

FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK
MINUTES OF MEETING ON February 11, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Jeff Beitel. In attendance were Anne Walters, Jim Salvas, Betsy Woodrow, Jen Long, Phil LaRue and Veronica Balassone.

--The MINUTES of the January 14, 2016 meeting were approved with the addition requested by Eric Miller that attendees at the December meeting wish to see a bocce court incorporated into the plans for a new MSP playground. Phil motioned, Betsy seconded and all agreed to accept the minutes into the official record.

--In Linda Scott's absence, Jeff reviewed the TREASURER'S REPORT. The 2016 Progressive Dinner results were the best ever, as an 8.4% net income increase is shown on the report comparing 2016 with 2015. It was felt that the additional expense this year to print and mail promotional postcards was well worth the cost, as attendance was at an all-time high. Thanks were voiced to Jim Salvas for donating the photographs raffled off at the event, raising \$345. Lee and Eric Miller donated wine to be served at the dessert hosted by the McEvoy's.

The balance sheet showed a negative balance for the Fountain Funds. This resulted from recording the liability for the fence and stone coping that have yet to be delivered and invoiced. The Susquehanna checking account has a balance of \$38,786. It was mentioned again that delays receiving donations that pass through the non-profit FWCP & R is a problem for us. Linda Scott has contacted Hugh Purnell with regard to the process and is requesting a procedural change that will funnel the funds to us more quickly. Ronnie felt it was important to tabulate the average number of days it takes from receipt of the checks by FWCP & R to their deposit into our checking account. Without this information it will be more difficult to press our dissatisfaction with the process. It is of concern also that acknowledgement of the gifts not be delayed as they are tax deductible.

The Receipts and Disbursements statement shows a decrease in net income year-to-date compared to the same period last year. The expense recorded for the park benches significantly impacts this number. It was pointed out however that there is a huge increase in total fundraising income this year.

--An order for eight benches has been placed for spring delivery. Once again Jeff was able to get free shipping. He reminded us that there will be a delay placing benches around the fountain until Phase II brickwork can be completed.

--Jeff is working with Keith Kurowski on a bid to repair the Swiss Cottage roof. The Borough has \$4000-\$5000 available for the repair. It should be done by June or July.

--The Hickman expansion plans have been approved and the demolition for the project may start in March. It was mentioned that a stamped concrete sidewalk in place of brick is going to be permitted. Although the footprint of the project is larger than the original proposal, the building will not be as tall and there will be no underground parking facility. The Hickman will share parking with the Friends School next door.

--The 2016 Spring Park Clean-up is slated for April 16th. There should be less leaf-raking needed since the leaves have been mulched. A tree company will try again to donate wood chips for spreading at the base of trees on that date.

--Following up on Eric Miller's concerns about FMSP liability exposure, Jeff has talked with Borough Manager Mac Cotter about this issue. The lack of a general contractor could put us at risk. Certificates of Insurance will be requested of the pool contractor and Heritage Metalworks. Mac Cotter will follow up with the borough's insurance company and get details of existing coverage from the Hall Insurance Company.

--Nominations are to be taken at the March 10th meeting for the offices of President and Treasurer. Only members "in good standing" may participate. Those are members who have attended at least one general membership meeting in the past calendar year and who are current in their dues payment. Ronnie will compose a list of those who have attended a meeting in 2015 and check with Linda as to their dues status. Anyone on that list can nominate, vote, or run for office.

--Betsy reported on the EVENTS FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE. The Progressive Dinner was a huge success. The committee has two new members: Holly Brown and Katy Luzzi. The group is starting to work on the Fall Party, scheduled for Saturday, September 24th. It will be held at the Wilcomes' home on Ashbridge Street. The plans may include a food truck caterer if feasible.

--Jen Long gave the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE report. They had a meeting on January 27th and developed five goals. 1) Continue utilization of Wild Apricot including integration with Paypal; 2) develop a new brochure with Jim Salvias to target younger area residents – Jen will take the lead; 3) repeat the December general membership meeting in 2016; 4) develop a creative and fun presence at the summer concerts; 5) reserve Sprout for a membership awareness/get-together on April 16th from 6 to 8 o'clock – "Pints for the Park". Phil LaRue is planning the event and hopes to provide light fare for perhaps \$5 a plate. There will be music at no additional charge.

Phil has also contacted State Senator Andy Dinniman's office and will promote FMSP membership with brochures at that location. It was learned that a window at the senator's office is available to the community for displays for two-week periods. It was suggested that perhaps FMSP could reserve this window immediately prior to the Fountain Dedication to publicize the event.

Jen brought up the Little Buddies/Junior Membership initiative as something that might be launched with the playground renovation project. She will suggest this to the Playground Committee.

--Anne reported on the FOUNTAIN RESTORATION COMMITTEE. At this time bids are being sought for the brick paving around the fountain and out to the corner. Decisions yet to be made include the restroom color and the details of the historic monument.

A discussion regarding publication on the website of contributors led to a motion by Jim, and a second by Phil, to post the list of contributors to the fountain restoration project on our website. The motion passed.

The committee is still waiting to hear about the state grant which will come from funds already allocated. It is understood that the budget problems in Harrisburg have no bearing and will not delay the awarding of this grant.

--Jeff shared what he knew about the playground project as there was no committee member present to give the report.

The focus at this point is to finalize potential equipment choices: There are three proposals: 1) Little Tykes plastic; 2) Manufactured wood similar to a fort in a Downingtown playground; and 3) Gordon Woodrow's custom designed castle made of synthetic wood. He is working with Tom McEvoy to develop a cost proposal. The committee's plan is to make a presentation at the April meeting. The borough has allocated \$85,000 for new playground equipment and it must be spent this year or it could be in jeopardy. Bid packages should be out by June. Any proposal has to be for equipment that is certified and meets all government regulations for playground equipment.

--Jim reported on the MUSIC AT MARSHALL Summer Concert series. People are needed to help with the event as two volunteers have dropped out and Brady Clark will be unable to organize the picnic this year. Phil LaRue offered to help. The Events Committee may be tasked with the picnic set up. Jeff noted that the grill which Michael Civita purchased is in the shed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Balassone