BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Lake Springfield Boathouse, 2312 Lake Springfield, Springfield, Missouri, and
Virtually via Microsoft Teams Platform
Friday, February 9, 2024

1. ROLL CALL & BUDGET OVERVIEW

Mr. Randy Blackwood, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:52 a.m.

Park Board Members Present: Randy Blackwood, Don Chenevert, Jr., Ann Compton (via Teams), Mark McNay, Dr. Dianna Parker, Royce Reding, Susie Turner

Park Board Members Absent: Leslie Carrier, Curtis Jared

Park Board Staff Present: Jon Carney, Tim Carpenter, Matt Coats, Jenny Edwards, Jim Fisher, Anne-Mary McGrath, Karen Mellinger, Jerry Mitchell, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Jeff Smith, Jackson Thompson, Lana Woolsey

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Mr. Blackwood thanked the Fees and Charges Committee, which includes Don Chenevert, Jr. and Royce Reding, for their review and input of the proposed FY 2024-25 proposed fees and charges at their meeting on January 31, 2024.

2. REVIEW OF FY 2024-2025 PROPOSED BUDGET DOCUMENT & BUDGET SNAPSHOT HANDOUT

Proposed Revenues Mr. Jim Fisher, Interim Director of Parks, stated that the Budget Snapshot document summarizes the revenue sources and expenditures for a good overview and useful tool in presenting the budget information. Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations, reviewed the Budget Snapshot document stating that we are projecting a conservative 1.5 percent growth in our 2001 and 2006 Parks Sales Tax funds. The City's Finance Department reports the Property Mill Tax projections, and due to growth and development throughout Springfield, they have suggested an increase of 9.78 percent for a total amount of $8,011,548. Golf Revenue is projected to conservatively increase in the next budget cycle. The Hotel/Motel Tax revenues are partially used to help support and maintain the Route 66 Park and Jordan Valley Park. We propose to utilize this year's golf enterprise fund balance next year for completing work on golf paths at Horton Smith Golf Course.

Proposed Expenditures Mr. Mitchell reviewed the expenditure of Personnel Service, Capital Outlay and Development, Transfer to City of Springfield for Administrative Services, Charges for Services such as General Services, Utilities, and the increase in Parks Contribution to the City of Springfield's Self-Insurance Fund, along with Operating and Maintenance Supplies. Mr. Mitchell also reviewed our current Debt Service.

Departmental Priorities Mr. Fisher reviewed the FY 2024-25 Budget Proposal areas of special emphasis. The most important area remains a long-term reinvestment tool to address the community's and future expectations for its parks and trail system. Recently, we have seen a reinvestment of over $27,000,000 made for renovations in Cooper Park's facilities through State, City ARPA, and Park Board Funding. With significant financial support from the State, City and local donor sources, similar turf efforts for Killian Softball Complex and Cooper Youth Baseball Complex are being planned as necessary project fund raising continues. We continue to partner with Ozark Greenways including a current trail grant initiative to construct three miles of trail to create an 80-mile continuous loop. We actively seek funding support to engage and restore our neighborhood parks when possible. Over the past five-year period, with the help of Federal HUD funds, City of Springfield Neighborhood Works Program funding, donor support and other key partnerships, we have reinvested well over $2,500,000 in neighborhood parks. The Park Board will continue to explore partnerships with health, wellness, and outdoor-focused organizations. The Dickerson Park Zoo facility, which was accredited through the Association of Zoos and Aquariums for the eighth time in 2024, requires capital project funding for much-needed maintenance and repair of the Zoo's aging infrastructure. Through our Park Ranger Division, we continue to emphasize park system safety, security, and stewardship, while striving to become a fully-staffed division. Our Golf Division has continued to significantly grow over the last three years, which has allowed golf course improvements to be completed and additional projects to be considered for FY 2024-2025.

The Park Board discussed the importance of a long-term funding source and developing a plan to reduce the unfunded priorities and maintenance projects. Mr. Fisher stated that when the county-wide sales tax funding was not renewed, it was detrimental to our organization. We have been thankful for the State and City ARPA funds, along with the additional support of the City Manager's office, but a more sustainable funding source is needed.

FY 2024-2025 Funded Departmental Priorities Mr. Fisher explained that the funded departmental priorities within the budget document outline the priorities by funding source, and he reviewed the details of these items within the Parks General Fund, and the 2001 and 2006 Parks Sales Tax Funds. Within all three funds, we propose to fund the compensation for Variable Hour and Seasonal Employees as the state of Missouri minimum wage rate increased on January 1, 2024, along with the prospective increase on January 1, 2025, and utilize a lease-purchase financing option for replacement of equipment. Mr. Fisher reviewed the proposed appropriate funding and justification for reclassification of several key positions throughout the park system. We propose to continue our commitment to address park infrastructure needs and for continued efforts to address ADA-compliant site deficiencies. Funding from the 2001 and 2006 Parks Sales Tax operating funds, we will designate money to help comprise a total of one percent allocation of the FY 2024-2025 Parks Budget.

Within the Golf Enterprise Fund, we propose to fund the compensation for Variable Hour and Seasonal Employees as the state of Missouri minimum wage rate increased on January 1, 2024, along with the prospective increase on January 1, 2025, and utilize a lease-purchase financing option for replacement of equipment. Mr. Fisher explained the proposed restoration of funding for two full-time employees within the Golf Division. He also explained the proposed use of this year's Golf Enterprise Fund Balance to fund the completion of the cart path system at Horton Smith Golf Course. Although contracting services for a Golf Master Plan remains unfunded, it is considered a significant priority and future revenue sources could allow this process to be initiated during FY 2025-2026.

The Park Board discussed whether funds have been allocated for a Park District feasibility study, but we currently have not included this expense in our proposed budget for next year.

Proposed Fees and Charges The Fees and Charges Committee thoroughly reviewed all the proposed fee changes, including increasing fee ranges. Mr. Fisher mentioned that over the last three years, 62 percent of the fees and charges have been changed. The Park Board discussed several specific fees and made suggestions to adjust rental fees for the show wagon and stadium bleachers.

3. OTHER BUDGET SUPPORT DOCUMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION

Proposed Budget Summary – Revenues Mr. Fisher reviewed the new or additional funding sources for the Proposed FY 2024-2025 Budget. He mentioned that this next budget cycle will be the first time that the Golf Enterprise Fund has been able to contribute to the City's self-insurance fund. Mr. Fisher reviewed potential reductions to operating expenditures that could also be an increase in revenue for the next year.

Proposed Budget Summary – Liabilities Mr. Fisher reviewed the new or increased expenditures for the Proposed FY 2024-2025 Budget, which includes the mandatory costs for the City of Springfield's pay improvement plan, prospective salary increases for employees at their top step, and merit pay increases for full-time employees, including the under-budgeted pay improvement plan for FY 2023-2024. He stated that several of these line items, such as the increased contribution to the City Health Insurance Plan and the City Workers Compensation Fund, we have no control over when our budget is developed. We have included a place holder for a possible lease payment or property purchase, but we would need a funding source to complete the purchase.

Mr. Fisher mentioned that we have increased budgeted line-item appropriations within our divisions. Additionally, we made revenue adjustments based on actual revenue amounts for the FY 2024-2025 Budget. We also adjusted our full-time position vacancy rate from 4 percent to 2.35 percent. Mr. Fisher reviewed the impact that the minimum wage and market wage increases has on our next year's budget. Finally, we propose an annual lease/purchase program for vehicle and equipment replacements.

Proposed Budget Summary – Golf Enterprise Fund
Proposed Revenue Mr. Fisher reviewed the new or additional funding sources for FY 2024-2025 within the Golf Enterprise Fund, including an increase in revenue from proposed fees and charges and growth in participation.

Proposed Liabilities The new or increased and mandatory expenditures proposed for FY 2024-2025 included the mandatory costs for the City of Springfield's pay improvement plan, prospective salary increases for employees at their top step, and merit pay increases for full-time employees, including the under-budgeted pay improvement plan for FY 2023-2024. Several of these line items, such as the increased contribution to the City Health Insurance Plan and the City Workers Compensation Fund, we have no control over when our budget is developed.

Funded Priorities Mr. Fisher stated that the funded priorities previously discussed are recapped by specific categories including mandatory/required, increase in operating expenditures, capital equipment lease-purchase items, and personnel on a summary document.

Unfunded Priorities Mr. Fisher mentioned that the top unfunded priorities are included on a summary document. We also included a working list of unfunded priorities document that also includes those top unfunded items. With the recent State and City ARPA funds, and our partnership with Drury University, we have been able to remove some of our projects at Cooper Park and Meador Park.

Debt Issuances Summary Mr. Mitchell stated that the 2005 Cooper Tennis Complex expansion debt will roll off this year. The 2011 Dan Kinney Family Center will be paid in full in 2026-2027, and those funds will be used to pay the 2021 Fieldhouse Sportscenter acquisition, which is currently funded by the City.

4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE INTERIM DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Parks Reserve Fund Update Mr. Mitchell reviewed an Analysis of Fund Balance of our Reserve Fund to achieve the 8-10 percent goal of our total budget. With a 1 percent of the total budget annual contribution, at a 3.5 percent growth rate, it is projected that we may be able to reach an 8 percent fund balance in 2028, and a 10 percent fund balance in 2030.

Cooper Sports Complex APRA-Sponsored Projects & Additional Funding Needs Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director of Park Operations, mentioned that we recently received bids that are within our cost estimates. Mr. Park stated that we have not designated all design costs such as wayfinding signs and the like, but the good news is we believe that the base bids have all the critical items included.

Fieldhouse Sportscenter Operational Budget Update Mr. Fisher indicated that we have not quite met are targeted revenues year-to-date, but new revenue should include the fees associated with the recently installed ATM. We propose to continue contributions to the reserve account for future repairs such as refurbishing the gym floors as scheduled. Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation, stated that we have retained most of our league teams, and we have increased the number of tournaments and offered more programs that we coordinate and facilitate. The Park Board discussed potential naming rights for the Fieldhouse, which agreeably would be a welcome revenue generator and a topic that would require discussion at perhaps a future retreat. It was also suggested that a Park Board policy manual be developed, which would include the policies that had been previously adopted. Mr. Fisher said he would work to prepare the information for the Board's review.

Upcoming Parks Budget Discussions/Presentations with City of Springfield Mr. Fisher mentioned that he and Mr. Mitchell would meet with the City Manager's Office and the Finance Department to review Parks' budget on February 21. We will make any suggested changes discussed today, with the plan of presenting the FY 2024-2025 budget to the Board at the March 8, 2024, meeting for approval.

6. Motion to Adjourn

Mr. Royce Reding made the motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Dr. Dianna Parker. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 10:57 a.m.