

MINUTES
BUDGET WORKSHOP OF THE
SPRINGFIELD-GREENE COUNTY PARK BOARD
Wednesday, February 3, 2016
Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center, 2400 S. Scenic
Springfield, Missouri

I. ROLL CALL

Tim Shyrack, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:39 pm.

Members Present: Scott Bailes, Matt Bailey, Carolyn Gerdes, , Bob Horton, Sarah McCalliser, Sidney Needem, Tim Shyrack, Chair.

Members Absent: Paula Glossip, John Price

Park Board Staff Present: Bob Belote, Jon Carney, Mike Crocker, Jeff Cumley, Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Jim Fisher, Karen Herron, Anne-Mary McGrath, Jerry Mitchell, Tom Moore, Miles Park, Kim Reser, Diana Tyndall, Lana Woolsey

Mr. Sidney Needem made a motion to begin the meeting; seconded by Dr. Sarah McCallister. Motion passed unanimously.

II. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED FY 2016-2017 BUDGET

Mr. Bob Belote, Director of Parks, stated that the purpose of this workshop is to review the proposed FY 2016-17 budget, including any new or changes in the fees and charges proposed for the next fiscal year. We will also discuss several supplemental handouts and answer any questions the Board may have regarding the budget. The FY 2016-2017 budget cycle marks the fourth year that Parks has experienced financial sustainability. As it has been the case since 2012, Parks no longer receives any General Fund financial support from the City of Springfield nor have we ever received any General Revenue support from Greene County.

Areas of Special Emphasis Mr. Belote reviewed the proposed FY 2016-17 budget document with the Board, which included a discussion of the following departmental areas of special emphasis:

- We have completed the standards and evidence of compliance documentation in preparation for our accreditation site visit the last week in June. We expect that our application will be reviewed with CAPRA officials in the fall of 2016.
- We will continue our efforts to identify and secure a long-term capital funding source; most definitely the department's most critical long-term need.
- In 2013, as part of the Park Board's celebration of our 100th anniversary, we renewed our commitment toward restoration of some of the older and more under-utilized parks within

the park system. Our efforts mirror the City's current Zone Blitz initiative, so we anticipate more collaboration with community partners.

- Ozark Greenways will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2016 and special emphasis will be placed on trail development, promotion and fund-raising in order to complete several trail connections. We are proposing funding to assist with the extension of the South Dry Sac/Fulbright Trail.
- Park safety and security remain a priority, so we propose to replace our Park Ranger vehicles through our Capital Equipment Lease Purchase program, reclassifying our supervisor position, and filling three vacant positions. We will also work to formalize and adopt a Park Rangers Operational Manual.
- We are well-respected in national sport circles and hosting sporting tournaments and events is an economic driver for the Springfield community. Sports tourism remains a high area of emphasis, so we must continue seeking funding and partnerships to help reinvest in our sporting facilities.
- As one of the last capital projects identified through the 2006 Parks Sales Tax, we will complete a new public restroom facility at the Dickerson Park Zoo.
- We have made significant improvements and upgrades to several facilities including the Davis House and Property and the Springfield Skatepark. We plan to promote and market these and other unique facilities such as Springfield Botanical Gardens, Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center, Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park, and Mediacom Ice Park, as they each offer unique rental opportunities for special events, retreats, or meetings.
- We will review and assess our long-term golf facility needs including course improvements, clubhouse renovations, and expanded patron hospitality opportunities.
- It is our intention to address our most inequitable staffing issues and recommend formal reclassifications of several park employee groups in order to remain competitive and equitable in filling those positions.
- The Park Board has many successful partnerships with groups such as Friends of the Zoo, Ozark Greenways, Friends of the Garden, City Utilities, and Springfield Public Schools. It is imperative that we continue to seek new collaborative opportunities and cost-sharing scenarios with other like minded organizations.

Organizational Chart Mr. Belote reviewed the updated organizational chart noting that the Assistant Directors are now in place, but we still need to identify funding to fill several key superintendent positions.

