



Milwaukee Parks Foundation

Executive Director, Rebecca Stoner

About Me

Passion for Parks

- Parks have been a backdrop for much of my life the last ten years I've lived in Milwaukee.

Grassroots Engagement & Equity Mindset

- Neighborhood engagement and a community focus have been woven throughout my career.
- Actively fight for equity and inclusion in personal and professional life

Extensive Fundraising Experience

- “Fell into” Fundraising because I love relationship management and storytelling. Raised over \$12M for important causes in Milwaukee since 2015.

Extensive Nonprofit Management Experience

- Masters in Nonprofit Management, ten years management and director level experience, six+ years supervisory experience.

The Fun Stuff

- Former improv comedian at ComedySportz; Certificate in Master Food Preservation; Board Game aficionado; Campaign treasurer for Local School Board Race



MISSION

The Mission of the Milwaukee Parks Foundation is to engage our community in supporting Milwaukee County Parks to collectively steward a thriving parks system.



VISION

Foster dynamic connections through our land and community, expanding what is possible in our neighborhoods, and engaging residents in supporting a safe and vibrant parks system that benefits all.

Strategic Priorities

Awareness, Access & Belonging

Equitable Amenities & Programming

Volunteering & Partnerships

Advocacy

Fundraising & Grantmaking Priorities 2022-23

The Seeds & Sprouts Initiative is the first proposed initiative of the Milwaukee Parks Foundation. The initiative tackles challenges throughout our County Parks System on the micro and macro level.



SEEDS

The SEEDS portion of the campaign tackles root cause challenges identified by County Parks leadership and supported by resident input. By planting seeds for additional revenue sources for our County Parks Department, our parks system overall is provided with more sustainable funding to achieve their objectives.



SPROUTS

The SPROUTS portion of the campaign directly addresses resident concerns around their parks by granting dollars directly to other organizations organizing in their parks, including Friends groups, neighborhood organizations, nonprofits, etc.

Fundraising & Grantmaking Priorities

Investments are made with an equity focus, utilizing MPF's strategic priority areas and Milwaukee County Park's equity index.

Focus Area: Safety & Building Improvements

- Arrived at these focus areas after 400+ resident conversations via strategic planning and meetings with County Parks Leadership

Fundraising & Grantmaking Priorities

While the Seeds and Sprouts initiative is the focus of fundraising, MPF does not intend to miss out on opportunities that are in alignment with resident voice and County Parks need.



RESTRICTED GIVING AND PROJECTS

When a donor is interested in making a donation restricted to a specific purpose, provided that County Parks interest, resident interest, and donor interest aligns, MPF will pursue that restricted gift (i.e. current trails maintenance gift). MPF is also interested in pursuing funding for capital projects that fit within our focus area (i.e. lighting at Sherman Park).

First Five Months

More than 125 stakeholder meetings

- Including Friends groups, neighborhood associations, supporters and potential supporters, nonprofit partners, County Parks and County leadership, MPF Board and more

More than \$93,000 raised

- Including successful year end appeal raising \$25,000

Infrastructure Building

- For example: hired a bookkeeping consultant as well as a marketing and branding consultant, established additional policies and procedures, grew the Board of Directors, developed fund development and staffing plan.

Awareness Building

- 4 News mentions, including one Op Ed in the Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service, growth in social media and email list, participation in two panels

LOTS of Learning and Gratitude!

- Regular meetings with Guy Smith and his team, visited 40+ parks, reviewed county budgets, interviewed Parks Foundation directors across the nation to learn best practices
- Wrote over 150 thank you notes!

So...what's next?

Awareness, Access Belonging

- Hiring! Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships
 - Launching communications and marketing strategy
- Engagement Events!
 - Walk & Talk in Mitchell Park with Adam Carr
 - Sponsoring neighborhood groups events, i.e. Makers Market @ Rose Park, in tandem with MKE Black
 - Saké Tasting with Tarik Moody

Volunteering & Partnerships

- Pilot corporate volunteer experiences
- Continue authentic partnership connections

Equitable Amenities & Programming

- Fundraising
- Establishing infrastructure to invest equitably in county and parks
- Positioned to make a significant Gift in 2022

Advocacy

- Advocate for County's Sales Tax initiative (moveforwardmke.com)
- Remain involved with the Wisconsin Policy Forum (<https://wispolicyforum.org/research/sinking-treasure-a-look-at-the-milwaukee-county-parks-troubled-finances-and-potential-solutions/>)

Opportunities for Partnership

- Let's Connect! Meet? Attend our events? Connect on social/email?
- Who else should I be talking to?



Thank You!