

May 29, 2012

News Release

For Immediate Release

Council Lunch Summary May 29, 2012

Director of Parks Bob Belote and Aquatics Coordinator Mark Baker provided City Council with an update on pool improvements, including the recent re-opening of Westport Pool on the City's north side.

Bucking a national trend, where many pools are closing due to budget constraints, Belote announced a nearly 50-percent increase in pool hours this year, with at least three outdoor pools open each day of the week, and every pool open six days a week. Maintenance days formerly scheduled on Mondays have been staggered throughout the week, and all outdoor pools are open Thursday through Sunday.

"We have completely restored and expanded our pool hours since reductions were made in 2008, and this year we're open more than ever before," said Marc Baker, Aquatics Supervisor for the Park Board. "We were able to extend hours without raising admission prices, which have remained the same since 2009."

Daily admission remains \$2.25 for youth and seniors, \$2.75 for adults, the same price since 2009. Discount coupon books and all-season pool passes are also available. Also new this year, regular outdoor pool admission prices apply to the indoor Chesterfield Aquatics Center, 1-8:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Splash 'n Sizzle events return to Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day, plus weekend evenings in July, with \$1 admission, or free admission with a canned food item donated to Ozarks Food Harvest. Free swim days are also scheduled for select Thursday mornings.

Other Council Items

- City Manager Greg Burris provided budget summaries and budget requests from Mayor's Commission on Children and Mayor's Commission on Human Rights, per an earlier Council request.
- City Finance Director Mary Mannix Decker announced the City's general obligation bond rating was reaffirmed at Aa1, which demonstrates very strong creditworthiness relative to other U.S. municipal or tax-exempt issuers or issues.

"What these means for taxpayers is that we will be spending less money on interest and more on projects," she explained. She went on to say that Moody's commented on the favorable year in 2011 and the fact the City had added to the General Fund reserves, as support for the high rating.

The City will issue approximately \$30 million in sewer bonds next week. Those were rated at Aa2. A key to this strong rating was the fact that planned sewer rate increases had already been approved by Council, after receiving recommendations from the Wastewater Improvements Citizens Task Force. "This provided support that there will be ample coverage within the sewer revenue to cover the bonds," Decker explained.

- Decker also provided an update on the department's ongoing analysis of sales tax results following last year's smoking ban implementation. Looking at establishments coded as restaurants and/or bars by the Missouri Department of Revenue, sales tax was relatively flat (less than a 1% increase) in the months June 2011- March 2012, compared with the same time period last year. The smoking ban went into effect June 2011.
- Mayor Bob Stephens suggested that City staff arrange for a meeting for the nine applicants to the City Council General Seat A to provide five-minute presentations. Council members agreed they could decide finalists based on that process. Finalists will be asked to answer a set of four questions posed at a future Council meeting. Council will then make a selection and that candidate will serve the time left on the seat, which expires in 2013.

Those who applied include:

- **Michael Carroll**, a resident of Springfield for 7 and a half years, is the controller of Andy's Frozen Custard. He received a juris doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia in May 2000. He is a former member of the Greene County Board of Equalization and Leadership Springfield.
- **Christopher Donegan**, a resident of Springfield for 17 years, is the owner of Donegan Insurance and Travel and finance manager at Zerr Auto Sales Inc. He graduated from Missouri State University in May 1999. He's been involved in various organizations.
- **Jan Fisk**, a resident of Springfield for 37 years, is the co-owner of J. Howard Fisk Limousines. She is a graduate of Missouri State University and has been involved with numerous organizations in Springfield.
- **Denice Forrest**, a resident of Springfield for 2.5 years, is the lodging operations lead agent at Expedia. She is a graduate of Missouri State University and is the former commissioner for the Mayor's Council on Human Rights and Minority Relations.
- **John Hardin**, a resident of Springfield for 30 years, is a retired city employee. He holds various degrees from multiple universities, including Missouri State University.
- **Arthur Hodge**, a resident of Springfield for 23 years, is retired from the U.S. Army and Springfield Public Schools, where he worked security and as an attendance adviser. He attended various schools including Ozarks Technical College and Missouri State University and currently works as a substitute teacher in Springfield.
- **Jeff Paul**, a resident of Springfield for 20 years, is the owner/operator of a local lawn care business. He started at Ozarks Technical College last year and has worked with Community Emergency Response Teams, the Community Partnership of Springfield and other organizations.
- **Roberta L. Culty**, a resident of Springfield for five and a half years, is a stay-at-home mom and the assistant secretary/treasurer for the Weller Neighborhood Association. She

has been involved with various organizations . Most recently she worked at Integrity Home Care as a personal care assistant.

- **William Scruggs**, a resident of Springfield for three years, is the owner of Engineered Resources LLC. He holds a master's degree in manufacturing management and a bachelor's from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has worked with cub scouts and youth sports.

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