

Bennett Spring State Park  
Town Hall Public Meeting  
06/09/2023 6 pm

- No agenda was submitted.
- No fact sheets were available, but displays provided of depictions of Hatchery renovation and splash pad rendering.
- 27 attendees were present.
- Invitations included: Lebanon Chamber of Commerce (General Invitation in between Directors) Buffalo area Chamber of Commerce (Tanya Watson, Executive Director) Laclede County Commissioner (Darrel Pollock, Western Commissioner) (Randy Angst, Presiding Commissioner) Dallas County Commissioner John Crawford.
- No local officials attended.
- Also invited were Senator Sandy Crawford, Representative Jeff Knight. Ed Vought from Jeff Knight's legislative staff attended; Jim and Sue Price were present on behalf of Senator Crawford.
- Invitations were sent to MDC Hatchery Managers Ben Havens and Mike Perry, Concession Owners Jim and Carmen Rogers. Ben Havens attended.
- No media identified.
- PowerPoint presentation: welcome, introductions, recently completed projects, current projects, future projects, stewardship work and hours, new ranger (Talon Farrar) introduction, Q&A.
- Public Comment:
  - Unidentified guest asked what the results of the wooden bridge survey were. Justin Adams answered - 55% in favor of keeping it as a pedestrian bridge and 45% in favor of replacement bridge. Justin also mentioned the \$3 million added to legislation for the purpose of the new bridge.
  - Jim Price and Sue Dial reported that they were speaking on behalf of Senator Crawford and confirmed the proposed legislation for a bridge and walking path awaiting the governor's signature.
  - Unidentified male guest asked why anglers couldn't buy the daily fishing tag for the length of their stay. Ben Havens replied citing that it would be difficult to calculate fish stocking rates, but it could be something that MDC looked at.
  - Female guest noted that the black vultures were not as bad so far this year. Gabriel DuMond responded and explained briefly about some of the measures the park had taken during the off-season to mitigate the problem.
  - Unidentified male guest asked about park policy on dogs being left unattended while anglers are fishing. Gabriel DuMond responded and explained leash law and park policy prohibiting unattended pets.
  - Unidentified male guest expressed disapproval of the year reservation window. Gabriel DuMond said he recognized the new reservation window was frustrating to some and offered the QR code for public feedback.
  - Female guest expressed frustration that the campground reservation company was an out of state company. Gabe explained that the call center for Missouri was located in

the state. Justin Adams also explained the reason was because no Missouri-based companies bid on the system.

- Danny Goldsmith inquired about plans for the park's centennial. Gabriel DuMond answered that there was a preliminary planning meeting set up between park staff and region staff.
- Danny Goldsmith inquired about plans for the Officer's Barracks. Deputy Regional Director Katy Holmer explained that we had requested cultural resource money for the purposes of fixing them up.
- Guest asked about facility use for school groups and DNR waiving charges. Patricia explained that the explorer camp was now the school's and the park was only providing requested programming. Danny Goldsmith responded that the church was helping out and it wasn't an issue.
- Danny talked about fly tying at the church annex on Wednesday
- Overall the feeling of the group was positive and the meeting went very smooth.