic and non-symptomatic, on multiple occasions. Mr. Belote stated his appreciation of the way staff, both from the Health Department and Parks, professionally handled the situation in a timely manner.

Mr. Belote stated that the City of Springfield mandated face masking on July 16, while our front-line workers in park facilities began wearing face masks about ten days before the mandate in an effort to help minimize the potential COVID-19 exposure. Our Park Operations staff have been diligently cleaning and disinfecting outdoor restrooms and continue to provide necessary personal protective equipment for Parks staff and sanitizing supplies for our facilities. Our Golf Division staff has been open since the beginning of the pandemic and continue to operate while making modifications as needed. We had hoped that once the initial wave of active cases had passed, we would be able to open all programming and host our regularly-scheduled events. But with continued potential health risks present, we regret that we will be cancelling a couple of our larger community events including the Japanese Fall Festival and Harvest Fest. The Dickerson Park Zoo is cancelling their Ball of the Wild event, which is a significant financial component to the Zoo's operating budget. We are grateful that many of our event sponsors are allowing us to keep their contributions as the financial support is still needed. The Missouri State High School Athletic Association is trying to move some of the fall championship events to the spring season. We are not fully sure of the impact the pandemic will have on college sports in the Missouri Valley, but we have received notification that the Missouri State Ice Bears season has been moved until after the holidays.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation, mentioned that we are modifying the annual Turkey Trot to a virtual event. There will also be a competitive component and participants can upload their race results. Registered participants will still receive a t-shirt and packet pick up will most likely feature a drive-thru station. Our community partners, Developmental Center of the Ozarks and Ozark Food Harvest, are strategizing with us on how to make this family event successful for everyone involved.

Mr. Belote stated that the Board is aware that we had projected a deficit of up to \$1.6 million dollars for the year ended June 30, 2020. With the help of the City sales tax receipts coming in stronger than anticipated and the implementation of a city-wide hiring freeze, we were able to reduce that deficit by nearly 50 percent. We were grateful that we did not have to lay off or furlough any staff during the pandemic thus far. The City also applied for CARES act funding distributed by Greene County for reimbursement of expenses related to COVID-19, and our Parks COVID-19 expenses have been a significant portion of that application.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports to discuss.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney mentioned that he continues to work with the Risk Management Office in maintaining an adequate supply of personal protection equipment and cleaning supplies for our staff and facilities. Mr. Carney encouraged the Board to enjoy a walk through the Botanical Center grounds as the staff works diligently to improve the Mizumoto Stroll Garden and surrounding gardens.

Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CSDP Mr. Cumley stated that the Missouri Ice Bears season has been delayed and will begin in January after the holiday season, continuing until March or April. There has been a slight increase in rental events at Jordan Valley Park. A local church has also made a weekly reservation at Founders Park. All event organizers have been apprised of the masking and physical distance requirements that must be followed during the events. Movies at Founders Park had been moved from the summer to September, but due to the continued potential health risk, this event has also been cancelled. The Arizona State Women's Hockey tournament involving six to eight national collegiate programs has been moved from October to March.

Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards mentioned that the Communications Team displayed new Parks retail merchandise at the Teddy Bear Picnic that took place at Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park on July 10. The merchandise has some of the community's favorite parks such as Sequiota Park, Fassnight Park, and the Botanical Center featured on t-shirts and decals. Items are now for sale in our gift shops at the Botanical Center and Lake Springfield Boathouse. Future designs will include t-shirts printed with scenes from Doling Park, Rutledge Wilson Farm Park, and Lake Springfield Boathouse. Ms. Edwards reported that a recent article suggested that individuals display more happiness when they visited parks and posted pictures of their activities in parks, and they reportedly stay happy for up to 10

hours. Mr. Randy Blackwood complimented Ms. Edwards and the great way she has represented the Park Board in recent media interviews.

Anne-Mary McGrath Superintendent of Recreation Ms. McGrath mentioned that staff remains committed to be engaged with our senior and accessible recreation participants. Northview Center staff recently offered tai chi classes for seniors at the Jordan Valley Maintenance Building patio area. The patio offers shade and participants can still practice physical distancing during this time that Northview Center remains closed. We also offering remote bingo, where participants can tune in to a radio frequency to play the game.

Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser stated that Tim McCrea, Business Systems Analyst, and Tim Carpenter, Park Ranger Administrator, have been reviewing our land lines including fax lines to determine if the service can be conducted via internet or cell phone in an effort to reduce monthly costs. We plan to complete the assessment in October as the cost for a land line will almost triple in November. Although some land lines will need to remain, it is also possible that several equipment upgrades could be considered to offer our security monitoring via internet or cell services. Mr. Belote mentioned that the Missouri Park and Recreation Association is offering professional training opportunities virtually through their Leadership Development Institute, which Kim helps to Chair. The annual National Recreation and Park Association Congress convention will also be offered virtually, which will allow more interested Parks staff to participate in the professional development sessions.

Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park mentioned that the new Ambler Fountains, which were dedicated last year, are located just north of the Botanical Center, and are truly a beautiful amenity to the park. Mr. Park stated that he is working to design another fountain within Nathanael Greene Park, which has been donated by Mr. Thomas Kachel's estate. Our staff continues to renovate the Rose Garden within the Springfield Botanical Gardens. With the help of volunteers, roses and other plants were recently added to the Rose Garden area.

Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker stated that upcoming Zoo events including Ball of the Wild, Kids Fair, and Brew at the Zoo have been cancelled. The Friends of the Zoo are reviewing ideas to host a smaller event for Halloween. A new play feature has been completed for the Zoo, which allows kids to climb and crawl through a log-like structure.

Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher stated that we recently had a COVID-19 exposure incident within the Golf Division, which required half of the golf pro staff at two of our courses to be quarantined. The other two golf pros not affected covered operations at all three courses for nearly two weeks including successfully overseeing the City Golf Championship and Price Cutter Professional Qualifying Event. Mr. Fisher reported on behalf of Matt Coats that he appreciated the work of many volunteers at Lake Springfield Boathouse, who have been planting native plants and wildflowers throughout the park over the last three years.

Bob Belote, Director of Parks Mr. Belote thanked the Board Members who attended or virtually participated in the City Council luncheon where we presented a Parks Update on July 22. Mr. Belote stated that City Council was receptive to the presentation and understood our current financial constraints. City Council also recognized the demand for our services and increased usage of parks and trails, especially during the pandemic.

Mr. Belote stated that thanks to a recent introduction by Board Member, Tammy Mast, we have a meeting with the Darr Family Foundation to discuss possible collaboration and funding opportunities. The meeting will take place on Friday, September 11 during our normal Board meeting time; therefore, we will send out possible dates and times for the rescheduled September Board meeting.

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 meeting for September 11, 2020, has been rescheduled to Wednesday, September 16, at 8:30 am. We will meet at Jordan Valley Ice Park in the upper lobby area.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Curtis Jared made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.