

**MINUTES**  
**SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD**  
**Timmons Hall, 1055 E. Webster, Springfield, Missouri**  
**Friday, June 9, 2023**

**I. ROLL CALL**

Mr. Randy Blackwood, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**Park Board Members Present:** Randy Blackwood, Leslie Carrier, Ann Compton (Teams), Curtis Jared, Mark McNay, Heather Noggle, Dr. Dianna Parker, Royce Reding, Susie Turner

**Park Board Members Absent:** None

**Park Board Staff Present:** Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Tim Carpenter, Matt Coats, Jenny Edwards, Jim Fisher, Tim McCrea, Anne-Mary McGrath, Jerry Mitchell, Miles Park, Christine Peoples, Kara Remington, Kim Reser, Jennifer Shepherd, Jeff Smith, Jackson Thompson, Lana Woolsey

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Susie Turner, Secretary, presented the open session minutes from the May 12, 2023, Park Board meeting. Mr. Royce Reding made a motion to approve the May 12, 2023, Park Board open session minutes; seconded by Ms. Leslie Carrier. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Turner also presented the closed session minutes from the May 12, 2023, Park Board meeting. Mr. Curtis Jared made a motion to approve the May 12, 2023, Park Board closed session minutes, seconded by Ms. Heather Noggle. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. UPDATE ON TIMMONS HALL ACTIVITIES & UPCOMING JUNETEENTH, PARK DAY EVENTS**

Ms. Christine Peoples, Timmons Hall Coordinator, provided information regarding the “We Are One” Juneteenth three-day celebration that will take place June 16-18. The first event on the June 16 will be at the Springfield Art Museum with the “Creating an American Identity” exhibition featuring prominent black artists. In the evening, The Milly Project will have a performance in the auditorium. Also, there will be a live actor, living history tour at Timmons Hall focused on the Harlem Renaissance. On June 17, there will be a full-day celebration at the Springfield Expo Center, with vendor booths, food, and live music performances. On June 18, there will be music performances at The Riff to close out the celebration weekend. We have partnered with the Springfield-Greene County Libraries and the local Barnes & Noble retail store from June 3-18 to offer a cultural tour of the African American community. By picking up an “I Too Am America” passport, participants can explore an African American timeline history and learn about the historical contributions made in Springfield while African Americans strived toward freedom.

Ms. Peoples also stated that Park Day will be held on August 4, 2023, in Silver Springs Park and Timmons Hall and discussed the history of Park Day.

#### **IV. CFO GRANT FOR PARK DAY REUNION EVENT DOCUMENTARY**

Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities, stated that Timmons Hall was recently notified by the Community Foundation of the Ozarks (CFO) of an opportunity to receive an Arts and Culture Grant through CFO's partnership with the Springfield Regional Arts Council (SRAC) and the Musgrave Foundation. The grant is to be used towards costs associated with the making of a Park Day's Reunion Documentary Film as part of the CFO's spring 2023 Grant Program. Timmons Hall will use the grant funds to assist in purchasing a scanner and rental space for hosting historical scanning sessions of Park Day archival materials. The materials will be used to make the film, designed to educate future generations on the historical significance and importance of Silver Springs Park. Parks staff is requesting approval and acceptance of the Arts and Culture Grant. Ms. Susie Turner made a motion to approve the acceptance of the grant; seconded by Mr. Mark McNay. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **V. LAKE SPRINGFIELD OLD IRON BRIDGE TRANSFER TO PARK BOARD OWNERSHIP**

