

FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK
MINUTES OF MEETING ON MARCH 19, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Jeff Beitel. In attendance were Anne Walters, Jim Salvas, Lane Randall, Linda Scott, Rose Stancato, Jen Long and Veronica Balassone.

--MINUTES of the last meeting were accepted as written.

--Linda Scott gave the TREASURER'S REPORT. There were no changes or activity since the February meeting. However, she believed that the expense for the fall garden party should be recorded under the fountain funds. This generated a discussion with regard to the accounting for specific fundraising goals. It was generally agreed that the expenses can continue to be recorded under general fundraising and then the net gain or loss from the event can be transferred to the fountain fund, if that is the object of the fundraising event.

Jeff expressed some frustration at the slow flow-through time of funds channeled through the Friends of West Chester Parks and Recreation. Anne indicated that this was likely as a result of the board being composed of volunteers.

--Jeff reminded everyone that the park cleanup was scheduled for Saturday, April 18th, 9-10:30 a.m. It is hoped that wood chips can be acquired by that time for the volunteers to spread in the designated areas to be mulched.

--Planning for this summer's Music at Marshall Picnic Concerts is underway and some sponsors are already lined up. Kit Anstey is the main sponsor at the \$3000 level. Individual concert sponsorship is available at \$1000 per concert, as well as picnic sponsor and face painting sponsorships at \$500 for all three concerts. The concerts will take place on the third Thursday of June, July, August with the rain date slated for the following Thursday of the month. Jim Salvas will design the brochure for the events.

--The MSP Tree Walk with Ken Leroy is scheduled for Saturday, July 18th, 10:30 a.m.

--The first order of commemorative benches should be delivered by the end of April. One of the first four is still available for sponsorship. Also we should have the remainder of the new trash receptacles by the end of April.

--The Kendal Crosslands Arboretum Annual Lecture is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22nd. The custodians of this arboretum used our tree identification and labeling project as a basis for their own project.

--Jeff passed around a printout showing the results of Dean Diehl's testing of three cedars in the park with a resistograph which assesses tree health by drilling a very tiny hole into the tree trunk. It indicated that one of the trees is essentially hollow but still structurally sound.

--The FMSP By-Laws revision project is well underway. Lane has incorporated Jeff and Bob Teti's comments into the original document submitted by Rose Stancato. Linda will email her suggestions. Jeff indicated that the document and comments must be reviewed by the next meeting and any suggestions sent to Rose well before that.

Linda did express her opposition to inclusion of a membership “initiation fee” and issuance of a membership card.

Ronnie proposed creating a “junior membership” level for children to get them involved in the park. Making it fun for them by creating membership stickers and possibly a mascot could develop in them a connection to FMSP and the park. Jen Long is willing to manage social media that could involve the youth in membership families.

--The Fundraising Committee has not met since the last meeting. Ronnie did contact Heather Gallo who is willing to organize the second annual Run/Walk in September. The Garden Party will be planned again by Betsy Woodrow and Ronnie for September as well.

--Rose reported on the Membership Committee.

To encourage membership they plan to set up another (second) table at all park events.

A discussion took place regarding the difficulty of collecting dues. Lane explained that although dues are payable on the website and have been for years, the PayPal system is confusing. FMSP can upgrade to a Shopping Cart that calculates multiple items (donations, tickets, dues), but this apparently involves converting from a Personal to a more expensive Business account in addition to paying a monthly fee of \$30 for the Cart. A Content Management System (CMS) solves this issue.

Authorized users of the Wild Apricot software are not finding it a useful tool for managing membership data. A deadline of April 5th was coming up to renew Wild Apricot. Anne made a motion to investigate what it takes to extend Wild Apricot at no cost, or on a month-to-month basis, until we find an alternative CMS. Jen Long seconded the motion and it was approved.

--Anne reported on the Fountain Restoration Committee. They will be meeting on March 24th and by that time will have met with Mac Cotter, the borough manager, and Jane Dorchester who has been asked to write a grant for funding. The fundraising arm of the committee will make a report.

Contractors have been out to the fountain site to tighten up their proposals.

Members of this committee include Tony Stancato, Gordon Woodrow, Jerry Wisneski, Jim Salvas and Anne Walters.

--Jeff contacted Heather Gallo about a Playground Improvement Committee. MSP is next in line for improvement. Jeff is urging that fundraising (if necessary) and planning for the playground begin now so that when the borough has the funds budgeted for the project, they are completely aware of the wishes of FMSP with regard to its layout, etc.

--Jen Long has offered to work on a social media strategy for FMSP.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Balassone

