



## LEE'S SUMMIT PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF LEE'S SUMMIT, MISSOURI

DATE:	July 28, 2021	TIME:	6:00 PM	PLACE:	Strother Conference Room
Board Members Present:		Board Members Absent:		Staff Present:	Other Guests:
Mindy Aulenbach, President		Jim Huser, Treasurer		Joe Snook	Scott Ison
Lawrence Bivins, Vice President		Wesley Fields		Steve Casey	Jackie McCormick-Heanue
Samantha Shepard				David Dean	
Casey Crawford				Brooke Chestnut	
Tyler Morehead				Tede Price	
Jon Ellis				Devin Blazek	
				Ruth Buckland	
AGENDA ITEM		DISCUSSION (Findings/Conclusions)			
SPECIAL GUESTS		RECOMMENDATIONS/ ACTIONS			
Employee of the Quarter – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2021		Mr. Snook recognized Grace Carson, Aquatics Manager, as the employee of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2021. This is Ms. Carson’s first summer as Aquatics Manager. She hired roughly 175 part time staff members and maintained full staffing throughout the summer. Mr. Snook thanked Ms. Carson for her hard work. Ms. Carson thanked Devin Blazek for teaching her and is thankful for the opportunity to continue to learn this new role through the busy summer.			
PRESENTATIONS					
Girl Scout Troop 3642 – Sign Language Signage in the Parks		Jodi Jordan introduced members Kaylen Bobble, Samantha Wozniak and Kaylee Conrad of Girl Scout Troop 3642. Ms. Bobble, Ms. Wozniak and Ms. Conrad presented a PowerPoint outlining their Silver Award Project regarding American Sign Language in the parks.  After conducting a poll of parents and teachers who utilize sign language in their work with children who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or non-speaking, Ms. Bobble, Ms. Wozniak and Ms. Conrad determined a sign language panel displaying the letters of the alphabet would be helpful at our parks. In addition, signs for “play”, “friend”, “hurt” and “help” were among the most recommended words to include on the panels. Incorporating these sign language panels at playgrounds would accommodate children of all abilities.  Ms. Jordan wrote a grant to the Truman Heartland Community Foundation in March of 2021 to help with the funding of these panels, and the outcome will be determined later this fall. Mr. Snook has approved to move forward with this project to begin installing these sign language panels at a few playgrounds.			
Resource Recovery Park		Steve Casey presented a PowerPoint overview of the master plan for the Resource Recovery Park. This project has been in the works since February of 2019, and was presented to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) in June 2021. This park consists of 270 acres with roughly 80 acres classified as the landfill dome and 35 acres designated as a public disposal area on the north side of the property. There will be four main areas to the park: Park Entry, “Baker’s Dozen” area, Landfill Cap and South Landfill.  Park entry will be from Hamblen Road and will create a sense of arrival to the park. This area would include restrooms, a welcome center, playground and some shaded picnic areas. The top of the landfill is one of the highest points in Lee’s Summit, providing beautiful views in all four directions. Staff would incorporate art, climbing stairs, bicycle flow track, alpine slide, tubing hill and open green space. The ‘Baker’s Dozen’ area will be a peaceful area for passive activities with a stream corridor. There are also connection opportunities to Sylvia Bailey Park. The South			



Landfill will provide an opportunity for trail connections or a trailhead, picnic shelters and a restroom.

Overall, the programming will include destination type activities such as an alpine slide, year-round tubing hill, natural stair climbing and adventure playground as well as an open-air welcome center. There is currently a transfer station located on the north end of the park, so a separate entrance will be constructed and heavily landscaped to keep the focus on the park. Mr. Snook stated we want to minimize the interaction between commercial traffic and park traffic. There have been many conversations with the city's potential contractor, and they are supportive of the parks master plan.

It will be necessary to provide vehicular access to the top of the landfill dome to allow accessibility. Mr. Snook stated there is already an existing maintenance road to the top, so we can utilize the existing road and create a parking area. Mr. Crawford asked for the height to the top, and Mr. Casey stated it is around 80 to 90 feet from the base.

Staff is currently finalizing the master plan and will continue to roll out plans to the public over the following months. At this point there has not been anything providing a cause for concern moving forward. However, the cost numbers for this project were eye opening, and it is anticipated this will be a phased project to help spread the costs out as well as sharing costs with other entities.