Proposed 2016-2017 Fees and Charges

Mr. Belote stated that for many years, we have worked hard and kept our program prices low while still offering a high quality, value oriented experience. In reviewing the budget in more detail, we found that several new expenses that we have incurred such as increased minimum wage mandates and instructor costs are not being recovered in all program areas. With the proposed 2016-2017 fees and charges, we have suggested new program offerings and made minor adjustments to better recover program operation costs. Market studies and area comparison information was provided for the Board to review in regard to the proposed changes in the fees and charges for FY 2016-17.

- The Springfield Botanical Gardens will soon have a new Band Shell available for concerts, meetings or other special event rentals. The new Band Shell was funded through private donations.
- The three family centers have revised the price range to offer more activities for birthday parties and other private rentals.
- Dickerson Park Zoo is proposing a \$1 increase for adult admission prices. Youth, senior, and group prices will remain the same, along with the Friends of the Zoo membership price.
- The Davis House and Property is now available on a limited basis for private rentals. The Park Board has an agreement with Greene County to use the property for programming and special event activities and we maintain the property. It currently serves as the headquarters for our Community Olympic Development Program, along with our indoor and outdoor Archery programs.
- The Mediacom Ice Park revised their birthday party offerings for the first time in eleven years.
- The Park Board is the only agency that has portable bleachers, a portable stage, and a show wagon available for special events in the community. It is evident because of the popularity in renting these items, we will soon need to replace the bleachers and add a second show wagon. A proposed rental fee increase will help reinvest in the purchase of equipment in the future.
- Rutledge-Wilson Farm is proposing a new rental category to accommodate the requests received by large corporations to rent “field space” primarily during Harvest Fest for employee picnics and special events.
- The Skatepark is proposing to add bike and skate camps, along with private and semi-private lessons.
- Valley Water Mill Equestrian Center has additional program offerings for riders. The outdoor arena is now available for evening rentals with the newly added lighting fixtures to the facility.
- Horton Smith and Bill and Payne Stewart Golf Courses are proposing a nominal cart rental fee adjustment because all carts offer the GPS feature. We plan to focus more on promoting our golf courses, along with the Fairways and Greens program in the next year.

DEPARTMENTAL FUNDED PRIORITIES

Parks General Fund The proposed 2016-2017 budget includes funding a complete rebuild of the Mediacom Ice Park compressor units. To remain competitive and ensure our ability to hire the most qualified and increased staff, we propose to increase the hourly rates of our temporary and seasonal lifeguard staff. We will continue our commitment to restore neighborhood parks with projects that include repairs associated with playgrounds, pavilions, tennis/basketball courts, signage, picnic tables, sidewalks and parking lot areas. The last several years we have participated in lease-purchase options using extremely favorable interest rates with the assistance of the City of Springfield for much-needed capital equipment.

2001 Parks Sales Tax Fund—Operating Fund Mr. Belote explained that five contract positions currently funded through the School-Park Division's 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant will formally roll into the Parks operating budget per the grant agreement with the State of Missouri. For the second year in a row, we propose to allocate additional money to the Park Reserve Fund, which will help increase stability, cash-flow, and allow us a better ability to address unforeseen emergencies. We propose to convert a contract position at Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park to a full-time employee. In the proposed FY 2016-17 Budget, we plan to allocate funds to support improvements associated with the proposed trail project that will connect South Dry Sac Trail to the new trail section extending from the David C. Murray Trailhead and the Fulbright Spring area. We recommend funding to address concerns identified through our recent ADA Transition Audit including accessible parking areas, ramps, drinking fountains, and restroom modifications. We will continue to participate in lease-purchase options with favorable interest rates for much-needed capital equipment. In this upcoming budget cycle, we plan to replace fitness equipment at Chesterfield and Doling Family Centers and acquire a utility vehicle for Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park. We will also lease-purchase hay harvesting equipment to allow the Special Facilities Division to supply hay to the farm, as well as to other sites within the park system. We anticipate that the savings from this operation will offset the cost associated with the lease-purchase of the equipment.

2006 Park Sales Tax Fund—Operating Fund Funding is proposed for the formal planning, designing and engineering fees associated with the future construction of an African Primate Exhibit at the Dickerson Park Zoo. Construction of this exhibit is the final parks project identified in the 2006 Parks and Stormwater Sales Tax Initiative. We will continue to participate in lease-purchase options with favorable interest rates for much-needed capital equipment, which include replacement of fitness equipment at Dan Kinney Family Center, replacement of two vehicles for Dickerson Park Zoo, and two replacement patrol vehicles for our Park Ranger Division.

