

FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

MINUTES OF MEETING ON MARCH 4, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Jeff Beitel. In attendance were Linda Scott, Lane Randall, Jim Salvas, Rose Stancato, Michael Civita, Steve Gallo, Holly Brown, Betsy Woodrow, Jason Brennan, Mike South and Veronica Balassone.

---MINUTES of the previous meeting had been approved prior to this evening, as the minutes had been emailed to the small number of attendees, who in turn approved them by email.

Jeff announced that future FMSP meetings will be held on the first Tuesday of the month in the living room at the Hickman. This schedule will allow our Borough Council representative to attend by avoiding a conflict with Council meetings.

In the future, minutes of a meeting will be sent to Jeff Beitel for approval and distribution by email to the attendees of that meeting. After approval, they will be posted on the FMSP website. Jeff moved to enter this change into the record. All present approved the motion.

---Linda Scott gave the TREASURER'S REPORT. The balance in the checking/savings account is \$28,051. Of that amount \$5,448 is restricted for the fountain project. The reduction in fountain funds since the last treasurer's report is due to expensing items directly related to the restoration project.

In addition to the checking/savings account, FMSP has accounts receivable of \$2,380 through Paypal for the Progressive Plates tickets. This brings total current assets to \$30,551.

Roughly \$9,100 was netted from this year's Progressive Dinner (Plates) event. Membership dues collected (\$2,540 of that amount) was greater this year due to an increase in member fees from \$25 to \$40 per household. Linda noted that there has been no real net gain in the number of members from last year. In addition, the number attending the event was higher as the format had been altered to allow more to participate. This contributed also to the success of the fundraising effort.

Discussion ensued regarding the accounting methodology for the fountain project. It was agreed that Linda will provide a detailed accounting of costs to date of the fountain restoration, that they will be capitalized where appropriate, and expensed against the restricted fountain funds. A motion was approved to continue with proper accounting methodology in recording and reporting costs and donations associated with the fountain project.

---A presentation was made by Frank Vattelana to the group with regard to a proposed MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS PLAQUE to be placed in the vicinity of the Civil War 97th Regiment monument in the park. Mr. Vattelana had been encouraged to address the park group by the Borough's Parks and Recreation Department. He has interest in honoring five recipients of the Medal who were members of the 97th Regiment with a marker that would include photos: George Walton, John Engle, DeWitt Clinton

Lewis, John Wainright and Galusha Pennypacker. . As one of these honorees was a Pennypacker, it might be possible to approach the Pennypacker Mills to assess any interest on its part to finance the project. Also there is a group in Downingtown that plans on creating a reenactment of an encampment in Everhardt Park on October 14th. It was suggested that they may have an interest in marching to Marshall Square Park to the monument. It would be appropriate to have a marker in place by that time.

Jeff made a motion to encourage Frank in this endeavour, with the caveat that it is Frank's project, that he needs to determine the specific costs including installation, and that FMSP has design standards that it is important to consider. The plaque must be consistent with the integrity of the park. In that regard Frank was encouraged to stay in contact with Jeff, and Jeff would contact Greg Walters regarding the project.

---Jeff informed the group of the HICKMAN EXPANSION plans. The proposed building is three to four stories tall and will accommodate 72 units. The current buildings now house 28 units. The preliminary drawings show an expanding footprint. Current Zoning height requirements will be honored. The Hickman has gone to the Planning Commission seeking guidance from the borough. Jeff urged FMSP to get involved. This project is a non-conforming use in the NC-2 zoning. No applicable requirements exist. The project is on the Zoning Hearing Board schedule.

---Jeff reported on the FOUNTAIN RESTORATION PROJECT. A rendering of the fountain in the setting of the park has been completed by Travis Walters. Fundraising efforts are going well. At this time a major event is scheduled for April 19th that is to gather individuals who may be considered major donors.

Three bids have been received on the cast iron work that is required. The design is complete for the plumbing and basin restoration. Jeff and Anne Walters updated the borough council on the project at its last meeting. Gordon Woodrow, Holly Brown and Tony Stancato made a presentation to the council regarding the plaque that would be placed at the fountain in memory of Joan Gagliardi. The council agreed to the plan for the memorial plaque.

---The FRANKLIN AND BIDDLE STREETS ENTRANCE project is to be re-bid this Spring. The budget has been increased and the borough will be covering 100% of the cost.

---Michael Civita reported that the FUNDRAISING EVENTS COMMITTEE has confirmed plans for a Race/Walk on September 20, 2014. The route has been approved by Borough Council. The fee for participants will be \$20 per person in advance, \$25 the day of. The committee is hoping the event will attract 80-100 people its first year.

The Fall Party will take place on September 27th. The plan at this time is to have an "Italian Street Festival " on the 100 block of East Lafayette Street between N. Matlack and N. Walnut.

---Rose Stancato and Jason Brennan reported for the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE. Their use of the Wild Apricot software has become limited at the \$25/month level because it is restricting the number of names that can be entered. They requested that they be authorized to use the program at the \$50/month level in order to take advantage of the programs' membership/bookkeeping utilities. Also

Jason will look into whether a paypal link can be made with the software for the monthly fees. A motion was made and approved to authorize the \$50/month fee for the software.

---Jason gave an update on TRASH RECEPTACLES. The borough has asked FMSP to consider taking recycled/refurbished cans from the downtown area at no expense to FMSP. They would be placed in pairs in the park. One of the pair would have a blue "recycle" top. This would be at no cost to FMSP, the cans would look like new, and the result would be "green" by recycling older cans. A motion was made by Jason to replace the current cans with black powder-coated refurbished cans, numbering no more than 16, and installed at the same locations as existing cans. Michael seconded and the motion was approved.

---Steve Gallo reported on the SUMMER CONCERTS scheduled for June 19, July 17 and August 21. Rain dates will be the following Thursday. More sponsors are needed. Currently sponsors at the \$500 level include National Penn, Stillman Volvo and EB Walsh. Sponsorships still available are \$2500 for the headlines, \$1000 for an individual concert and \$500 for picnic and face painting sponsors. There is a deadline to meet in order to place an ad in the Borough's Summer Activities publication.

---Jeff reported on a meeting he attended with Anne Walters and with Scott Wade, registered Arborist and curator of the Pierce Woods trees at Longwood, Denise Dunn-Kesterson, Urban Forester for the borough and representatives from Del-Chester Tree Service, who currently provide maintenance for the trees in the park. An MSP GROUNDS MAINTENANCE PLAN was drawn up for the long-term health of the trees and the park. Actions include instituting a mulching program around the trees; reducing frequency of grass cutting and increasing the height of the cut as well as choosing some zones for establishing low growing, low maintenance grass; mulch leaves in the park rather than removing leaves from the park; eliminate driving vehicles throughout the park to avoid soil compaction; and consider lightning protection in four or five of the largest trees to protect the entire park from severe damage to any tree. The monument in MSP is located on the highest ground elevation in the borough.

Jeff would like to arrange to have Scott Wade talk with the group. Scott emphasizes the arboretum quality of the park, the care of its trees and replanting plans.

---SPRING PARK CLEAN-UP is scheduled for Saturday, April 26 from 9-10:30 a.m.

---Jeff encouraged FMSP to consider applying to the American Public Gardens Association for membership. The organization is dedicated to the preservation and continuation of high quality American gardens. There is a fee and certain requirements to meet, but it may be a worthwhile endeavour. We could use Scott Wade's application for Pierce Woods as a template for MSP's application. Jeff has spoken to Suzanne Moussa, a local resident who is involved with the APGA, about MSP becoming a member.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Balassone

