MINUTES
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Park Board Administrative Offices, 1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri
And via Microsoft Teams for Park Board Members
Friday, February 14, 2025

I. ROLL CALL

Mr. Curtis Jared, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Park Board Members Present: Leslie Carrier, Don Chenevert, Jr, Curtis Jared, Mark McNay, Dr. Dale Moore, Dr. Dianna Parker, Royce Reding, Susie Turner

Park Board Members Absent: Cody Danastasio

Park Board Staff Members Present: Tim Carpenter, Jenny Edwards, Jim Fisher, Karen Mellinger, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Ron Schneider, Jackson Thompson, Lana Woolsey

Guest: Paige Oxendine, Director of Consulting Services, Habitat Communication & Culture

II. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Mark McNay made a motion to approve the January 10, 2025, Park Board Meeting minutes; seconded by Ms. Susie Turner. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Mark McNay made a motion to approve the January 10, 2025, Closed Park Board meeting minutes; seconded by Ms. Susie Turner. The motion was passed unanimously.

III. REPORT OF THE OFFICERS

Vice Chair, Susie Turner, mentioned that the Friends of the Garden Board approved funding for the north section of the Sensory Garden, just north of the Ambler Fountains in Nathanael-Greene Close Memorial Park. The design will include raised beds for accessibility. The funding was made possible through proceeds from the Garden Gala and an interested donor.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

For the past 12 years, the Park Board and the University of Missouri Extension Center have been operating without a written agreement in place at the Botanical Center after the prior contract ended on October 1, 2012. Through discussions with the Extension Center leadership, a draft agreement has been developed for the Park Board’s review. The proposed agreement keeps the intent of the 2010 agreement in place but provides some critical updates due to changing needs over the last 10-12 years. The proposed agreement continues the longstanding partnership that provides important services to our region.

Mr. Don Chenevert, Jr. made a motion that the Park Board approve the Resolution presented today and authorize entering into a license agreement with University of Missouri Extension Center; seconded by Mr. Royce Reding. By a roll call vote, the motion passed with Board members Leslie Carrier, Don Chenevert, Jr, Curtis Jared, Mark McNay, Dr. Dianna Parker, Royce Reding, and Susie Turner voting in favor of the motion; and Dr. Dale Moore voting against the motion.

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. Presentation of the strategic planning recap Paige Oxendine, Director of Consulting Services, Habitat Communication & Culture, presented the results of the Strategic Planning sessions held with the Park Board members, and then, a separate meeting with the Park Board Administrative Team. The first session with the Park Board members focused on setting a long-term vision for our organization and identifying strategic areas of focus for the next 12 months. The second session with the Administrative Team built upon the foundation to define actionable priorities and specific, measurable results to move those priority areas forward over the coming year. The Administrative Team worked collaboratively to develop a clear and focused plan, which included the four primary Objectives and Key Results (OKR) of maximizing funding efficiency, fostering a forward-looking organizational culture, creating a systematic approach to program evaluation, and enhancing the public's perception of park safety. These OKR's provide a measurable and actionable framework to guide the Park Board's efforts, while addressing both internal and external priorities. It is the Administrative Team's plan to review the progress of the key results monthly and report back to the Board on a quarterly basis.

b. Review and discussion of the proposed fees and charges for FY 2025-2026
Director of Parks Schneider stated that the Fees and Charges Committee reviewed the proposed updates and changes extensively in their meetings on January 16 and January 30, 2025. The Administrative Team reviews the fees annually, including a marketing analysis, instead of an across-the-board type of fee increase. Assistant Director of Recreation, Kim Reser, highlighted several updates related to Family Center passholder punch card rates, an increase of $1.00 for outdoor pool admission, inclusion of Lake Country Soccer fees in this document, and outdoor pickleball court rental fees. Additionally, the Board reviewed a summary of revenues and expenses for outdoor pools. It was mentioned that the pools are open on a rotating schedule, with each pool opened 3-4 days/week. The report represented a typical season of pool repairs and maintenance. Staff will continue to review information regarding attendance and subsidy percentages within other markets. It was mentioned that it might be beneficial to retain an aquatics consultant to perform an assessment of outdoor aquatics facilities.

