

Council Memo

Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: July 20, 2026

Re: First Amendment to the Boone County Historical Society Lease – Nifong Park

Impacted Ward: Ward 6

Executive Summary

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting a resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign the first amendment to the property lease agreement with the Boone County Historical Society (BCHS) at Frank G. Nifong Memorial Park. For over 40 years, BCHS has leased approximately 3.63 acres in Nifong Park for the purposes of operating a public historical museum, gazebo, art gallery, visitor's center and historic village. The first amendment to the 2017 agreement will expand the leased area by 0.51 acres. This is necessary for the expansion of the Historic Boone Village for the relocation of the Locust Grove Baptist Church to the site.

Discussion

The City of Columbia and the Parks and Recreation Department have partnered with the Boone County Historical Society (BCHS) for over 40 years at Frank G. Nifong Memorial Park. The initial lease began with the construction of the Boone County History & Culture Center, which includes the Montminy Art Gallery. In 1994, the lease was amended so that BCHS could construct an outdoor gazebo to enhance the services and events being offered at the museum. In 2003, the lease was amended again to include an additional .046-acre corner of land to provide an indoor exhibit space for the "Nikawa", the boat used by author William Least Heat-Moon in his cross country journey that he described in his book River Horse. On August 21, 2017, the Columbia City Council authorized an updated lease agreement with the Boone County Historical Society that extends the agreement through December 31, 2040.

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting a resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign the first amendment to the property lease agreement with the Boone County Historical Society (BCHS) at Frank G. Nifong Memorial Park. The amendment will increase the total acreage of the leased space by the Boone County Historical Society to 4.14 acres of land. The additional 0.51 acres of land will allow for the expansion of the Historic Boone Village.

The Boone County Historical Society will use the additional space for the relocation of the Locust Grove Baptist Church. The church is currently located on Thomas Road, approximately five miles north of Sturgeon, Missouri. The church was constructed in 1881 and was in use until 1953. The church has stood abandoned since this date. The church is

currently owned by the Locust Grove Baptist Church Cemetery Association. The cemetery trustees voted unanimously in the summer of 2025 to donate the church to the Boone County Historical Society so that it could be preserved in perpetuity in the Historic Boone Village. The Boone County Historical Society has acquired the necessary funding through private donations for the relocation and restoration of the church and a contractor is in place to complete the work.

The lease expansion in the Historic Boone Village will also allow for future building additions within the village on the north side of the gravel road.

All other terms of the 2017 lease agreement will remain unchanged and in full force and effect.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: N/A

Long-Term Impact: N/A

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Reliable and Sustainable Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Land Use & Growth Management, Tertiary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities

Legislative History

Date	Action
8/21/2017	R114-17: Authorizing a lease for real property with the Boone County Historical Society for operation of a museum, gazebo, art gallery, visitor's center and other historic buildings at the Frank G. Nifong Memorial Park. R114-17

Suggested Council Action

Approve the resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute the first amendment to the property lease agreement with the Boone County Historical Society (BCHS) at Frank G. Nifong Memorial Park.