

Welles Park Advisory Council
January 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Call to Meeting at 7:00 pm by Aaron Durnbaugh

(Meeting conducted via Zoom due to COVID-19 concerns and restrictions)

Roll Call Aaron Durnbaugh (WPAC President), Bethany Simmons (WPAC Vice President), Adrienne Roe (WPAC Secretary), Sarah Dandelles (WPAC Treasurer), Becky Kliber (Welles Supervisor), Sherry Skalko, Coral Negron, Sue Smock-Lawson, Scott Michaels, Michael Sewell (47th Ward Office)

Review Minutes – Minutes approved from both the September and November 2020 meetings.

Treasurer Report - Sarah

Sarah reviewed the financial report. The current balance is \$55, 595.39.

The only income since November was from the circus, a donation and the Joe Krysztpik restitution. Sarah believes we are about halfway to receiving all the reimbursement through the adult probation program. She will confirm with the Cook County program.

Sarah looked into the advisory council using a credit card. She contacted two members of the Horner Park Advisory Council. While they did once have a credit card, they did not have specific information to share. Sarah will ask the Chicago Park Foundation about credit card use.

Park Report – Becky

Becky had several park updates:

1. Winter program is suspended until Chicago COVID status changes.
2. No other changes in facility operation
3. Bill would like to thank Sarah for the donation of tote bins for storage of Christmas decorations.
4. Follow up to Park Partnership/Mentoring
 - a. Maria Stone is planning to move forward with the idea. (However, she will have time to get to it after the PAC conference)
 - b. CPD in doing internal viewing and Q & A about “Folded Map” project (Maria said they might model the Partnership/Mentoring program after this project)
 - c. I shared that WPAC might be interested in helping get things off the ground
5. Online BINGO for age 50+
 - Wed 1-2pm
 - \$10 (\$5 seniors 60+)
 - Register online Activity Code # 323133
 - Bethany will post flyer on Facebook page

Requests:

- Request for reimbursement for BINGO Set \$59.99. Purchased for virtual BINGO program that Bill is hosting (will also use for camp).
- Up to \$140 of \$5.00 gift cards for Jewel and Walgreens to be used as prizes (4 games/week, \$5/game, 8 wks.). WPAC will be announced weekly as sponsor.
- WPAC Thank You cards and stamps are also requested to send prizes

Motion approved for up to \$220 for Bingo program supplies

Committee Reports

Greening Committee- Sue

Sue talked to Sigrid, the Greening Committee bird walk volunteer. She is interested in offering bird walks this year, but she will not be able to share binoculars with participants. Sue proposed us purchasing some binoculars. Bethany pointed out that \$1,500 have been approved for this purpose in March. Becky reminded the group that she had researched a brand.

- Becky will find the binoculars she had previously researched.

Becky met with Matt Freer in December. They talked about the desire paths in the NaturePlace and mapped out places for temporary fencing. This will allow the native plants to come back. Matt mentioned that some areas were too trampled, and the plants would most likely not return. Becky and Matt discussed opening the area near the council ring with low trees for play since so many kids were enjoying that area this year.

Swim Team - Sherry

The swim team has no updates. They are still doing dry land programs.

Old Business

Holiday Lights

- Scott mentioned that he planned to take down the lights and greenery on the gazebo tomorrow, but members asked if we could keep them up longer. Aaron suggested that Scott take them down when he believes (aesthetically) they should be removed.

Communications

- Thank you to Sherry for updating the WPAC website and creating the newsletter. Sherry explained that she updated the template on word press.
- Sherry attended the Chicago Park Foundation's social media discussion. It was a good refresher and they explained that we may use logos from their website.
- Sherry noticed that other parks use historic photos of the park for social media posts. These photos were obtained from the Chicago Public Library, but that Welles was not included on the park. Becky explained that Chicago Park District has archives, and that park has some photos as well.

- Bill offered to check Sulzer's collection.
- Becky mentioned adding photos to the website as well.
 - Sue offered to share a collection of NaturePlace photos.
 - Bethany will add some of her photos to Google Drive
- Sherry suggested that we give some information about native plants, especially to help visitors understand why we want to preserve them.
 - Bethany offered to write something up about the plants we have.
- Becky mentioned that the Greening Committee should add content to the website as well.

New Business

Michael Sewell from the 47th Ward office joined us to say hi and asked if there were any questions he could answer.

- Aaron brought up the Pickleball court plans. Another community member brought the issue to the WPAC recently. Michael remembers Becky sending the office the designs. He offered to talk to Becky about it again and put the topic on the Alderman's schedule.
- Aaron mentioned the WPPA plan's for baseball field lights earlier in the year as a topic that will likely return soon. Aaron reiterated WPAC's hope that the WPPA would hold community meetings to gain community input. Michael mentioned that their office encouraged the WPPA to get community input as well.
- Sue brought up the trampled Native Plants in the NaturePlace and asked if information about the topic could be shared in the Alderman's newsletter. Michael said that any talking points could be sent to him to be included.
- Michael mentioned the Western Avenue Corridor Study. He shared that there will be a meeting at 6pm on January 27th, as well as a survey open until January 31st.

[Study, Meeting and Survey Information Link](#)

Planning for 2021

- Aaron suggested that we discuss our plans for 2021 and hoped we could create a calendar at our March meeting.
- Bethany asked about whether the Chicago Park Foundation will continue the Pitch In For the Parks program this year. Becky mentioned that the Park District will not be hiring until at least July, so she assumes CPF will continue the program.
- Sue suggested an Informational Night about Native Plants and asked if we know of any experts. Sarah suggested that we find a Master Gardener. Sherry mentioned that this is something we should coordinate with the 47th Ward Green Council. Michael mentioned that their group had created an information event like this already. Michael also said that the Council is considering a Native Plant Sale. Sarah asked if they needed a location, to consider Welles.

- Bill mentioned that he hopes we can do some music in the park this summer. He suggested that the gazebo concerts could use the pod format that the Circus used. Becky mentioned that the Park District suggested the format the circus used, so it could be possible. However, this format requires a lot of volunteers to guide people.
- Becky's mother suggested an intergenerational horseshoe event. (similar to how Welles hosts the Senior Games and uses the horseshoes)
 - Aaron suggested that Forward Chicago might be helpful in an event like this.
- Adrienne mentioned the gnome hunt at Emily Oaks as inspiration for a similar hunt at Welles.
- Sue brought up bringing in our teen audience in planning. Aaron mentioned a previous discussion with Michael about the Ward's youth council. Michael mentioned that he could bring up the topic with the leader of the youth council.
- Aaron suggested we install hammock polls in the park, especially after noticing so many hammocks this summer. He thought maybe teens would be interested.

Other

Sue asked that members use only her gmail email address: smocklawson@gmail.com

Meeting Adjourned at 8:28pm.

Addendum

Greening Committee Meeting dates for 2021 – the last Monday of the following months: February-May and August-November.

February 22
March 29
April 26
May 24
August 30
September 27
October 25
November 29