

Resolution Number 176

John Karel

Whereas, we have been apprised that after over 27 years of dedicated service to Tower Grove Park Mr. John Karel is retiring; and

Whereas, born June 30, 1948, in Louisville, Kentucky. John Karel was educated there and in St. Louis, Missouri until beginning studies at the University of Missouri – Columbia in 1966. From that university, he received a Bachelor of Arts in American Intellectual History, and a Master of Science in Wildlife Management. His Master’s Thesis was “A Natural Area Survey of Southeastern Missouri”; and

Whereas, from his master’s studies, he began work as a planner with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, beginning in May of 1976. In April of 1977 he transferred as a planner from the Division of Planning and Policy Development to the Division of Parks; and

Whereas, in October of 1979, he was appointed as director of the parks division and held that post until July of 1985. As parks director, he was responsible for administration of the Missouri State Parks system. His duties included those of Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, with responsibility for overall state historic preservation functions including compliance with federal statues, grant allocations, investment tax credit programs, and National Register surveys and nominations. He was also responsible for supervision and coordination of overall statewide outdoor recreation policies and federal recreation grant programs; and

Whereas, following his state service, John worked as a consultant to various environmental organizations and other institutions. His clients included Pioneer Forest, the University of Missouri, and the Sierra Club; and

Whereas, in October of 1987, Mr. Karel accepted the directorship of Tower Grove Park. He is responsible for administration of all aspects of this 289-acre historic institution; and

Whereas, restoration and revitalization of this National Historic Landmark landscape has been the focus of Karel’s efforts for over two decades. The results have been dramatic and consequential for the civic vitality of the Park and also for a broad swath of the City’s most densely populated and diverse area; and

Whereas, Mr. Karel has published numerous articles in various publications, and belongs to numerous environmental, recreation, and historic preservation groups. He has received numerous awards, and currently serves on the boards of several citizen organizations including the St. Louis chapter of the Victorian Society in America, the Missouri Parks Association, and the National Association for Olmsted Parks. He is President of the L-A-D Foundation, which owns over 140,000 acres of forest land in Missouri, demonstrating and supporting conservation and responsible forestry; and

Whereas, he is co-author of a highly regarded book on Missouri’s state parks and historic sites, Exploring Missouri’s Legacy, published in 1992 by the University of Missouri Press. He has received numerous awards and honors in recognition of his work on behalf of public lands and historic preservation.

Now therefore be it resolved by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to commend and thank John Karel for his remarkable leadership in the stewardship and revitalization of Tower Grove Park, for building a solid foundation for its future and wish him a enjoyable retirement. Furthermore we direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it may be presented to our honoree at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced on the 5th day of December, 2014 by:

Honorable Stephen J. Conway Alderman 8th Ward

Adopted this the 5th day of December, 2014 as attested by:

David W. Sweeney
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen