



June Board Cycle

Milwaukee County Parks

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Wauwatosa, WI 53226

(414) 257-PARK

Date: May 20, 2020
To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, County Board of Supervisors
From: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks
Subject: **Parks applied for grant support of a pilot Park Ambassador program through AARP Foundation (INFO)**

Issue

Milwaukee County Parks recently applied for a grant to support a pilot Park Ambassador program through the AARP Foundation.

Background

As part of Parks' Racial Equity work in Milwaukee County, building relationships and trust with local communities has been identified as a priority. Building trust will take time, effort, and ongoing dedication, but one proven best practice deployed by other urban parks systems is implementing Park Ambassador programs.

Best practices for parks and recreation engagement show that community liaisons play an important role in building community relationships between residents and government, and this is especially true in communities of color. Urban park systems across the nation deploy the concept of "Park Ambassadors", as either paid or volunteer ambassadors from local neighborhoods who serve as park activators and liaisons between government and local neighborhoods. Park Ambassadors serve as "trusted voices" as they represent local communities, allowing for improved two-way communication as a step towards building trust across all communities.

Through the AARP Foundation, Milwaukee County submitted a grant request of \$145,779 to support a new Park Ambassadors program beginning in spring 2021. The Milwaukee County Parks Park Ambassador program would introduce community liaisons and regular programming into selected parks each year. Park locations for ambassadors will be determined using a racial equity lens that takes into consideration ethnicity, age, socioeconomic data, etc. The program will support 16 paid Park Ambassador positions each year for up to three years as part of the pilot program.



Parks will hire Park Ambassadors directly from local communities surrounding our parks, and Ambassadors will implement weekly programming focused on engaging older adults and supporting intergenerational activities in Parks.

The grant does not require a financial match from Milwaukee County but does apply staff time as in-kind, non-required match. If we are approved for the grant, we will return to the County Board for approval in accepting the grant.

Recommendation

This report is for informational purposes, no action is requested at this time.

Prepared By: Lindsay Frost, Engagement Manager, Milwaukee County Parks

Approved By: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks



Attachments

- Attachment 1: Park Ambassador Budget
- Attachment 2: Park Ambassador Logic Model

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- David Crowley, County Executive
- Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
- Sheldon Wasserman, Parks, Energy & Environment Chair, Supervisor District 3
- Steven Shea, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Vice-Chair, Supervisor District 8
- Felesia Martin, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 7
- Sylvia Ortiz-Velez, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 12
- Liz Sumner, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 1
- Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board
- Julie Landry, Director, Department of Administrative Services
- Joseph Lamers, Fiscal & Budget Director, DAS
- Vince Masterson, Fiscal & Strategic Asset Coordinator, DAS
- Pamela Bryant, Capital Finance Manager, Comptroller's Office
- Justin Rodriguez, Capital Finance Analyst, Comptroller's Office
- Kelsey Evans, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk
- Emily Peterson, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller
- Lindsey Peterson, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB

