



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Parks Commission  
**FROM:** Darren Dunkle, Director of Parks, Recreation & Forestry  
**DATE:** October 16, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Department 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; Kaufman and Kingsland 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 received approval from the St. Louis County Department of Health for the reopening of Playgrounds. All playgrounds except for Kaufman and Kingsland are now open. Kaufman and Kingsland will remain closed due to surfacing issues.

## 2) Departmental Policies and Procedures

- a) Since the department has had limited and several undocumented policies and procedures, I have continued to work on the development of a more formal documented system of policies and procedures.
- b) Continued working on the development of an overall Golf policies and procedures manual.
- c) Worked with legal counsel to review recommended "Park Ordinances".
- d) Submitted Park Management Policies to legal counsel for review and direction.

## 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

- a) Annual Tree Trimming – Developed Bid Documents and went out for Bid. Council approved bid at the October 12<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting.
- b) Ballfield Groomer – Identified equipment need and anticipate purchase after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.
- c) Dog Park Pavilion/Shade Structure – Identifying options.
- d) E.A.B. Program/ Hazardous Tree Removal - Developed Bid Documents and went out for Bid. Council approved bid at the October 12<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting.
- e) Enclosed Trailer - Continued to work on the development of technical specifications.
- f) Asphalt Trail Repairs at Heman Park - Continued to work on the development of technical specifications.
- g) Parking Lot & Trail Sealing and Striping at Heman Park - Continued to work on the development of technical specifications.
- h) Pool Painting at Heman Park - Developed Bid Documents and anticipate going out to bid after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.
- i) Security Lighting – Heman Park
- j) Playground Surfacing – Kaufman, Kingsland and Mooney Parks
- k) Golf Course Netting - Developed Bid Documents and went out for Bid. Will bring to the October 26<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting for approval.
- l) Golf Course Parking Lot Repair/Replacement – Identifying options.
- m) Wide Area Mower - Identified equipment need and anticipate purchase after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.

## 7) Grant Projects

- a) Submitted a Municipal Parks Construction Grant Application for Ackert Park as budgeted in the FY21 CIP Program. Should receive notification in October.
- b) 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:
  - 1) Lewis Park drainage
  - 2) Ruth Park Golf Course Parking Lot
  - 3) Ruth Park Golf Course Driving Range
  - 4) Ackert Park
  - 5) Community Center Parking Lot
  - 6) Wilson Road Floodway

## 8) Uniforms

Continued to work with other departments regarding uniform needs. Met with Cintas to identify and streamline uniform options. Should receive Cooperative Contract pricing within the next two weeks. Anticipate taking recommendation to Council in November for approval.

## **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.
- 4) Aquatic Operations – Developed Bid Documents and went out for Bid. Will bring to the November 9<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting for approval.
- 5) Software Upgrades – Staff continued to work on preparation of upgrading the current RecTrac/GolfTrac recreation software.

## **PARK OPERATIONS**

- 1) Park Closures – Maintenance staff continues to place caution tape/fencing and on/at all basketball, pavilions and athletic fields. Staff are checking these areas daily and making necessary repairs.
- 2) Playgrounds – Opened up all playgrounds except for Kaufman and Kingsland Park.
- 3) Mowing – Continue to mow and trim all park areas. Developed Bid Documents and went out for Bid. Will bring to the October 26<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting for approval.
- 4) Aerating, Seeding, Fertilizing – Aerated, seeded and fertilized 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) Tree Trimming Program - Developed Bid Documents and went out for Bid. Council approved bid at the October 12<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting.
- 4) E.A.B. Program/Hazardous Tree Removals - Developed Bid Documents and went out for Bid. Council approved bid at the October 12<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting.
- 5) Tree Removal Presentation – Gave a presentation to members of City Council on the City’s Tree Removal Policy and Procedures.
- 6) T.R.I.M. Grant – Received notification from the Missouri Department of Conservation regarding the City being selected for a grant for the inventory of select street trees. If accepted, the City would receive a reimbursable grant in the amount of \$9,437.00 to hire a consultant to perform a tree inventory of select street trees in Ward 3.

## **GOLF OPERATIONS**

- 1) Mowing and Trimming – Continue mowing and trimming of the course.
- 2) Fees and Charges – City Council approved the recommended fees and charges. Golf Course Fees went into place on Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>. Driving Range Fees will take a little longer to enact as the ball dispenser machine has to be recalibrated.
- 3) Policies and Procedures – Continue to review and upgrade policies and procedures.
- 4) 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.
- 5) Golf Course Netting - Developed Bid Documents and went out for Bid. Will bring to the October 26<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting for approval.

## **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.
- 3) Met with Enterprise Leasing regarding their Municipal Fleet Management Program. Staff will continue to have discussions with Enterprise to analyze the program.
- 4) Met with team members of Brown, Smith & Wallace to develop the scope of the Fleet Audit.

## **BOARDS, COMMISSIONS & PARTNERS**

- 1) Parks Commission – Next meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2020.
- 2) Forestry Commission – Next meeting is scheduled for November 11, 2020.
- 3) Senior Commission – Next meeting is scheduled for November 16, 2020.
- 4) Arts/Letters Commission – Next meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2020.
- 5) CALOP Commission - Next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2020