



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Parks Commission  
**FROM:** Darren Dunkle, Director of Parks, Recreation & Forestry  
**DATE:** September 11, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Parks Monthly Report

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### ADMINISTRATION

#### 1) COVID-19

- a) Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, staff continues to spend a lot of time on the cancellation of programs; continuing maintenance operations; dealing with safety concerns; and working with staffing levels and concerns.

As of today, the following facilities and/or park areas remain closed: Heman Park Community Center; Centennial Commons Recreation Center; Basketball Courts; Playgrounds and the Pool.

- b) Staff continued to work on the development of a COVID-19 Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department overall reopening plan. The intent of this plan is to identify areas of system in which we can reopen in accordance with St. Louis County Health Department and CDC guidelines. In doing so, it is proposed that areas/activities within the system would have to open in phases over a period. The length of time between each phase will primarily depend on new scientific information and local information including the trajectory of influenza-like illnesses, cases of COVID-19, and any other information deemed relevant to protect public health.
- c) Staff continued to work on the development of a COVID-19 Centennial Commons reopening plan. Like the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department overall reopening plan, the Centennial Commons reopening plan would also be done in phases over a period. The length of time between each phase will primarily depend on new scientific information and local information including the trajectory of influenza-like illnesses, cases of COVID-19, and any other information deemed relevant to protect public health.
- d) Staff continued to work with the University City School District regarding their use of athletic fields and tennis courts for the fall and submittal of their COVID-19 Youth & Adult Sports plan.
- e) Staff continued to work with Christ the King regarding their use of soccer fields for the fall and submittal of their COVID-19 Youth & Adult Sports plan.
- f) Staff submitted a proposal to the St. Louis County Department of Health for the reopening of Playgrounds. If granted, the playgrounds would be opened on a phased approach starting with Heman Park.

2) Departmental Policies and Procedures

- a) Since the department has had limited and several undocumented policies and procedures, Staff has been working to develop a more formal documented system of policies and procedures.
- b) Working with the Golf Division on the development of an overall Golf policies and procedures manual.
- c) Continue waiting for legal counsel to review recommended "Park Ordinances" and forward to City Council.

3) Maintenance Investment/Improvement Plan, Capital Investment/Improvement Plan, Refurbishment/Replacement Plan.

Continued to work on the development of an overall plan to identify the maintenance and operational needs of the department. This plan will include itemized work, life cycles, estimated costs, etc.

4) Park Management Plans

Continued to work with staff on the development of management plans for each park and/or facility within the department. These plans will include the type of park, type of use, maintenance objectives, improvement needs, etc.

5) Department Reorganization

- a) Currently identifying the needs, roles and responsibilities of each division and employees and analyzing operational changes that are needed to be more efficient and effective.
- b) Continued to review existing job descriptions and analyze individual job scope, goals and objectives. Have created rough drafts of Job Descriptions that either may not have existed in the past, or the jobs/duties/responsibilities have changed over the years.

6) Capital Improvement Projects

Continued to work on the development of technical specifications for FY21 CIP items.

- Annual Tree Trimming
- Ballfield Groomer
- Dog Park – Pavilion/Shade Structure
- E.A.B. Program
- Enclosed Trailer
- Hazardous Tree Removal
- Asphalt Trail Repairs – Heman Park
- Parking Lot & Trail Sealing and Striping – Heman Park
- Pool Painting – Heman Park
- Security Lighting – Heman Park
- Playground Surfacing – Kaufman, Kingsland and Mooney Parks
- Netting – Golf Course
- Parking Lot Repair/Replacement – Golf Course
- Tub Grinding
- Wide Area Mower

## 7) Grant Projects

- a) Submitted a Municipal Parks Construction Grant Application for Ackert Park as budgeted in the FY21 CIP Program.
- b) Closed all the Fogerty Park and Greensfelder Park grants and received reimbursements totaling \$531,400.
- c) MSD Project Clear Grants – Met with Jenny Wendt, Cliff Cross, Sinan Alpaslan and Judy Prange to discuss possible stormwater/beautification projects that would be eligible for the program. During our meeting we identified the following projects:
  - Lewis Park drainage
  - Ruth Park Golf Course – Parking Lot
  - Ruth Park Golf Course – Driving Range
  - Ackert Park
  - Community Center – Parking Lot
  - Wilson Road - Floodway

## **RECREATION OPERATIONS**

- 1) Fees and Charges – Based on the procedures outlined in the Revenue and Pricing Policy, staff continued to review the existing pricing and will make recommendations on new fees and charges.
- 2) Contract Instructors – Developed “draft” contracts for contract instructors and continue waiting for legal counsel to review and approve.
- 3) Volunteer Guidelines – Continued working on guidelines and job descriptions for volunteers used in programs.

## **PARK OPERATIONS**

- 1) Park Closures – Maintenance staff continues to place caution tape/fencing and signage on each playground; Have placed signage on/at all basketball, pavilions and athletic fields. Staff are checking these areas daily and making necessary repairs.
- 2) Playgrounds – As time and weather allow, staff will begin with topping off wood chip playground surfacing.
- 3) Mowing – Continue to mow and trim all park areas.
- 4) Aerating, Seeding, Fertilizing – Began the process of aerating, seeding and fertilizing of athletic fields and select park and public areas.

## **FORESTRY OPERATIONS**

- 1) Tree Removals and Limb Pickup – Continued to address problem trees.
- 2) Ordinances – Continued reviewing the current ordinances and to make recommendations to needed changes.

- 3) Storm Damage – Worked on emergency tree removals as well as the collection of fallen limbs from roadways and sidewalks.
- 4) Tree Trimming Program - Continued to work on the development of technical specifications for the annual tree trimming program.
- 5) E.A.B. Program - Continued to work on the development of technical specifications for the annual E.A.B. program.
- 6) Hazardous Tree Removals - Continued to work on the development of technical specifications for hazardous tree removals.

## **GOLF OPERATIONS**

- 1) Landscaping – Staff has built landscape beds and have planted flowers. Placed Zoysia sod around tees and greens.
- 2) Mowing and Trimming – Continue mowing and trimming of the course.
- 3) Fees and Charges - Based on the procedures outlined in the Revenue and Pricing Policy, staff has reviewed the existing pricing and made recommendations on new fees and charges to the Parks Commission. These Fees and Charges are scheduled to be placed on the September 29<sup>th</sup> Council Agenda for review and consideration.
- 4) Policies and Procedures – Continue to review and upgrade policies and procedures.
- 5) Driving Range – Due to the excessive rains this summer we have experienced severe rutting and drainage issues at the driving range. We have also been experiencing issues in retaining and recruiting part-time staff due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, we have had to close the range periodically.

## **FLEET OPERATIONS**

- 1) Currently identifying the needs, roles and responsibilities of the division and employees and analyzing operational changes that are needed to be more efficient and effective.
- 2) Continued working on identifying items for a second auction to take place in late August or September.
- 3) Met with Enterprise Leasing regarding their Municipal Fleet Management Program. Staff will continue to have discussions with Enterprise to analyze the program.