Mr. Crawford noted the challenges related to the methane vent pipes on top of the landfill dome. Mr. Casey stated as the trash underneath decomposes there will be an emission of gases being monitored. Mr. Snook stated initially due to the methane vent pumps MDNR was requiring staff there at all times of the day, but they have relaxed on those requirements since the initial meeting. Now, they stated when the park closes there needs to be a way to close the landfill area, such as a gate system.

Ms. Shephard thinks this is a great set of activities to include in a park and will provide a great draw to people from outside of Lee's Summit.

Vice President Bivins is a firm supporter of this project and believes it will provide a fun destination spot.

Mr. Crawford asked what happens if staff does not move forward with this master plan. Mr. Snook stated it stays as it is and nothing will change. Mr. Crawford followed up with asking how this potential project fits in with our other capital projects. Mr. Snook stated in 2016 our strategic plan states to develop and purchase park land. This project was dropped in our laps, and presents numerous opportunities we did not imagine. Mr. Crawford agrees but is cautious as we have already discussed a fieldhouse or a community center in the underserved part of the area and to not lose sight of those projects in light of this new park. Mr. Crawford suggested sharing this plan with the community to see if it is something the citizens would like. Mr. Snook agreed, and shared this needs to be presented to the City Council to gauge their support. Then it can be rolled out to the public to receive input. Mr. Casey has looked at a three or four phased approach as being the best course of action, so this project will not happen quickly. Mr. Crawford feels constructing a trail or stairs to the top could create some interest in developing the landfill dome which would encourage the public to support funding for future development. Mr. Snook stated we do not want to compromise the plans we already have for the future, but dream as to what additional activities this park could potentially provide the community. Mr. Crawford believes presenting this to the City Council is a good next step as this could be a cool attraction.

Mr. Ellis agrees with presenting this opportunity to the City Council to let them know where we are with the planning. He also likes the idea of private partnerships to collaborate with the community.



	<p>Mr. Morehead appreciates all the research and agrees with Mr. Crawford about receiving input from City Council and the community.</p> <p>Mr. Snook will work with City Manager Steve Arbo to see how he would like to proceed with presenting the plans to the City Council.</p>	
<b>AGENDA ITEMS:</b>		
<b>Approval of Minutes of June 23, 2021 Regular Park Board Meeting</b>	Supporting documentation (see pages 1-4). No questions or discussion.	Vice President Bivins made a motion to accept the regular session minutes of the Park Board meeting on June 23, 2021; Ms. Shepard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
<b>Treasurer's Report – June 2021</b>	Supporting documentation (see pages 5-14). Mr. Ellis and Ms. Shepard read the Treasurer's report for the June financial statements. No questions or discussion.	Mr. Morehead made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report from June 2021; Vice President Bivins seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
<b>Sales and Use Tax Report – July 2021</b>	Supporting documentation (see pages 15-16). Mr. Blazek stated sales tax is about 18% over last year and still trending upward. No other questions or discussion.	No Board Action.
<b>OLD BUSINESS</b>		
<b>Projects and Services Review – FY21 &amp; FY22</b>	<p>Supporting documentation (See pages 17-32).</p> <p>Mr. Ellis asked if any adjustments need to be made to our programs with the possibility of masks being reintroduced. Mr. Snook shared we budgeted this fiscal year with no mask mandate in place, but there may be a mandate coming. At this time, we plan to adjust as our environment requires and we will keep the board aware of said adjustments.</p>	No Board Action.
<b>Capital Projects Plan</b>	<b>Velie Park Improvements (See pages 33).</b> Mr. Casey stated advertising began for the request for proposals for improvements including a playground, fitness equipment and park shelter. The bids will be due by the third week in August, at which time a committee will be formed to review those proposals.	No Board Action.
<b>Fundraising Update</b>	Supporting documentation (See pages 34-36). No questions or discussions.	No Board Action.
<b>NEW BUSINESS</b>		
<b>Ad Hoc Committee for Administrator Performance Appraisal</b>	<p>President Aulenbach stated the administrator performance appraisal form needs to be updated in an effort to better guide and evaluate the administrator. President Aulenbach asked Vice President Bivins, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Morehead and Mr. Huser to meet and create a better evaluation form.</p> <p>Ms. Shepard stated the form previously used was similar to an evaluation form the city uses, but does not feel it appropriately fit an administrator's role. President Aulenbach stated it is for this reason she would like this group to develop a new form out of fairness to the administrator.</p> <p>Vice President Bivins stated the current document may still be a good document, but needs to be modified to better fit the administrators job criteria.</p>	
<b>Board Committee Assignments</b>	<p>President Aulenbach appointed new members to the subcommittees as follows:            Budget Committee: Jim Huser, Samantha Shepard and the new board member            Personnel Committee: Lawrence Bivins, Casey Crawford and Wesley Fields            Youth Sports: Casey Crawford, Jon Ellis and Tyler Morehead            Foundation: Tyler Morehead and Mindy Aulenbach</p> <p>All Board members agreed to their committee assignments.</p>	
<b>End of Activity Reports</b>	Supporting documentation (pages 37-41). No questions or discussion.	
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Security Report</b>	<p>Supporting documentation (pages 42-44).</p> <p>Mr. Ellis asked if the security report is provided by the police department. Mr. Snook stated yes, the police department provides the report each quarter. Mr. Ellis then asked if there are any crime activities trending up needing to be addressed.</p>	



