Utah State Legislature

Fiscal Highlights

Update on This Is The Place Heritage Park - Ivan D. Djambov

This Is The Place Heritage Park was established in 1957 and was managed by the Division of Parks and Recreation until 1998. In an effort to generate more private funding, the park operation was then transferred to This Is The Place Foundation, a non-profit corporation, which continues to manage the park today. The park was to be funded by private donations, park revenues, and an ongoing appropriation of \$800,000 from the General Fund. However, the foundation went through serious financial problems, which led to requesting additional state funds, and resulted in restructuring its leadership in 2006.

Under the new leadership, the park saw some immediate changes, including an increase in revenue, visitors, volunteers, the number of open buildings, and expansion of the season. However, the revenues, visitation, and volunteers appear to be impacted by the economic conditions and trends.



Revenues

The park has organized its revenue sources in three major categories: Public Funding, Private Giving, and Earned Revenue. The total revenues to the park have varied over time, but have been on the rise in the last three years in all three categories.

<u>The Public Funding</u> category includes \$850,000 from the General Fund (the \$50,000 is contingent upon securing matching funds from Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County and funding from the ZAP (Zoos, Arts, and Parks) Tax. The Legislature appropriated for FY 2016 an additional \$200,000 ongoing and \$200,000 one-time from the General Fund to the foundation for the management of the park.

<u>The Private Giving</u> category includes donations from organizations, such as the Eccles Foundation and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This category has increased in the last three years.

<u>The Earned Revenue</u> category includes revenues from admissions, building rentals, food, gifts, and membership sales, and has been increasing every year since FY 2010. The main reasons for this increase are higher revenues from building rentals and retail sales.

Visitors

The number of visitors to the park increased significantly since FY 2007, peaking at 255,100 in FY 2010. In FY 2015, the park management reported 250,955 visitors, the second highest since FY 2006 (see red line in the figure above). The number of visitors depend on the number of free events at the park and on the level of competition from the Hogle Zoo and the Museum of Natural History.