

MINUTES
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Lake Springfield Boathouse, 2312 Lake Springfield Park Road, Springfield, Missouri and
Virtually via Microsoft Teams Teleconferencing
Friday, April 12, 2024

I. ROLL CALL

Mr. Randy Blackwood, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

PARK BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Randy Blackwood, Leslie Carrier, Don Chenevert, Jr., Ann Compton, Curtis Jared, Mark McNay (via Teams), Dr. Dianna Parker, Royce Reding, Susie Turner

PARK BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: none

PARK BOARD STAFF PRESENT: Jon Carney, Tim Carpenter, Matt Coats, Jim Fisher, Ben Kellner, Tim McCrea, Karen Mellinger, Anne-Mary McGrath, Jerry Mitchell, Miles Park, Jackson Thompson, Lana Woolsey

Guest: Chris Coulter, Greene County Administrator

II. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Mark McNay, Park Board Secretary, presented and made a motion to approve the minutes, with a suggested edit from Ms. Susie Turner to recognize that Friends of the Garden partnered with the Park Board in the success of the Gardens Aglow event (Agenda Item IV, b), from the March 8, 2024, Park Board Minutes; seconded by Dr. Diana Parker. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. McNay presented and made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 8, 2024, Closed Session meeting; seconded by Ms. Susie Turner. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. McNay presented and made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 28, 2024, Property Development/Assessment Committee Closed Session meeting; seconded by Mr. Curtis Jared.

III. REPORT OF THE OFFICERS

Park Board Chair Report and Comments Mr. Blackwood, Chair, thanked the members of the Property Development/Assessment Committee who met to discuss several property topics in their last meeting.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Accept and Approve Bass Pro Donation—Lost Hill Pavilion** Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities, explained the Park Board's opportunity to receive a \$25,000 donation from Bass Pro Outdoor World to assist with the construction of a recreational and educational pavilion at Lost Hill Park. This pavilion will be used as part

of our Conservation and Outdoor Initiatives Programs and will be available for public use, as well. Mr. Coats stated that the estimated cost of the pavilion is \$100,000. Having met with the Missouri's Department of Conservation regarding this project, MDC has verbally committed to provide a \$50,000 grant to be used towards the pavilion construction. The MDC grant does require a match, so the Parks' share would be \$50,000. With Park Board approval, the Bass Pro donation of \$25,000 will be used as part of the Parks' match requirement. The remaining \$25,000 will be from the sale of walnuts from Lost Hill Park, as a walnut tree harvest is required as part of the Habitat Plan in place for this park site. Parks has already raised \$18,000 towards this amount and expects to raise the additional amount this fall with the next harvest. Mr. Curtis Jared made a motion that the Park Board accept Bass Pro's \$25,000 donation, with the funds to be used towards the construction of an outdoor pavilion at Lost Hill Park, as set out in the Resolution presented to the Board today; seconded by Mr. Don Chenevert, Jr. The motion was passed unanimously.

- b. **Accept and Approve Bass Pro Donation—Kayaks, Paddles, Life Jackets** Mr. Coats stated that with the help of Ms. Jenny Perkins, Lake Springfield Boathouse Coordinator, Bass Pro Outdoor World would like to donate watersport equipment, valued at approximately \$4,300.00, to the Park Board to use for outdoor, water-related programming. Ms. Susie Turner made a motion that the Park Board accept Bass Pro's donation of eight Ascend Tandem Kayaks, 16 Ascend Trek Kayak Paddles, and 10 Bass Pro recreational life jackets, valued at \$4,300.00, as set out in the Resolution presented to the Board today; seconded by Dr. Dianna Parker. The motion was passed unanimously.
- c. **Accept and Approve Forest ReLeaf Donation—Trees** Mr. Coats stated that the Park Board has an opportunity to receive a donation of 300 Missouri native trees and shrubs from Forest ReLeaf of Missouri. The trees will be planted at Lost Hill Park, Lake Springfield Park, and Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park, and will be used to improve the health of the riparian buffer and to mitigate erosion into the waterways at each of these park sites. Mr. Caleb Sanders, Conservation Coordinator, already has volunteer days set up to plant the trees upon the Board's approval of the donation. Dr. Dianna Parker made a motion that the Park Board accept Forest ReLeaf of Missouri's donation of 300 trees and/or shrubs for planting at various park sites, valued at \$9,000.00, as set out in the Resolution presented to the Board today; seconded by Ms. Susie Turner. The motion was passed unanimously.
- d. **Accept and Approve the Missouri Humanities Grant** Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation, stated that the Parks' Outdoor Initiatives Section has the opportunity to receive \$8,319.85 in grant funding from the Missouri Humanities Council through its Major Grant Program. These grant funds will provide funding for staff training and certification from the National Outdoor Leadership School in Wilderness First Responder and American Canoe Association Level 2 Kayak Instructor Certification for three staff members. Additionally, it will cover the purchase of 15 kayaks for use in these programs that will be offered to youth and adults and assist with the curriculum development for land-based and water-based programs offered by section staff. Mr. Don Chenevert, Jr. made a motion that the Park Board approve for staff to apply and accept the \$8,319.85 grant from the Missouri Humanities Council, with the funds to be used by the Parks' Outdoor Initiatives Section in the furtherance of its recreational programs and

the humanities, as set out in the Resolution presented to the Board today; seconded by Mr. Royce Reding. The motion was passed unanimously.

- e. **Authorization of Signing and Executing Parks Contracts and Documents Update** Ms. Lana Woolsey, Parks Assistant City Attorney, stated that we are updating and replacing the previously approved Resolution that provides authority for the Park Board Vice-Chair and various employees to sign contracts and legal documents on behalf of the Park Board. This new Resolution now formalizes the signing authority to include the Business Operations Superintendent, who will be the Managing Officer for liquor control and handling the liquor license process, on behalf of the Park Board. Ms. Leslie Carrier made the motion to approve the Resolution presented to the Board today to update the positions with authority to sign on behalf of the Park Board, and which is to replace all previously approved Park Board Resolutions addressing this same topic; seconded by Mr. Don Chenevert, Jr. The motion was passed unanimously.

- f. **Volunteer Report—Ms. Anne-Mary McGrath** Ms. McGrath presented our annual Volunteer Report as National Volunteer Week will be celebrated April 21-27. The Park Board is proud and honored to have so many dedicated community supporters who donate hours to coach kids, serve as buddies with Miracle League, tend to gardens, prepare and serve meals to seniors, work with animals at Dickerson Park Zoo, and help organize groups of other volunteers to execute projects or events at our parks and facilities.

In 2009, we worked with the National Parks and Recreation Association to develop and implement a comprehensive volunteer management program, which also includes a third-party background check that expires annually. The program established a consistent process and strict protocol for screening, identifying, training, and tracking all our volunteers. In 2023, we screened 678 volunteers. According to the Independent Sector, a coalition of non-profits, foundations, and corporate giving programs, and the leading authority on volunteer valuation, the national valuation of a volunteer hour in 2022 was \$28.66 for the state of Missouri. With 41,190 recorded hours from our volunteers in 2023, this equates to nearly \$1.180 million dollars of donated labor back to our park system. We are grateful for our volunteers' dedication to our parks and programs. Mr. Chenevert asked how we publicize volunteer opportunities, and Ms. McGrath indicated that anyone interested can complete the volunteer form online. We do our best to match skills and interests for areas in need of volunteer support, but we typically do not need to externally recruit volunteers.

- g. **Interim Director of Parks Report and Comments** Mr. Jim Fisher, Interim Director of Parks, stated that recently Ms. Jennifer Penning, Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park Coordinator, and Keith Hunt, Park Operations Utility worker, both passed the Certified Park and Recreation Professional exam. Ms. Kim Reser, Assistant Director, was selected as a recipient of a 2024 National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials Award, in the Professional Fellow category, and will be recognized at their summer meeting in June. Mr. Jackson Thompson was selected as the Interim Assistant Director/Zoo Director following the retirement of long-time Zoo Director, Mike Crocker.

Mr. Fisher mentioned that the Springfield Sister Cities Kite and Pinata Festival was held in Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park on April 6. Canoe and kayak season at Lake Springfield Park begins on April 15, which is also the opening day of the spring season for our Miracle League. The contractor for Cooper Soccer Complex Phase 1 project has been issued a notice to proceed, so work should begin within the next few weeks. A kick-off meeting for the Killian/Cooper Youth Baseball improvements, Phase II, was held last week, and the consultant is in the beginning stage of the design work for the project. The Board discussed the parking issues during large events in the Pythian corridor. Mr. Miles Park, Assistant Director, indicated that we are definitely aware of the neighbor's concerns, and we are working with the project consultants to create additional parking in the area.

Mr. Fisher invited the Park Board to attend a celebration for Mike Crocker, hosted by Friends of the Zoo, on April 17. The reception is from 4:00 – 6:00 pm, with a short ceremony at 4:30 pm. We have received word that Mike has already been involved with several volunteer opportunities since retiring on March 29.

V. CALENDAR

- a. The next Park Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 10, 2024, at 8:30 am, at the Springfield Botanical Center.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Don Chenevert, Jr. made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Curtis Jared. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 am.