

Welles Park Advisory Council  
July 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Call to Meeting at 7:00 pm by Aaron Durnbaugh

(Meeting conducted outside the Field House due to continued COVID-19 concerns)

**Roll Call** Aaron Durnbaugh (WPAC President), Bethany Simmons (WPAC Vice President), Adrienne Roe (WPAC Secretary), Sarah Dandelles (WPAC Treasurer), Becky Kliber (Welles Supervisor), Bill Bergfalk (Welles employee), Gene Schuler, Rosemary Schuler, Sheila Garg, Mary Oellrich, Jeff Walter, Susan Brandehoff, E. Claffey, Sid Lubitsch, Peter von Buol (Inside Publications), Michael Sewall (44<sup>th</sup> Ward Office), Alex Hernandez (Block Club Chicago)

**Introductions**

Executive officers, PAC members, and first-time attendees each introduced themselves.

**Meeting Minutes**

Minutes from May meeting could not be attached to meeting email so they will need to be sent out later and adopted at our next meeting.

**Treasurer Report** – Sarah

Sarah presented the current financial report. Our balance is currently \$56,124.44.

**Park Report** – Becky

- Night Out in the Park
  - Tuesdays at the Gazebo concerts at 6:30pm from July 13 until August 17 (possibly more)
  - Toddlers Tunes and Turtles August 10 at 5:30pm
  - Circus in the Park on October 9 at 11am, 2pm, 5pm
- Requests
  - Becky requested up to \$100 for 1) wax spray paint for the kiosk to be able to take of graffiti right away 2) extra globes for Gazebo lights (per Gene's suggestion). Approved.
- Paying Concert Artists
  - We are the fiscal sponsor of the Tuesday concerts. Welles Park Parents Association (WPPA) donated \$3,200 to cover 5 concerts and then we reimburse the artists.

## Committee Reports

### **Greening Committee- Sue**

Aaron read from her report, as Sue could not attend tonight's meeting.

- Mulching at the NaturePlace and trees in the park was finally completed after several workdays.
- Workdays - monthly workdays are scheduled on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month. Registration occurs through the Chicago Park Foundation Pitch in for the Parks website. At least one Advisory Council or Greening Committee member is leading each date, but they can always use help.
  - Pitch in for the Parks dates at Welles
    - July 24 – Bethany
    - August 28– Jeanne
    - September 25– Sherry and Adrienne
    - October 23– Sherry
- Mud Kitchen – a new mud kitchen will be ordered for the NaturePlace play area to replace the current one. It should be longer lasting and more functional. The mud kitchen will cost \$835.00, but the payment must be sent via PayPal. Sarah offered to help Becky use Zelle to complete the purchase.

### **Swim Team - Sherry**

Aaron read from Sherry's report, as Sherry could not attend tonight's meeting..

- As of now there will be a full swim season in the Fall
- Becky confirmed that all pool programs will be open after Labor Day.

### **Gazebo - Sarah**

- This year the Tuesdays at the Gazebo concerts will have a shorten season, starting tomorrow night!
- We need some WPAC volunteers to help each night and Sarah will try to make it as well.
- The artists will be bringing their own P.A. systems this year.

### **Concert Information**

- 7/13/21 **Laura Doherty and the Heartbeats** (Children's show)
- 7/20/21 **Casey McDonough and Nora O'Connor** (of the Flat Five) (acoustic folk-pop)
- 7/27/21 **The Red Line Rustlers** (acoustic country duo)
- 8/3/21 **Porchlight Music Theater's "Broadway in Your Backyard"**
  - This 90 minute performance of Broadway songs celebrates family, friends, community and inspiration. *Broadway in your Backyard* is suitable for all ages.

