

Park Board Minutes
January 15, 2019

Members Present: Gabe Miller, Scott McCaulley, Jamie Whiteis, Garrett Vanderpool, Bob Simmons, Danielle Dingman, Julie Wolfe, Andrew Brown, Wes Stoner

Members Absent: Candy Sullinger

Staff Present: Cindy Shook, Jason Reinsch, Marsha Fulton

The meeting was called to order.

Scott McCaulley made a motion to approve the Park Board minutes dated November 20, 2018.

Andrew Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Business:

1. The first item on the agenda was a presentation of the financial report. Cindy opened this item by stating that the campground had continued to have a fantastic year in 2018. Gabe commented that the revenue was also up at the RecPlex. Cindy confirmed that the programs were doing very well for 2018 and that this was the fourth consecutive year for an increase in teams for youth basketball. Cindy remarked that Carlie Allison was doing a great job managing and growing the programs. Jason pointed out that they were seeing a rebound in some adult programs, specifically adult basketball. He noted that last season they had 18 teams in the winter league and this season they had 20 teams registered. Wes stated that some of the growth in adult basketball could be related to Ozark no longer offering their program. Cindy stated that adult programs can often be challenging due to the difficulty of finding qualified referees willing to officiate the adult games. Bob inquired as to how close we were to being at our maximum capacity. Cindy stated that the maximum is 20 teams due to the needs of the youth basketball program. Andrew inquired as to if there had been any consideration given to having the teams provide one referee each night they play. Cindy explained that for the adult leagues there is a certain standard that they have come to expect with their entry fee and that she felt asking them to provide an official would not be something they would agree to. Bob added that he felt Cindy had done a great job of keeping the need for additional facilities at the fore front of discussions. He mentioned that it is important to keep people talking about the need and be able to justify it when the opportunity arises. Gabe asked if the utilization of the facilities was able to be tracked in the new software. Jason stated that there was definitely more information available in the new software and they would be looking at the different reports it was able to provide. Cindy then stated that related to utilization, they were currently in the process of adding pickleball clinics and open play on Tuesday and Thursdays from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Garrett inquired if they had ever looked at doing an adult league during the day, or a survey to see if there would be interest. Jason explained that most of the adult players and officials work during the day which is why the evenings are the best time to participate.

2. The next item on the agenda was an update on grant projects. Cindy shared with the board that the department was being awarded the Empire Electric Energy Efficiency Grant as well as a Green Grant through the City of Branson. The Green Grant will assist in paying to replace the existing light bulbs in the gymnasium with LED bulbs, helping to reduce our electric bill by

approximately \$5,700. The Department will then receive a rebate from Empire as part of the grant because of the proactive approach to changing out the bulbs. Cindy added that our out of pockets costs was only around \$1,000 and our energy saving would be substantially more than that in the first year alone. Cindy added that Environmental Specialist Mona Menezes was extremely helpful in getting those grants. Additionally, Jason shared that they would be receiving grant money from the Missouri Conservation Department's TRIM Grant that works hand in hand with the tree inventory program that the city had initiated in 2017. Scott asked when the tree work would be done. Jason stated it was scheduled for March 4, 5, and 6. Garrett asked what would happen with the downed trees. Jason stated the limbs are typically hauled off piled until it can be mulched.

3. The next item on the agenda was an update on the campground improvements. Cindy opened this item by reminding the board that there had been a lot of discussion about updates to the campground, including the new online software, improved signage, staffing changes and site improvements. Cindy explained that they would be going live with the new software on March 1 and were currently working on entering in all the RV site information and reservations. Cindy reminded the board that during the parks tour in the fall, she highlighted the need to improve and expand sites that were too close together, creating larger premium sites. Each site would include a concrete pad to park an RV, a designated picnic area, a fire pit, and an extra pad for additional car or boat parking. Marsha then shared with the board the comparable sites she had researched and how they compared in amenities and in price. Cindy stated while we will be losing sites, she felt that we could significantly increase the occupancy on the new premium sites, and coupled with a fee increase, will offset the lost revenue from the removed sites. Cindy stated that there is a demand for higher end sites with additional parking, and that she feels this is a good decision for the long-term sustainability of the park, similar to what was done several years ago to create the super sites. Gabe agreed, and stated that he felt the unique experience, along with customer satisfaction, would increase the utilization of the proposed premium sites. Garrett inquired if the campground electric usage was tracked by site, and went on to explain how his company was able to track their usage and how that information was very beneficial. Cindy thanked him for the insight and stated they would definitely be talking about it in the future. Wes inquired if they ever considered charging an additional fee for peak season, similar to what is done in the hotel industry. Cindy stated that it was tricky since their fees were set and voted on annually, making it difficult to adjust them throughout the year. Cindy went on to say that they would be extending their veteran's discount to a year round discount, as opposed to only during Veteran's Week. Jason added that they did require a 3 night minimum on holiday weekends and during October and November.

4. The next item on the agenda was the presentation of the 2019 campground fee schedule. With the fee increase for the premium sites already discussed during the third item on the agenda, Gabe asked Cindy if she was requesting a vote on the proposed fee schedule in order to take to the board of aldermen. Cindy indicated that she was requesting a vote, and briefly outlined other changes in the campground fee schedule. Cindy noted that the only other fee change besides the new premium site fee was for the pull-thru sites. Cindy continued by stating that the pull-thru sites have continued to become more desirable because of their size and easy access, and she was requesting a modest fee increase of \$2.00 per site. Cindy indicated that the other changes were not related to new fees, but were simply changing the name of sites. With no further discussion

or questions, Scott McCauley made a motion to approve the new fee schedule. Julie Wolfe seconded the motion. All were in favor.

5. The next item on the agenda was the update on new recreation software implementation. Jason stated that the implementation had been seamless and had gone very smoothly. He indicated that staff had picked up the system very quickly, and he was extremely pleased with the initial rollout. Jason noted that he had received positive feedback from the front desk staff on the ease of use and ability to easily navigate within the system. Additionally, he mentioned that the support team for CivicRec had been fantastic thus far and appeared to be very attentive and responsive.

6. The next item on the agenda was the presentation of the parks newsletters. Cindy shared with the board that she always wanted to give them the opportunity to see the newsletters so they could continue to be aware of all of the things that were constantly going on within the department.

Member's Report

1. Andrew informed the group that a new 1984 arcade attraction was to open at the Shoppes of Branson Meadows, and inquired if there was any opportunity for leagues.
2. Wes Stoner wanted to share his positive impression of the youth basketball league, stating that it was running very smooth.
3. Cindy informed the board that Taylor Lee, former Facility Manager, had accepted a position closer to her home and was no longer with the department. Additionally, they would soon be posting her position.
4. Jason shared that he had recently attended the Branson Arts Council's production of Miracle on 34th Street at the Owens Theatre, and it was excellent.

Meeting Adjourned 6:15pm