2006 Park Sales Tax Fund—Capital Projects Fund Mr. Belote stated that we will continue to cultivate relationships to seek charitable gifts and donations that will help further the objectives for the park system. This type of funding could be utilized for park and trail acquisitions, facility renovations and upgrades, and new programs and activities. A Board member mentioned that it is important to communicate with our community partners, so we do not duplicate solicitation to the same individuals or organizations.

Golf Enterprise Fund In the proposed FY 2016-17 Budget, it is our intent to retire the debt associated with long-term fairway improvements at Rivercut Golf Course. We will continue to participate in lease-purchase options with favorable interest rates for much-needed capital equipment, which includes the purchase of three transportation cars and a rough area mower for the Stewart Golf Course. We propose funding to make parking lot repairs at Horton Smith Golf Course for the coming year.

General Budget Discussion Mr. Belote explained that 1/8 cent continues to be collected for perpetuity from both the 2001 and 2006 Parks Sales Tax Initiatives. It is used to operate

and maintain the projects and facilities we completed with the capital funds associated with the 2001 and 2006 Parks Sales Tax Initiatives.

Mr. Belote reviewed the remaining pages of the proposed FY 2016-2017 budget document, including operating revenue sources and expenditures. There is an increase in the Fund Balance Appropriation allocation from the City of Springfield, as they have agreed to provide additional funding for us to maintain the Route 66 Park, which is a City designed and funded project. Mr. Belote mentioned that we submitted a proposal through the City's Surplus Project fund to redesign and increase the functions of Founders Park, along with making it a safer area within the community. Preliminary discussions indicated that the proposal would be at least partially funded, but the proposals have been tabled recently by City Council.

The Board expressed continued concern about the overall transfer cost for City services, and that the intent of the Intergovernmental Government Agreement was for Parks to become self-sustainable and not mix City General Fund and Parks-intended funding sources. Although the agreement indicated that we would reimburse the City for services provided to Parks, the Board would like to further discuss the amount and possible alternative uses of the transfer funds to the City General Fund. Board members mentioned that the economic impact we have on the community should be taken into consideration. Without capital funds, we do not have the money to reinvest in our athletic facilities that bring in the large national, regional and state tournaments which bring considerable money to the community's local economy.

Mr. Belote also reviewed additional pages of the proposed budget document including the capital outlay and park development funds and a comparison summary of contract and full-time employees. Mr. Belote stated that our staff personnel costs represent 62 percent of our budget, which is considered low compared to other park agencies of our size, the number of programs we offer, and facilities we operate and maintain. A Board Member inquired about an aquatic component being added to the Dan Kinney Family Center. Mr. Belote stated that there is considerable amount of interest for a competitive swim facility, but we do not have a capital funding source for the project.

In reviewing the Parks Current Outstanding Debt Issuances summary, Mr. Jerry Mitchell, Superintendent of Business Operations, mentioned that we have low and reasonable rates on the outstanding debt. With just a one-third debt ratio to our overall budget, we exhibit responsible and careful financial management practices.

Mr. Belote reviewed the funded and unfunded priority lists that were compiled by staff and then, reviewed and categorized by required, critical need, capital equipment lease-purchase, and personnel. The Board members mentioned scheduling a meeting to further discuss long-term capital funding. Additionally, the Board members would like to better educate our citizens about the many ways we support and give back to the community, along with serving as an economic impact generator and providing a quality of life aspect through our programs, events, and preservation of park space.

Hearing no further discussion regarding the budget documents presented, Ms. Carolyn Gerdes made the motion to move forward the Proposed Fees and Charges for FY 2016-17 to the February Park Board meeting for approval; seconded by Mr. Scott Bailes. The motion was approved unanimously. Dr. Sarah McCallister made the motion to move forward the Proposed Budget for FY 2016-17 to the February Park Board meeting for approval; seconded by Mr. Bob Horton. The motion was approved unanimously.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Scott Bailes made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Sidney Needem. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.