

FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK
MINUTES OF MEETING ON JANUARY 27, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Jeff Beitel. In attendance were Anne Walters, Linda Scott, Holly Brown, Rose Stancato, Jim Salvas, Lane Randall, Betsy Woodrow, Jean Stretton, Bill Scott and Veronica Balassone.

--MINUTES of the last meeting were approved as written; Rose moved that they be entered into the record, Jim seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

--Linda gave the TREASURER'S REPORT. A balance sheet for the years ending 2014 and 2013, and a Receipts and Disbursements statement for the years ending 2014 and 2013 were distributed, as well as statements for January 1-27, 2015. The checking account balance at year end 2014 was \$33,051.32. This compares with the year end 2013 balance of \$22,000. The net income for 2014 was \$11,459.29 and for 2013 was \$4,457.85. The increase in income in 2014 was attributed in part to \$2,600 more from the Progressive Plates event, a rate increase in dues, and an increase in fundraising income. Expenses were down in 2014 compared to 2013 by about \$1,350. The January statements showed that, in addition to the checking account, there is \$3,403.19 in Accounts Receivable from Eventbrite receipts for the Progressive Plates event, and Paypal undeposited funds of \$864.40, totaling \$37,880.91 in current assets. Linda pointed out that during the same period in January last year, we had received \$4,016 more in total fundraising income (donations, membership dues, progressive plates event).

--Bill Scott wished to add an additional agenda item. He distributed an article from the Daily Local News dated October 1, 2014, "The 97th Regiment: Pa.'s original Band of Brothers", written by Senator Andy Dinniman. Bill clarified that Borough Council has approved the concept of placing a special memorial to this regiment at the site of the Civil War monument in MSP. There is no deadline for completing this project. FMSP has expressed its preference with regard to the design and placement of such a memorial to the council and to the proponents of the memorial.

--ANNOUNCEMENTS by Jeff included the All Parks Clean Up scheduled for Saturday, April 18th, 9-10:30 a.m. Last year the Boys Soccer Club/Team at West Chester University assisted. They were such an asset to this endeavor that Jeff would like to enlist their help again this year. If they are not available, Jeff will ask Keith Kurowski to help us find another group to help.

--Jeff has received an email from Eric Miller indicating that he will not be in West Chester April 25th for the MSP tree walk that he had planned with arborist Ken Leroy. As a result, the event will need to be rescheduled or cancelled.

--The Leaf Mulching Program in MSP was derailed last fall as a result of the contractor not having the appropriate equipment for the work. Mulching the leaves requires a special mulching deck and blade. The program, which Jeff and Anne had spent a great deal of time working on with Public Works, was intended to reduce the cutting schedule and to mulch the leaves in the fall. Holly Brown urged Jeff to go to Public Works to discuss the terms of the contract which are not being honored. Bill Scott asked to see the relevant documents regarding the program terms and the contract.

--A third plan is being designed for the Hickman Expansion. Holly offered to work with the Hickman as a liaison to the community. There is a great deal of concern about the size and design of the project, but all agreed that the dialogue has to continue between the Hickman and the surrounding community and the borough.

--MSP is next in line for playground improvement. Jeff has talked with Keith Kurowski to let him know that FMSP members are interested in forming a group under Steve Gallo's direction to meet with Keith to share in the planning of a new playground. Jeff distributed two plans: one showing the existing playground area/paths for MSP, and the other mapping a proposed playground area/new paths for MSP. Jeff's proposal connects the pathways between the entrance near the playground at the intersection of North Matlack and Marshall Street, through the playground area and to the pathways near the gazebo. His preferred material would be TSA hard compacted gravel. A motion was made by Ronnie and seconded by Holly that pathways be incorporated into the proposed playground design. The motion carried, and it was agreed that this be made know to Steve Gallo. It was clarified that the number one priority at this time is repair of the existing brick sidewalk on North Matlack Street and the steps into the park in the middle of that sidewalk.

--The FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE report was given by Betsy. There is a great deal of concern about the disappointing response to the Progressive Plates event on February 7th. Linda suggested that, because the new 5-house format allows for more participants, the urgency is no longer there to buy tickets early. Everyone was encouraged to "talk up" the event and get more members to attend. Calls may be made to encourage members to come to the event.

--The general membership/open house/holiday party at the Side Bar in December was not as well attended as hoped. The event ended up costing FMSP \$217. There was some ambiguity as to whether additional attempts will be made to hold meetings/gatherings like this as a way to encourage membership growth.

--Jim was encouraged to do a first printing of the membership brochure he has developed. The brochure will be offered in Welcome Packets given to new neighborhood residents, and may possibly be placed in the lobbies of the new apartment complexes going up in the neighborhood. FMSP may possibly do a direct mailing as well to new residents. Jeff suggested that the word "annual" be added to clarify membership dues levels included in the brochure.

--The FOUNTAIN RESTORATION committee will meet on February 3rd. Holly has joined the committee. Anne reported that the intent at this point is to develop solid construction estimates for Phase I. There is a need to move past the initial set of drawings to the development of construction documents for bids. Jeff added that from feedback he has gotten, members find it difficult to understand the cost estimates for the project, and the committee wants to put together "real" numbers in order to foster a better understanding of the costs involved. The project also is in need of a construction contractor.

The committee plans to apply for a PHMC Keystone Historic Preservation Grant for the fountain project. This would be a matching grant up to \$25,000. The borough would be the applicant. Jane Dorchester, experienced in grant writing, is willing to prepare the grant application for an \$1800 fee. Because there is a stipulation that approval of the grant gives PHMC the right to review anything on the property for 15 years, Jane will try to confine the "property" in this case to the area of the fountain. Anne and Jeff

agreed to meet with Michael Cotter, the new West Chester borough manager, to update him on the fountain restoration project and the planned grant applications.

Betsy suggested that we may also approach the Humphrey Marshall Trust Fund for a contribution to the project. At this time it is estimated that the restoration will cost \$150,000.

A motion to authorize Anne and Jeff to submit a quote for developing construction plans for bids was made by Jim, seconded by Holly and carried.

A motion to move forward with the PHMC grant application for next year, with Jane Dorchester providing the grant writing for \$1800, was made by Linda, seconded by Anne and carried.

--Jeff has three checks for MSP COMMEMORATIVE BENCHES which he will send along with the bench brochure to the Friends of West Chester Parks and Recreation for deposit. Anne and Jeff made a presentation in November to the commission. They are requiring an application form from FMSP which will clearly state in a disclaimer that the borough is not responsible for damage, theft or maintenance of the benches. The program was approved as long as FMSP takes responsibility for installation and maintenance.

--Jeff asked that everyone review the By-Laws sent by Rose, and send any comments to her. It was suggested that the officers' terms be staggered so that the entire board does not get replaced in the same year. How to get people together to have a meaningful election of officers is a concern, and is to be moved up on the agenda and addressed at the next meeting.

--The meeting was adjourned at 8:54.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Balassone