

MINUTES
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Park Board Administrative Offices, 1923 N. Weller, Springfield, Missouri
And via Microsoft Teams for Park Board Members
Friday, May 9, 2025

I. ROLL CALL

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

Park Board Members Present: Don Chenevert, Jr, Cody Danastasio, Curtis Jared, Dr. Dale Moore, Dr. Dianna Parker, Royce Reding, Susie Turner

Park Board Members Absent: Leslie Carrier, Mark McNay

Park Board Staff Members Present: Jon Carney, Tim Carpenter, Matt Coats, Jim Fisher, Karen Mellinger, Miles Park, Caleb Sanders, Ron Schneider, Jackson Thompson, Lana Woolsey

Guests: Dan Dawson, Railroad History Museum at Grant Beach; Ron Bradshaw, Ozarks Model Railroad Association

II. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Don Chenevert, Jr. made a motion to approve the April 11, 2025, Park Board Meeting minutes; seconded by Ms. Susie Turner. The motion was approved unanimously.

III. REPORT OF THE OFFICERS

Mr. Jared, Chair, mentioned that nominations for the 2025-2026 Park Board officers are now being accepted and may be submitted to the current Park Board officers, Director of Parks, or the Parks Senior Executive Secretary. Nominations should be received by or during the June 13, 2025, Park Board meeting, with the 2025-2026 slate of officers to be voted on at the July 11, 2025, Park Board meeting.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

V. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Land Conservation Management Program Presentation** Mr. Matt Coats, Superintendent of Special Facilities, presented information on the Parks land conservation management program, which included background information and insight on the Park Board's efforts to restore native habitat and stewardship of our conservation areas. The conservation benefits of prairie plantings include water quality, erosion mitigation, supports pollinators and wildlife, mitigates encroachment of

invasive species, and promotes soil health. At Lake Springfield Park, staff and volunteers have planted over 10,000 native prairie plants on roadside embankments, eliminated all herbicide, mulch, and respective labor inputs, improved longevity of a public roadway, and drastically reduced the maintenance for the areas as part of a pilot program since 2016. The pilot program conducted at Lake Springfield Park was praised by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and has been expanded throughout the State by MDC. The Parks Conservation Coordinator has completed management plans for over 600 acres of parks property.

- b. Update on Storm Damage Recovery** Mr. Jon Carney, Superintendent of General Services, presented information regarding the recent damage from a storm that occurred on Tuesday, April 29. Over 40 parks, including more than 200 trees, sustained damage. It was reported that 35 damaged trees were over 100 years old with some blown over at the roots, which makes it difficult to remove. The Grant Beach Park pool bathhouse was significantly damaged and is currently being assessed by insurance appraisers. The Grant Beach pool and bathhouse will remain closed until repairs are made.

Mr. Jackson Thompson, Assistant Director, Dickerson Park Zoo, indicated that the Zoo staff followed their storm protocols to assess any injuries to animals and people, and damage to facilities. City Utilities staff removed fallen trees out of the power lines. Parks Operations crews helped to remove 30 downed trees out of the zoo and assisted in locating a generator to save the animals' frozen food since the zoo was without power for several days.

- c. Superintendent of Parks Business Operations Report and Comments** Parks Director Ron Schneider reported that there were no major differences with year-end projections from last month. Currently, we are projecting a loss of \$87,661 for the end of this fiscal year. Without the cost saving measures made earlier this year, the loss may have been closer to \$1,000,000. The increase in minimum wage to \$15.00/hour beginning January 1, 2026, will impact Parks budget by \$500,000, with an additional expense of \$500,000 in the 2026-2027 budget year. The Golf Fund revenues currently exceed the projected amount for this budget year. The Attendance and Revenue Report was provided in the packet for the Board's review.
- d. Director of Parks Report and Comments** Director Schneider recently presented three funding opportunities to the Hatch Foundation. The projects were well-received by the Foundation, but no definitive decisions were made.

The Parks employee survey tool was completed and distributed to staff on Tuesday, May 6. The purpose of the survey is to measure communication, leadership effectiveness, job satisfaction, and organizational culture. The survey link will stay active for 30 days. Nearly 50 percent of Parks employees have already completed the survey.

On May 1, Cooper Tennis Complex held a kickoff celebration for National Tennis Month, which included a proclamation from the Mayor of Springfield, along with a special

recognition of long-time tennis instructor, Jean Larrick. It was a great, well-attended event.

Parks staff is currently working with the City's Purchasing Department to develop a RFP for a study of the Parks' outdoor pools. The evaluation scope will include conditions of the pools, estimated life expectancy and replacement costs, a market study of other community outdoor pools, analysis of current use, cost per user, and revenue comparisons. The Park Board members expressed appreciation of the scope of the report and looked forward to reviewing the results.

The Bylaws and Policies Committee's next meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2025. Once the Bylaws revisions are completed, the revised document will be shared with the Board for review.

Director Schneider indicated he plans to continue providing in-depth reports about key areas or projects at future Board meetings. Should Board members have a specific topic of interest, please make suggestions to Director Schneider.

VI. CALENDAR

- a. The next Park Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 13, 2025, at 8:30 am, at the Park Board Administrative Offices.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Royce Reding made a motion to adjourn the meeting and take a break before meeting for the Closed Session; seconded by Dr. Dianna Parker. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:34 a.m.