

MINUTES
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Lake Springfield Boathouse, 2312 Lake Springfield Park Road, Springfield, Missouri, and
Virtually via Microsoft Teams Platform
Friday, July 8, 2022

I. ROLL CALL

Mr. Sidney Needem, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

Park Board Members Present: Randy Blackwood, Leslie Carrier, Ann Compton (via Teams), Curtis Jared, Mark McNay (via Teams), Sidney Needem, Heather Noggle, Royce Reding, Susie Turner

Park Board Members Absent: none

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Randy Blackwood made the motion to approve the June 10, 2022, Park Board minutes; seconded by Ms. Heather Noggle. Motion was passed unanimously. Ms. Leslie Carrier made the motion to approve the June 10, 2022, Closed Session minutes; seconded by Mr. Randy Blackwood. Motion passed unanimously.

III. SILVER SPRINGS PARK/TIMMONS HALL UPDATE

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, stated that we had intended to host the Board meeting at Timmons Hall today, but due to air-conditioning issues at the facility, we moved the meeting to Lake Springfield Boathouse. Ms. Christine Peoples, Timmons Hall Coordinator, presented information about recent events, and she thanked the collaborative partners, history keepers, and volunteers who assist in making the events successful. Ms. Peoples shared information about the Black History Summer Academy outreach program, which includes hands-on activities and the reading of a historical book that connects to Silver Springs Park. The program has 100 youth enrolled this year. Ms. Peoples stated that she uses exhibits within Timmons Hall to share historical stories such as how the medical needs of the community were met and how some methods are still relative today. This exhibit will be on display during the Reunion Club's Park Days event coming up in Silver Springs Park, as well. Ms. Peoples has received several grants to help provide educational activities such as the History Keeper luncheons. To capture the historical knowledge from the History Keepers, the stories are being recorded and sent to the State Historical Society.

Ms. Peoples mentioned the Parks Day event calendar for August 4-7, 2022, is listed on the back page of the Unite newspaper, a publication that has been in existence for 34 years, with over 2,700 readers, and was distributed in the Park Board packet. Ms. Jenny Edwards, Public

Information Administrator, mentioned that Park Board member, Heather Noggle, is also a contributing writer to the Unite Publication, and her latest article appears on page 5.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director, mentioned his appreciation for the City's Environmental Services Departmental team who is helping to make necessary repairs to the underground pipes that burst at Silver Springs Park, leading to the flooded amphitheater and playground areas.

IV. MUSGRAVE GRANT FOR SPARC PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation, stated that our SPARC program was awarded a \$50,000 grant last year from the Jeannette L. Musgrave Foundation's Change for Children to provide high-quality, professional staff training to address the mental and social-emotional behavioral needs of youth in Springfield through the Before and After-School programs. After the Foundation Committee's evaluation of SPARC's implementation and usage of the first grant, SPARC is again being awarded a second year of grant funds for 2022-2023 in the amount of \$30,000. Mr. Randy Blackwood made a motion to accept the Jeannette L. Musgrave Foundation's Change for Children program grant in support of youth mental health in the amount of \$30,000; seconded by Ms. Susie Turner. Motion passed unanimously.

V. ARPA-FUNDED PARKS AND TRAILS PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Belote provided a status update on the ARPA-Funded projects. He mentioned that Governor Parsons has approved the State budget that includes ARPA funding in the amount of \$13.5 million to the Park Board for renovation of the three Cooper Park Projects: Lake Country Soccer Complex, the Cooper Youth Baseball Complex, and Killian Softball Complex. Mr. Belote mentioned that all three of these renovation projects were listed on our unfunded project list discussed during our budget workshop. The new funding will provide turf for eight Lake Country Soccer fields, along with six softball fields, and all five youth baseball fields. The 19 turf fields will reduce our maintenance and increase our revenue potential. On Monday, July 11, City Council will also be reviewing the City's ARPA Committee recommendations, and we are hopeful they will recommend approval for \$7.3 million dollars to these Cooper Sports Complex projects.

With the approval from City Council and the State ARPA Funding, this would mean the Park Board would receive \$20,800,000 for restoration for Cooper Park. The City ARPA Committee is also recommending \$3 million dollars towards the Chadwick Flyer Regional Greenway Trail Development Project, which stretches from Sunshine, through Galloway, through Sequiota Park, with connections to Lake Springfield, to the Finley River and into Ozark and the Finley Farms area, making it a trail over 15 miles long. If approved, the City ARPA funding will provide a great start to this project. Additionally, we have made some requests for expansion of the Fieldhouse Sportcenter, but we currently have not received potential funding for that project. At the State of Missouri level, there will be additional funding through the Department of Economic Development, Division of Tourism, in which the Fieldhouse facility expansion may be a good project to be considered.