- o 8/10/21 **Toddlers, Tunes, and Turtles** (Chicago Park District - Children's event with music)  
\* event begins at 5:30pm!
- o 8/17/21 **Hawk Colman, Jack Dolan & Shane Prewitt** (psychedelia-inspired experimental R&B and hip-hop)

## **Old Business**

### **Pickleball**

- o Becky explained the history behind neighbor interest and the current proposal for Pickleball courts at Welles, including updating the horse pits and adding a bags area. In order to complete this plan, we would need to raise \$100,000. Our hope would be that the Park District would fund some of this cost.
- o Becky also explained that Pickleball lines will be painted on one of the tennis courts. She put in the request in the Spring and was assured it will happen, but it still has not happened. We do have lines on the inside (field house) courts and there will be 2 one hour slots in the Fall indoors.
- o Jeff Walter explained that there is only one permanent court in Hyde Park and that most people use tennis courts and bring their own nets. He suggested we just paint on concrete.
- o We hope to find people interested in creating a group to fundraise. Becky pointed out that we have a good track record with the Park District, based on our previous fundraising efforts.
- o Gene asked about Pickleball's popularity with seniors. Jeff discussed the positives of playing Pickleball, however, he doesn't think the players he knows would help with fundraising. He thinks people will just go to Horner instead of fundraising.
- o Bethany questioned whether Horner has plenty of space and slots and whether Pickleball is even needed at Welles based on Jeff's opinion.
- o Bill suggested we call a meeting and see if people are interested and go from there.

### **Baseball/Softball Field Lights Proposal**

- o Michael Sewall shared that the Alderman heard that ComEd did a walk-through regarding feasibility. This feasibility determination could take months.
- o Becky pointed out that ComEd's involvement does not mean the project has been approved. She explained that the bigger decision makers wanted to see if the project is possible as currently there is not enough electric here and the Park District will not take it from the field house. She explained that ComEd came to see what would have to happen to bring lights to the park.
- o Gene asked if it has been determined what else the lights can be used for.
  - o Becky explained that this is up the Park Supervisor's discretion, and she would not approve anything past 9pm.
- o Gene asked what would happen is Becky moves on

- o Becky explained that the Park District has a strong relationship with the community and has a good track record with passing along information to new staff.
- o Aaron explained that the WPAC's letter the WPPA and Alderman asked specifically about the process for other events and the voice the WPAC would have in the process. He reiterated that the WPAC will not promote this project unless our questions are answered.
- o Sheila Garg explained that she is part of the new Welles Park Neighbors group. She asked if the whole committee sees the emails that the group sends to the WPAC. She wants to make sure that the Welles Park Neighbors opinions are shared with all committee members. Sheila passed out paper copies of their concerns.
- o Sheila also explained that the group has sent questions to the WPPA and have not received answers. They believe that the WPPA has not been truthful about topics such as local business support.
- o Aaron mentioned that he could look over the FAQ page on our website to see it answers any of their concerns.
- o Gene asked for voting WPAC members to receive input (like emails) from neighbors. He would like to see all emails that we receive.
- o Aaron explained that only the executive team has access to our email account, but emails could be forwarded to voting members.
- o E. Claffey pointed out that they are also concerned about the 9pm cutoff time.

### **New Business**

- \_\_ Bill mentioned that more kids have been signing up for after school programs and that he has had to spend \$173.31 for supplies to help the additional kids added to the class. Bill asked if the WPAC could reimburse him. Gene motioned, Adrienne seconds and motion approved. We pointed out that these requests should be made in advance in the future.
- \_\_ Save the Ash program identified 5 trees in the park. Sherry (via email) may request \$493 for this project later. First, we need to find out if the Park District will allow for ash treatment in the park. Gene, Sarah, and Aaron stated that they are in favor of this treatment. Alex Hernandez pointed out that Horner Park has been treating their ash trees for 10 years and explained that John Freedman does it for them.
- \_\_ Circus will be October 9<sup>th</sup> for three performances on one date. It will be free and open air like last year. Gene and Rosemary are one of the sponsors of the event. In terms of concessions, food will be prepackaged, so no popping popcorn.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:18pm.