Assistant Director, Jim Fisher, reviewed several updates within the Special Facilities Division including clarification of watercraft rental rates at Lake Springfield Park. AD Fisher mentioned that due to the increase in minimum wage, the Boathouse hours at Lake Springfield Park will be reduced. Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park front desk coverage by part-time staff will be reduced with full-time staff providing more coverage. Within the Golf Division, the greens fees will be increased by $1.00 and cart rental fees by $2.00 at the three golf courses due to increase in minimum wage rates. There will be an increase in the rate for the summer junior golf promotion, as well. Based on marketing research, the golf course greens fees remain a good value within this market for a public course. Currently, the Golf Division does have a funding reserve account, and this past year, funds were used to complete the cart path at Horton Smith Golf Course. Once the budget document is passed, communication is provided to members and patrons about any fee changes.

c. **Review and discussion of the draft budget for FY 2025-2026** Director of Parks Schneider reviewed the Parks Department 10-year summary of revenues and expenditures report highlighting several areas in which the expenditures were higher than budgeted and other areas in which revenues were lower than budgeted. Additionally, there was a significant increase in the cost of the Parks Department's insurance contributions, along with the unexpected cost of paying a third-party vendor for part-time employees. Director Schneider also shared the rising costs of minimum wage, which increased to $13.75/hour on January 1, 2025, and will increase to $15.00/hour on January 1, 2026, and has significantly impacted the Parks budget. Historical budget data has been reviewed to assist in streamlining information across-the-board, while making steps forward toward a zero-based budget, which includes reducing full-time staff by nearly five percent by eliminating or freezing 12.5 staff positions. With safety identified as a key objective, currently a recruitment campaign is underway to hire more Park Rangers. Currently, there is a proposed deficit for the draft FY2025-26 budget cycle. Director Schneider mentioned several scenarios on how to handle the deficit and indicated that a meeting would be organized to discuss further with the City Manager and Greene County Commissioners, as well.

d. **Approval of a Parks Code of Conduct Policy** Director Schneider mentioned that the City recently updated the Administrative Memo related to Violence and Disruption in the workplace, which outlines the procedure from removing violent or disruptive individuals from a city facility or procedure. Parks staff worked together to create a Park Board Code of Conduct Policy to be followed while on Parks property or Park-related events, which also follows the Administrative Memo and City Ordinances related to conduct in parks, but it is also intended to encourage positive behavior and sportsmanship. Ms. Susie Turner made a motion that the Park Board adopt the Code of Conduct Policy presented to the Board today; seconded by Dr. Dale Moore. The motion was passed unanimously.

e. **Park Board Meeting Schedule Discussion** The Board members discussed the possibility of changing the monthly Park Board meeting schedule to a different day of the week and a new time.

f. **Director of Parks Report** Director Schneider reported that he attended the February 10, 2025, City of Springfield Council Meeting to present Council Bill 2025-022, which authorizes the use of Zone 4 Minor Neighborhood Improvement Program funds, in the amount of $127,474, to support a portion of the Phase 1 site improvements needed for the bicycle pump track at McDaniel Park. The bill was approved unanimously.

Council Bill 2025-034 was also presented at the February 10, 2025, City Council Meeting to amend the City's FY 2024-2025 General Fund Budget by appropriating carryover funds from the prior year. Several projects are being considered for funding including two Parks projects. The remaining funding for Phase1 site improvements at McDaniel Park in the amount of $106,325 and the construction of the bear boardwalk at Dickerson Park Zoo in the amount of $580,000 were recommended for funding. Since the ordinance requires two readings, it will return for potential approval at the February 24, 2025, City Council meeting.

Director Schneider mentioned that Assistant Director/Director of the Dickerson Park Zoo, Jackson Thompson, was recently recognized as one of the Springfield Business Journal's 40 under 40 nominees. Assistant Director Kim Reser and Director Schneider recently met with the YMCA to discuss potential collaboration. The Phase 1 of the Cooper Park improvements of the soccer fields is nearly complete. A grand opening kick-off at the new fields is scheduled for 11:00 am on Saturday, March 29.

The Board mentioned that they were pleased with the new Assistant Director reports and how the information is matching the recent key objectives outlined at the Board's retreat. The Board also requested a cost/user evaluation in comparison to other agencies.

VI. CALENDAR

The next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting is Friday, March 14, 2025, at 8:30 am, at the Park Board Administrative Offices.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Dale Moore made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Leslie Carrier. The motion was passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.