With the impending new Cooper Park improvements, we need to study the whole park including the traffic flow, shared parking lots, retaining the neighborhood park, and proper signage. Even though these items were not included in our ARPA request application, they should be part of

the master plan for this corridor. We want all four complexes, the three receiving ARPA funding and Cooper Tennis Complex, to work cooperatively and be good neighbors to those adjacent neighborhoods. These new improvements are a great amenity for our local athletes and their families. We can host more local, state, and regional level events, in which additional economic impact to the community will also be realized.

We are now approaching the secondary phase of ARPA funding, including Greene County, who will be opening up their small business portal for not-for-profit groups shortly. Several of our partner groups have talked to us about working together to submit other projects that would benefit both entities.

Mr. Belote thanked the State of Missouri, local legislators, along with the City ARPA Committee, for recommending our projects for full City Council consideration. If City Council approves the recommendations of the City ARPA Committee, we would recommend a kick-off or groundbreaking event at Cooper Park relatively soon. We would then begin working with the engineers for the Lake Country Soccer project to get it started as soon as possible as we only have three years to complete the projects that were awarded funding.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORT

- a. **Nominating Committee** Mr. Belote thanked Mr. Sidney Needem and Mr. Randy Blackwood for their past year of service as Park Board Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. Additionally, he appreciated Ms. Susie Turner for agreeing to Chair the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee has selected a slate of candidates for the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary for 2022-2023, and a ballot was distributed to the Board.

Board members discussed the concept of the Director of Parks serving as the Secretary to the Board, which is the practice previous Boards have recommended. Although there is not an Executive Committee comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary to the Board, it was mentioned that the Director of Parks serving in this role could be perceived as a conflict of interest even though the Director does not vote on any Board issues. The Director suggested that the Nominating Committee review the bylaws and discuss the role of Secretary to the Board in more detail.

In regard to selecting a candidate for a Board seat replacement, Mr. Belote stated that typically the Nominating Committee reviews the applications, selects top candidates to be interviewed, and then conducts the interviews. After the interviews, the Nominating Committee makes a recommendation, and the candidate's name is forwarded to the City Manager and/or Greene County Commission, and the final approval of the recommendation is made by City Council.

Mr. Belote explained that we used to have several Board committees who reviewed certain aspects pertaining to the Board's operations and budget such as a Golf Committee, Finance Committee, Recreation Committee, and a Fees and Charges Committee. However, in recent years, the Board members wanted to be part of all the budget discussions and suggested that we adopt a Board Budget Workshop format where the budget and operations information were presented in detail to all of the Board members at the same time.

Mr. Belote mentioned that our Park Development/Property Assessment Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 26 at 5:00 pm, and members of the Board are welcome to attend the meeting in addition to those designated Committee members. After the Park Development/Property Assessment Committee meeting, we will bring a report back to the Board.

Mr. Curtis Jared made a motion to review the Secretary position and how the position interacts with the Board and perhaps review the bylaws in order to assess what might be best for the Board moving forward. There was no second of this motion and discussion continued, so Mr. Jared rescinded the motion.

After continued discussion, Ms. Susie Turner made a motion to amend the slate presented today and suggested that the Board vote for the Chair and Vice Chair positions and table the vote for the Secretary to the Board until further review of the bylaws; Mr. Curtis Jared seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Woolsey indicated that she would send the bylaws electronically for the Board to review, and she would review the legal implications of a Board member serving as Secretary in regard to the signing of contracts. The ballots were collected, and Ms. Woolsey later reported that Mr. Randy Blackwood was elected as the Chair, with one abstention by Mr. Blackwood, and Ms. Heather Noggle was unanimously elected as Vice Chair.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities Mr. Coats mentioned that Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park staff is busy with summer camps. Lake Springfield Park staff hosted 21 lake room rentals and 12 pavilion rentals in June. Timmons Hall staff and volunteers did a tremendous job at the Juneteenth celebration event in Silver Springs Park. Maintenance crews have been doing a commendable job keeping up with HVAC issues caused by the high temperatures.

Mr. Jeff Cumley, Superintendent of Jordan Valley Park and CSDP Programs Mr. Cumley reported that the Jordan Valley Park staff hosted several events in June including the O'Reilly employee event with over 3,000 people and Snowfest with over 1,000 people.

Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations Mr. Mitchell reported that the Golf Fund achieved a record amount in revenue for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022. Zoo revenues are also up from the previous year. Mr. Mitchell reported that sales tax revenue was up a modest six percent, and he believes the increase in sales tax revenue will begin decreasing. Mr. Belote stated we can discuss with the Board what additional information regarding revenue centers would be helpful to the Board in the future.

Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation Ms. McGrath reported that the Community Tennis Division hosted "Tennis Under the Lights" at Lafayette Park on June 3, with 30 participants. Kid's Fishing Fun Day was held at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park on June 4, with over 100 kids. Ms. McGrath stated that our Community Sports Division has hosted a youth or adult softball tournament every weekend in June. Go Skateboarding Day was on June 21, with 157 attendees. The Teddy Bear Picnic event was held at Nathanael-Greene/Close Memorial

Park, with over 100 participants and their bears. Bark in the Park is scheduled on July 16. The Price Cutter Charity Championship Golf Tournament activities begin on July 19. As a recipient of the proceeds from the event, our staff will provide marshals for Hole 15 throughout the tournament play. Ms. McGrath stated that we have internal protocols and procedures that our staff follows to notify the public about designated cooling centers and extended pool hours when our community experiences a heat advisory event.

Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services Mr. Carney reported that with the hotter and dryer than normal weather, our HVAC systems are challenged to keep our facilities cool. Mr. Carney mentioned that on June 18, 2022, we hosted the Butterfly Festival, a softball tournament at Killian, the Juneteenth Celebration event, and a pickleball tournament at Cooper Tennis Complex, which took a significant amount of coordination within several divisions.

Ms. Jenny Edwards, Public Information Administrator Ms. Edwards stated that normally this weekend, we would be beginning World TeamTennis (WTT) season with the Springfield Lasers home matches. WTT will send out the official statement, but it does not appear that there will be a 2022 season. Mr. Belote mentioned that the WTT league season is on hold for now as it was difficult for team owners to recoup any revenue when the teams did not have any home matches. We are hopeful that we will have a season in 2023 and play Lasers matches here in Springfield. Ms. Edwards mentioned that there is a survey on the Park Board website collecting a variety of information, so please take time to complete the survey.

Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director Ms. Reser stated that Tim McCrea is updating security systems at the Botanical Center and Chesterfield Family Center. Ms. Reser thanked the Parks staff for conducting so many activities while enduring the hot temperatures and for taking good care of our participants, as well. Ms. Reser reported that the Lake Country Soccer Board continues to fundraise, and they are considering submitting an ARPA application for the next round of funding through Greene County. Mr. Belote stated that he appreciates Lake Country's continued efforts to achieve their \$3.5 million dollars commitment for the soccer field amenities and improvements.

Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director Mr. Park reported that the Botanical Center staff hosted nine weddings in June. The Thomas J. Kachel Fountain dedication is next month following the Park Board meeting at 10:30 am on Friday, August 12. Organizers are meeting bi-weekly discussing the development of the Chadwick Flyer trail. We are hopeful that the construction documents will be completed late summer with the help of a grant from Ozarks Transportation Organization.

Mr. Mike Crocker, Assistant Director Mr. Crocker stated that Friends of the Zoo's largest fund-raising event, Ball of the Wild, is tonight, July 8, at the White River Conference Center. Brew at the Zoo will be held at the Zoo on September 17.

Mr. Jim Fisher, Assistant Director Mr. Fisher stated that he was proud of the Golf Division staff for achieving a record amount in revenue, including a successful Governor's Cup tournament played at both Bill and Payne Stewart and Rivercut Golf Courses. Mr. Fisher mentioned that the Park Rangers provided 16 days of bike patrol on the trails last month.

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks

Mr. Belote stated that staff hosted a dedication of the recent improvements at the Rose Garden in Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park which included a bronze sculpture entitled "Sail Away". The new amenities were funded by former Park Board Chair, Ms. Carolyn Gerdes, in honor of her late husband, Dr. John Gerdes. Mr. Belote mentioned that the Fulbright Spring Greenway recently received recognition as a National Recreation Trail, the only trail in Missouri to receive this designation out of the nine sites awarded this past year. It usually takes 10-15 years to receive this honor, but the Fulbright Spring Greenway has been open for just three years. The Forward SGF Committee will reveal their report findings at a public viewing at Hammons Field, beginning at 3 pm, on Thursday, July 21.

Mr. Belote stated that we will host another dedication at Sanford Park, on Saturday, July 23. Through the Neighborhood Works program, we created a designated parking lot, park signage, and a pavilion at Sanford Park. It took two years to fully complete the project because of the Neighborhood Works \$100,000 per project annually. The nearby neighborhood is very pleased and excited to use the new park amenities. Mr. Belote mentioned that courtesy of the City of Springfield's partnership with the Springfield Cardinals, we will host a Park Board Social on Wednesday, July 27. Game time is 6:35 pm.

VIII. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair did not have a report.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

X. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Randy Blackwood thanked Mr. Sidney Needem for his leadership as Chair this past year. Mr. Needem thanked everyone for their participation on the Park Board. He believes this is the best board to serve on, and he appreciates the Park Board's efforts to continue working collaboratively with community partners.

XI. CALENDAR

- a. Sanford Park Dedication: Saturday, July 23, at 10:00 am, Battlefield & Campbell
- b. Springfield Cardinals/Park Board Social: Wednesday, July 27, Game time is 6:35 pm
- c. Park Board Meeting: Friday, August 12, at 8:30 am, Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center
- d. Thomas J. Kachel Fountain Dedication: Friday, August 12, at 10:30 am, Springfield Botanical Gardens, Great Lawn Area

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Heather Noggle made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Leslie Carrier. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:27 am.