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News Release

*For Immediate Release*

### **Bob Belote Named Director of Parks**



The Springfield-Greene County Park Board has named Bob Belote as Director of Parks, effective May 6, 2012. The unanimous vote took place Friday, April 13, during a posted closed session immediately following the Park Board's regular April meeting.

Belote, 49, has served as Interim Director of Parks since the November 2011 retirement of former director Jodie Adams. He was Assistant Parks Director for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board 2006-2011, assisting in the development and implementation of capital programs included in the voter-approved 2006 Parks Sales Tax as well as leading numerous departmental research initiatives. Belote also served as Superintendent of Recreation 2004-2006.

"Bob is outstanding in his field, recognized and respected by the recreation industry. He's from here, he lives here, he knows how this community works and he can collaborate with anybody," said Jerry Clark, chair of the Park Board.

"Bob's resume speaks for itself. He served as Director of Parks and Recreation for two other cities before returning to us in 2004. He's been our Assistant Director for six years, and during that time has worked closely with the Park Board. We're impressed by his collaborative leadership style and his ability to work with our more than 200 partners."

The Springfield-Greene County Park Board is one of four city-county departments, and the appointment of the Director of Parks is the responsibility of the Park Board itself. City of Springfield and Greene County leaders commended the Park Board's selection.

"I think Bob is the right fit for the Parks Department at this point in its history," said Greg Burris, Springfield City Manager. "We are blessed with an outstanding Parks program, and Bob possesses institutional knowledge of the department, greatly appreciates that history, and is focused on listening to our citizens as we plan our future. As we near the Park Board's 100-year anniversary, we're lucky to have him leading Parks into our next 100 years."

A native of Springfield, Belote spent 12 years managing parks departments in Missouri and Iowa before returning to Springfield in 2004, including: Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Independence, Mo., 1998-2004; Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Sioux City, Iowa, 1997-1998; and Assistant Parks Director, City of Blue Springs, Mo., 1992-97. Belote was also the Youth Baseball Program Director for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board in 1989 and served a graduate-level internship with Parks in 1988.

Belote earned a master's degree in Parks, Recreation and Tourism from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1995 and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Missouri State University in 1987. He is also a 1997 graduate of the National Recreation and Park Association Executive Development School. He is a 2010 graduate of Leadership Springfield and now serves as a program advisor. He was President of the Missouri Park and Recreation Association 2003-2004 and has served on the MU School of Natural Resources Advisory Council since 2002.

Belote and his wife, Deana have two children: Alex and Abbey. His family was named 2011 Tennis Family of the Year by the Missouri District of the United States Tennis Association, and the Belote household routinely calls the Cooper Tennis Complex their "second home." He is a graduate of Kickapoo High School and a member of South Haven Baptist Church. Belote grew up playing in Sequiota Park and spent several years in the Park Board's youth baseball and basketball programs. He picked up tennis and golf during college and still plays today.

Belote said the appointment is an honor, especially having grown up in the Park system and been mentored by former directors Dan Kinney and Jodie Adams.

"I'm really proud to have this special opportunity," said Belote. "The best things about our Parks system are the people who use it and the great partners and groups that our staff has the privilege of working with. I'm really looking forward to celebrating the Park Board's centennial in 2013 with our community."

Belote's annual salary as Director of Parks will be \$110,780.80.

Park Board Chair Jerry Clark is available for media interviews this afternoon. To schedule an interview, or for more information, contact Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, at 417-874-2176 or 417-224-5510.