Mr. Snook stated at this time the bulk of activities in our parks are park checks, and there are no concerning issues trending up.

Mr. Crawford requested the more problematic activities be displayed in a graph to better see if they are trending up. Mr. Snook asked if the graph would be based per park or per incident. Providing a graph showing crime per park could be cumbersome, but per incident could allow some insight if a particular type of crime is increasing. Mr. Ellis agreed as he would like to see more of the crime reports instead of the park checks. Mr. Snook stated we will put something together for next month as a working tool until we determine what we would like to use moving forward.

#### PATRON COMMENT REVIEW

Supporting documentation (see pages 45-59).

Mr. Ellis and Vice President Bivins noticed there were a lot of comments over the last month. Mr. Snook stated Erin Keeney, one of our new recreation supervisors, is doing a great job staying on top of the comment cards and getting responses out to patrons. Many comments involve patrons wanting specific classes or instructors, and Ms. Keeney has been very prompt in replying to these comments. We have added 21 new classes and extended our hours of operation on Sunday to better accommodate our patrons' requests.

Mr. Ellis asked how we spread the word when we add new classes, whether we post on social media, press release, etc. Mr. Snook stated we distribute a monthly calendar showing our class schedule and will post on social media. The instructors also do a lot of self-promotion, sharing with patrons if or when they have added an additional class, as well as word-of-mouth from the class participants.

#### MONTHLY CALENDARS

Supporting documentation (see pages 60-61). President Aulenbach mentioned the next Park Board meeting will be held Wednesday, August 25, 2021.

#### ROUNDTABLE

Mr. Ellis is encouraged to see activity participation picking back up. It is tough not knowing what is coming next in regards to a mask mandate, so he thanked staff for staying flexible and positive with the upcoming opportunities.

President Aulenbach met with Mr. Snook, Mr. Arbo and Mayor Baird on June 25<sup>th</sup> for their quarterly meeting. She enjoyed attending the quarterly breakfast two weeks ago where many staff members were recognized for numerous years of service.

#### OTHER ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD

The NRPA conference in September will be the same week as the Park Board meeting, so the September Park Board meeting will be moved to September 29, 2021.

The Park Board Retreat will be held on Friday, October 8, 2021.

Kansas City will require masks to be worn indoors from August 2-28, although at this time we are not sure what this means for Jackson County. The City of Independence is encouraging mask usage indoors but will not require it with the exception of fitness and health facilities. This is concerning because the mask mandate had a negative impact on our memberships. Many patrons commented as long as they have to wear masks they were going to cancel their memberships. We have seen a steady increase in memberships over the last three months, but if a mandate stretches beyond one month it could be detrimental. Mr. Snook stated if the county recommends or encourages mask usage then we will not mandate usage indoors, but if there is a mandate we will need to require mask usage within our facilities. Mr. Ellis asked if we have any avenue to voice our frustrations with the county. Mr. Snook stated trying to speak with the county has been challenging as they have not been receptive to our perspective. Mr. Ellis agreed a mask mandate could be devastating for our memberships so hopefully it is suggested instead of mandated. Mr. Crawford asked if we are participating in vaccination events. Mr. Snook stated we had two vaccination events at Longview Community Center and Lovell Community Center, but the turnout for the events was not large.

Mr. Snook would like to resume park tours once things with COVID settle down.

We are currently facing some staffing challenges, primarily at the part-time level as we wrap up the summer, but our community centers are struggling to find staff. This is not specific to us, but is a challenge across the country. Moving forward we may need to look into unique opportunities to recruit and keep employees.

#### MEETING ADJOURNMENT