

FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

Minutes of Meeting on October 13, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Jeff Beitel. In attendance were Eric Miller, Holly Brown, Jim Salvas, Linda Scott, Lane Randall, Betsy Woodrow, Sharon Gabor, and Veronica Balassone.

--Minutes of the last meeting were accepted as written into the record.

--Linda Scott gave the TREASURER'S REPORT. The Balance Sheet was reviewed. \$17,448 is in the Susquehanna Bank checking account; \$8,906 of that total is earmarked for the fountain. Accounts receivable totals \$11,930. About \$7,500 of that amount is due from Friends of West Chester Parks and Recreation. Linda noted that checks for fountain renderings sold at the Fall Party were mistakenly made payable to FMSP, and therefore not tax-deductible. This will be rectified by "refunding" the sales and arranging for new checks to be written to FWCP&R so that the purchases may be tax-deductible. She added that an additional fountain coping stone has been sold, which will bring in another \$5,000 for the fountain funds. Accounts Payable of \$1,120 is primarily for the basin cover on order from Pebble Pools.

The Receipts and Disbursements statement showed a net loss to date of \$26,087. Linda emphasized the accounting is on an accrual, not a cash, basis.

The last statements reviewed were Fall Party Receipts and Disbursements. Two statements were prepared for 2016: one including the proceeds from the Plein Air Brandywine Valley fountain art sales, and one without. Without the art, net proceeds from the Fall Party were \$3,345. With the art sales added, net proceeds equaled \$5,781. The net income this year, without the art proceeds, is in keeping with previous years: \$3,583 in 2013 and \$3,123 in 2014. The 2015 event was cancelled.

--Jeff reported that FMSP has prioritized the repair of the brick walkways surrounding the park; repair of the steps and railing leading into the park on North Matlack Street; completion of the Swiss Cottage roof repair and updating the restrooms for consideration in the 2017 borough budget. A discussion followed regarding the sidewalks' unacceptable condition. It was proposed that a petition be drawn up to make our case to the borough that the sidewalks present a danger to the public and must be made a top priority.

--Volunteers will be needed to assist in placement of Luminaria in the park on Friday, December 2nd. The Walters are arranging again to have the Boy Scouts work on the project. They will sell luminaria materials to surrounding neighbors but the service to set them up will not be offered.

--The MSP Summer Concert Series has always been a project of the Friends of West Chester Parks and Recreation with proceeds shared 50/50 with FMSP. With the resignation of Steve Gallo as chair of the concert committee, it is most likely that the event will have to be coordinated by FMSP, in which case the total proceeds would go to FMSP. This would require a FMSP committee to find sponsors and bands. The loss of Kit Anstey as the major sponsor was noted. Jim Salvas could continue to take care of marketing, Michael Civita has always been instrumental in securing the bands. It would be necessary to have someone to chair the committee and take the lead in finding sponsors. Keeping the number of concerts at three would be more desirable for sponsorships due to the added exposure. A decision should be made by the end of the year to facilitate planning.

--Betsy Woodrow reported on the Events Committee. She emphasized that the addition of the art sales by the Plein Air Brandywine Valley and coordinated by FMSP member John Cigler was instrumental in boosting the proceeds of the Fall Party and it would be a great addition to the Fall Party annually.

Plans are moving along for the Progressive Dinner on February 4th. One more house is needed for the dinner segment. Homes for appetizers include the Eberts and Luzzi's; for dinner the Tirk/Balassone and Woodrow's; and dessert conditionally at the DePhilip's.

--Eric Miller reported on the Membership Committee. He passed out the agenda for December's General Membership Meeting on the 6th from 6-8 p.m. at the Side Bar in West Chester. He asked for the same budget as last year - \$400 – and those present approved the amount. The special topic at the meeting will be the "Little Buddies" program for children, if it has been satisfactorily developed by that date. Otherwise, alternative special topics that were proposed were a "Sidewalks/Steps" Petition to the borough, or a presentation by Jeff on the Shade Tree Commission and the development of a new Tree Ordinance which would place responsibility for all the trees in the borough with the Commission.

--Jeff reported for the Fountain Restoration Committee. Phase I has been completed! A cover for the basin is on order to protect the basin over the winter. The fountain will need to be covered in early October to prevent leaves from clogging the filter, which is beginning to occur at this time. It is hoped that enough funds will be raised by next spring to complete Phase II of the restoration. Ann Walters will develop a landscape plan and an irrigation system will be in the plans. At this time it is estimated that \$25,000 to \$30,000 is needed to complete Phase II.

--Jeff also reported on the Playground Committee. The plans are before the Borough Council again and the equipment has not yet been purchased, even though all equipment had been approved. The demolition of the old playground is complete and the grading and leveling of the new site is scheduled soon. The new installation was initially scheduled for mid-to-late October and now is pushed to mid-November.

--Wild Apricot has proven to be a disappointment to everyone concerned. A "shopping cart" feature is not available and only one transaction at a time can be done including ticket purchases of one per transaction. It doesn't store history, so reports need to go to Excel. Lane Randall has spent an inordinate amount of time dealing with the software, and is opposed to learning a new program.

REPLACE ABOVE PARAGRAPH WITH THIS:

--Wild Apricot (WA) is a disappointment to everyone concerned. A "shopping cart" is not supported, allowing only one transaction at a time; e.g., purchasing two tickets requires two transactions. Lane Randall "solved" this problem using PayPal's "shopping cart". Since WA can't receive PayPal's data, we must enter it manually. Also, WA doesn't format or print reports; so data is exported to Excel. Lane spends an inordinate amount of time dealing with WA. If FMSP keeps WA, Lane can compensate by incorporating other, familiar software; e.g., Eventbrite. Otherwise, someone else needs to choose, learn, and manage new software.

--Malcolm Johnstone has suggested that FMSP have a "special event" in coordination with the new Humphrey Marshall exhibit opening at the Chester County Historical Society on November 4th. Paintings by Adrian Martinez will be part of the exhibit.

--FMSP has not been contacted by the Dutch Bulb staff this year to ask if we are interested in having more spring bulbs donated for the park.

--Jeff added discussion of FMSP applying for 501c3 status to the agenda. It is felt that it is time to proceed in this direction for a number of reasons, particularly the difficulty of passing donations through the Friends of West Chester Parks and Recreation. Application will require extensive paperwork and reporting requirements. Holly Brown made a motion to pursue 501c3 status; Linda Scott seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. Holly will consult with attorney Tony Morris regarding the matter.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Balassone, Recording Secretary