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission (MHTC) contacted the City's Public Works Department (PW) after MHTC determined that it no longer needed or wanted the Old MoDOT Lake Springfield Steel Bridge on Old Highway 65, which is owned by MHTC. This bridge was previously used as part of old Hwy 65 before the new interchange was constructed but has since been dormant as part of MHTC's public highway system. The City has continued to use the bridge, however, as a critical piece of our trail network infrastructure for the Lake Springfield area and as a trailhead access point to the Park Board's Galloway Trail, with long-term plans to develop a more formal trailhead facility at this location. The future use of the bridge as a trail-connector is also expected to increase once the Chadwick Flyer trail is completed. The City also uses the bridge structure to carry and protect City's Environmental Services Department (ES) sanitary sewer line that runs along or under the bridge structure, and AT&T uses the bridge structure for its conduit for fiber lines. Since this bridge is no longer used as part of the public highway system, MHTC wants to dispose of the bridge and reached out to PW, who subsequently contacted Parks because of the heavy use of the bridge as part of the Park Board's existing trail system. If the City declined interest, MHTC planned to demolish the bridge.

As an administrative board of the City, and according to the City Charter, Sections 15.15 and 15.16, the Park Board has the authority to acquire this bridge from MHTC. In consideration of the heavy usage of the bridge as part of our trail system and for the City's sanitary sewer line at this location, and in noting that trail access for this area is highlighted in both the Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan, as well as our Parks & Recreation Master Plan, staff began investigating the option of obtaining ownership of this bridge.

Additionally, if we can complete the transfer of ownership before June 23, 2023, MHTC has agreed to pay Parks the \$100,000 it has earmarked for the demolition of this bridge as part of its current fiscal year budget, with the condition that this money will be applied towards the long-

term maintenance of the bridge. After staff reviewed and investigated the acquisition of this bridge, the matter was discussed on several occasions with the Park Board's Park Development/Property Assessment Committee on July 26, 2022, and January 31, 2023. After negotiating with MHTC, the City was able to arrive at a mutually agreed upon contract to transfer the ownership of the bridge.

We request that the Park Board authorize entering into the proposed contract with MHTC to transfer ownership of the bridge to the Park Board and authorize acceptance of the \$100,000 offer from MHTC for funds to be used towards the bridge. Mr. Curtis Jared made a motion to approve the acceptance of the bridge transfer and funds; seconded by Mr. Mark McNay. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Belote stated that this will be a great opportunity for Parks, and he thanked Ms. Lana Woolsey and Mr. Miles Park for working with PW and MHTC and completing the process of transferring ownership of the bridge.

#### **VI. COMMITTEE REPORT – NOMINATIONS**

Ms. Turner announced that Ms. Leslie Carrier has been reappointed for her second term on the Park Board. Ms. Turner also stated that she is working to obtain information regarding reappointment of County Park Board members.

#### **VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

##### **Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities**

Mr. Coats stated that the first-time Heroes at the Farm event at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park was a great success with around 2,000 attendees. RWF staff plan to make it an annual event. Canoe and kayak rentals at Lake Springfield are up by 500 rentals from last year due to the recent great weather conditions. Conservation Coordinator, Caleb Saunders, has been busy planting native plants at Lake Springfield and hosting volunteer events. Timmons Hall is busy with Juneteenth events and programs throughout June. Summer camps at Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center are full, and they are averaging 90 lessons a week.

##### **Jenny Edwards, Public Information Administrator**

Ms. Edwards stated that the new edition of the Park Bench magazine has been distributed. Media interest has increased due to the pools opening and special events. Ms. Edwards introduced Ms. Kara Remington to talk about an ongoing mural project. Ms. Remington said that she is working with local schools on a new project to paint murals at various Park Board facilities. The first mural was installed at the Oak Grove Community Center in partnership with Summit Preparatory School. The next mural will be installed in one of the party rooms at the Jordan Valley Ice Park.

### **Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services**

Mr. Carney said that May was very busy due to pools opening, ball games, special events, and a general increase in park usage. He said that the Park Operations team shifts from planning phase to action phase in the month of May. He stated that mowing has become a big task due to rain fall and the increasing rate the grass has been growing.

