

FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

MINUTES OF MEETING ON OCTOBER 17, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Jeff Beitel at 7:05. In attendance were Bill Scott, Linda Scott, Anne Walters, Michael Civita, Gordon Woodrow, Betsy Woodrow, Rose Stancato, Kim Costanza, Jason Brennan, Steve Gallo, Chrissy Hinks and Veronica Balassone.

---MINUTES of the last meeting in September were reviewed. Correction was made to the nature of the planned race from "bike" race to "5K walk/run" race which will be planned now for next year. The minutes were approved.

---Linda Scott provided the TREASURER'S REPORT. FMSP now has 98 members; this year's income is slightly behind last year's. She informed us also that corporate memberships are available, but need to be added to the Membership category on the financial report. The Hickman is one of our corporate members and was represented at this meeting by Kim Costanza. Linda suggested approaching Sharpless Square for membership. Total income to date from fundraising activities and memberships as shown on the report totals \$14,013.50. Balance in the checking account at this time is \$23,488.17. Inventory on the balance sheet includes xmas notecards and a large number of 18 x 24 prints, currently being marketed at \$75, unframed. Michael offered to get them into a gallery to sell for FMSP.

---Mayor Carolyn Comitta met with us to share information about the Fall Community Conversation which had been held at the Chesco Historical Society the previous week. 100 or so attended, and ideas generated by the meeting around a central idea of a "Capacity for Change" in the community was tabulated by interns. One such idea – a COMMUNITY CALENDAR – for all activities in the borough has already been implemented for downtown West Chester activities by Malcolm Johnstone, but could be expanded for the whole of the borough. Plans are in the works to link the borough website with both the BID website and the West Chester University website. The university, in alignment with its commitment to be a "good neighbor" has offered to help the borough update its website. At this time borough CIO Bill Mann has set up facebook and twitter for the borough.

Another idea is to improve outreach to new homeowners in the borough. Jason suggested FMSP develop a welcome package for new homeowners to familiarize them with our group and encourage membership. This will be referred to the membership committee. Rose Stancato offered to assist with its development.

---Jeff distributed information on Yard Waste and Leaf Pick-up by the Department of Public Works.

---OLD BUSINESS:

---Fountain Restoration Project. On October 7th Anne Walters and Jeff Beitel went before the Recreation Commission to present FMSP's plans and drawings for the fountain and gain the support of the commission to move ahead with the process of restoring the fountain. Unanimous support was given

with the understanding that no funds are being sought from the borough for the project. The commission was given the complete, detailed drawings and it is understood that FMSP can now move forward with securing bids and donations.

---The fall garden party fundraiser "Oktoberfest" on September 28th was attended by 105 people and raised \$3,408.90 after expenses. The amount is about \$2500 less than last year's garden party income, about \$1600 of that difference due to the amount of donations received for fountain restoration. The balance of the difference was due to higher costs for catered food and music. The setting at Barb Voltz' and the decorations provided by Jeff made for a wonderful atmosphere. Betsy indicated that charging more for the event next year would be reasonable and strongly suggested. At this time, it is likely that next year's party would be held on Lafayette Street, with an Italian street festival theme. Michael Civita believes he can procure donations of food. Rose Stancato can as well. It will be held on the last Saturday of September 2014.

---Franklin and Biddle Streets Entrance Improvements. One unqualified bid has been received. The project will be bid out again. The project will be put back into next year's budget as it is too late now to move forward with this year's budget.

---Fundraising Events report. Homes and sponsors have been secured for the Progressive Dinner. There will be three stops: two homes for heavy hors d'oeuvres, two homes for a second course, and one home for all to gather for desserts. The committee will meet next week.

---The Fountain Committee will seek a large donor and work on developing a plan for a long-range endowment for the maintenance and upkeep of the fountain once it is in working order. The committee members are Anne Walters, chair, Jeff Beitel, Gordon Woodrow, Steve Gallo, Jerry Wisneski and Jim Salvas. Michael Civita will act as a liaison between this committee and the Fundraising Events committee. At this time 50% of funds raised by the concerts are earmarked for the fountain restoration.

---Membership Committee report. Discussion ensued on value of a postcard membership drive. A sample of one developed by the membership committee was passed around. There were some who see no value in a mailing and believe membership should be internet driven, while others disagreed. There also were objections to the text on the postcard as presented. Eric Miller is eager to have a reliable membership database which needs to be compiled from Linda Scott's membership records as well as Lane Randall's email lists. Additional help was solicited for Eric's committee. Rose Stancato and Jason Brennan volunteered to work along with Eric and Bill Scott. A motion was made to add these two new members to the committee and have them meet with Eric to work out strategies for recruiting new members and retaining members, and methods of communication for achieving those goals, i.e., through print or electronic form. The membership committee should then bring their ideas to FMSP for approval. The motion was seconded and approved.

---Jason reported on the trash receptacle replacement project. He has received word from Megan, the solid waste manager, that Public Works will budget for two cans and the Park and Recreation department will budget for two cans for next year.

---NEW BUSINESS:

---Placement of the Luminaria in the Park on Friday December 6th will require adult supervision of the Boy Scouts from Troop 14 who are volunteering their service for this activity. 1000 bags need to be folded in advance of this date. Volunteers are needed for this effort.

---The Progressive Dinner Party is scheduled for Saturday, February 1st.

--An invoice for the Fountain Restoration Architectural Drawings in the amount of \$1645 has been approved for payment.

--Lastly member comments/concerns were solicited. Gordon Woodrow objected to email blasts being sent to the general membership without prior approval by the board. It was agreed that such a policy is in place, and that the policy had been broken when communications had gone out regarding the Save the Barclay grounds campaign. This was brought to the attention of those responsible and the policy was made clear.

The meeting was adjourned .

The next meeting is scheduled for the 21st of November.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Balassone