### **Jackson Thompson, Superintendent of Dickerson Park Zoo**

Mr. Thompson stated that the AZA Accreditation Team is conducting their on-site inspection this week. He stated that there were no major concerns during the inspection; however, a few minor concerns were mentioned, and the Zoo staff promptly addressed and corrected those items. Although we will not know the results of the inspection until September, the Accreditation Team was very complimentary of our Zoo staff. On July 15, there will be a 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration of the Zoo from 10AM-2PM. On June 1, the annual "Dream Night" event was held at the Zoo, which allowed children who are chronically ill or have disabilities to tour the zoo. Governor, Mike Parson, and his family stopped by the zoo, and they were very complimentary of the zoo and staff.

### **Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations**

Mr. Mitchell stated that per the Board's request, he prepared a budget actual comparison for revenues and for overall expenditures. He stated that June is the largest revenue month due to the increase of activities in our parks and facilities. Our fiscal year reporting period ends on June 30. Golf revenues through May 31<sup>st</sup> exceeded our budget for the year with June looking like another great revenue month. We will have overall final year-end numbers around September or October.

### **Anne-Mary McGrath, Superintendent of Recreation**

Ms. McGrath said that the Recreation Division was very busy in May. Artsfest was at the beginning of the month and our staff distributed Parks promotional materials at the event. The outdoor pools opened on Memorial Day weekend. We hosted Missouri State High School Activities Association State softball and tennis championships throughout the month. Staff hosted two annual events, Bark in the Park, at Phelps Grove Park, and Dirt Days, at Lafayette Park, on May 20. The Pool Connection is steadily growing with 908 individuals signed up. The Wild Mouse rollercoaster sign was found in a storage unit by a citizen who then donated it to the Doling Museum.

### **Kim Reser, Assistant Director**

Ms. Reser stated that the Springfield Roofing Systems Queen City Open Pickleball event will be held on June 23-25 at Cooper Tennis Complex, with 325 participants registered so far, which includes a player dinner catered by Big Shots. National Night Out will be held on August 1, 2023, at Meador Park from 5PM-7PM with a City of Springfield Police vs. Fire softball game following

the event. In May, we hosted a mid-state regional Pickleball event that had players from 18 states.

**Miles Park, Assistant Director**

Mr. Park said that the Botanical Center staff has conducted 21 tours in May. He stated that volunteers have provided over 300 hours of service in May for the Butterfly House alone. The Butterfly Festival will be on June 24. On June 20, we will host a Peace Pole Dedication at 5:30PM. The Peace Pole was donated by the Rotary Club with guidance from Sister Cities and help from Friends of the Garden. The forestry crew has been busy cleaning up after recent storm damage at Jenny Lincoln Park and Ritter Springs Park. The Cooper Soccer project is continuing to make progress in the design and development phase.

**Jim Fisher, Assistant Director**

Mr. Fisher said that the Rivercut 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration was on May 13, and there were around 170 players who took part in the festivities at the course that day. We are continuing with the Ranger position hiring process, with one more Ranger position opening. Mr. Fisher announced that Mr. Richard Beck has been promoted to a Community Recreation Manager at Jordan Valley Ice Park. He stated that our CAPRA accreditation documentation has been submitted, and we are waiting to hear back from them on our results.

**Bob Belote, Director of Parks**

Mr. Belote stated that there have been four MSHSAA State golf, tennis, and softball championships held at our park facilities in May. We are working to bring in more of these tournaments in the future, including soccer which we have not hosted before. It's a great opportunity to host these youth tournaments for the local athletes, while contributing a significant economic impact for the city. Mr. Belote also reminded everyone to mark their calendars for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Dickerson Park Zoo which will be held on July 15.

**VII. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Mr. Randy Blackwood stated that he and Mr. Belote met with the AZA Accreditation Team, which included individuals from other Zoos across the country. The Accreditation Team was very complimentary of the Zoo staff, particularly with the staff's cohesiveness and professionalism.

**IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss.

**XI. CALENDAR**

- a. Park Board Meeting: Friday, July 14, 2023, at 8:30 a.m, at a park location TBD.

**XII. CLOSED SESSION**

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Leslie Carrier made a motion to adjourn the meeting and go into closed session; seconded by Mr. Mark McNay. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.