

Minutes for Grant Park Watch / Friends of Grant Park, Nov. 13, 2014

Attending: Jackie Benka, Debby Pizur, Rick Kaiser, Betsy Abert, South Milwaukee Police Inspector Mike Hill, LaVonne Leonard, John Leonard, Annemarie Adsen, Pam Uhrig, Don Lawson, Lynn Crawford, Jan Marsh, Marty Honel, Keith Schulenburg, Jan Schumacher, Rob Vajagich, Jody Johnson, Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department Deputies Marlon Jones and Michael Rewolinski

Recently installed cameras at area #5 pavilion were destroyed. The individual responsible was arrested and taken to jail after being identified from obvious appearance on camera footage. The individual could not be held, however, because he is homeless and the crime was a municipal citation with a fine imposed, which if unpaid will become a warrant. Other illegal activity in the park included 1 fireworks complaint (in October); 2 drug arrests; and 1 indecent exposure.

A labrador dog off leash was gored by a buck while with his owner in the park. November is rutting season for deer; it was reported that the buck was with a doe, and that the likely aggressive response by the buck was due to rut behavior. It was reported on the news that the dog owner discharged a firearm to scare off the buck. The dog was saved with health restored.

We reviewed the events leading up to our present position with regards to the Cudahy Sportsmen's Club and the lease negotiation. Those events were summarized as such: Removing shotgun wadding repeatedly over the years during beach cleanups; we wanted to know, first, where it was coming from, and then, why it was OK for the club to be shooting and depositing into Lake Michigan. We researched Best Management Practices for Shooting Ranges published by the EPA, NRA, and the National Trap Shooting Assoc.; all were unanimous that shooting ranges should not be located on a body of water. We brought attention to Supervisor Pat Jursik in Nov. 2013 regarding the wadding trash. We sent a letter to Parks Director John Dargle in Feb. 2014 when we realized that the club's lease required they keep the premises clean and sanitary, a requirement not being met at the time. We met with the club in April 2014. The president of the club admitted that they used 25,000 clay targets last year. Lead shot is sold on site for use at their range. They reported that the bluff is eroding 2-3 feet each year at the top of the range, showing us a chart on the wall to illustrate that. Our research brought forward that a federal permit is required for any shooting range; the club said they do not have a permit.

We submitted a Freedom of Information request from the WDNR regarding any citations or complaints about the club. We also received copies of the club's meeting minutes from Feb. 1989 to March 1990. In 1989 a citation was issued by the DNR for littering, violating state statute. One year later, the DNR warden decided the club was not in violation of the charge of littering.

Corporate Counsel for Milwaukee County recommended termination of the lease. Director Dargle gave the club the remainder of the year to find solutions. On Oct. 31st, Director Dargle terminated the lease agreement. The County Board of Supervisors met and recommended amending the county executive's 2015 budget to include a 1 yr. lease extension, citing the termination was too abrupt. Director Dargle recommended we renew for 1 year and 1 year ONLY, specifying that the club not seek an extension. County Executive Chris Abele specified a 1 year extension.

Minutes for Grant Park Watch / Friends of Grant Park, Nov. 13, 2014

Note: We have subsequently been informed that the county board of supervisors will hold a fact-finding hearing in January.

On Saturday, Dec. 6th, the South Milwaukee Holiday Fair will be held at the high school. We will have a table there. We hope to get some canvas tote bags printed with the iconic Seven Bridges trailhead pictured to sell at the fair.

Another event planned for December, the Grant Park Owl Prowl on Thursday, Dec. 11th, with 5 live raptors from the Schlitz Audubon Center. We will ask a \$5 donation for adults; students under 16 will be admitted free. Announcements will be sent to the local schools.

Congratulations to Matt Collins, the Grant Park Unit Coordinator, who received the Young Professional Award from the Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association. Matt developed a pilot program that offers underprivileged youth the opportunity to experience career options within the Milwaukee County Parks system. A federally funded partnership with the Milwaukee Job Corps, young workers gain experience with a skilled trade after graduating from high school. Win - win!

We still have not received the portion of the proceeds for the recycling event in August. CasBro recycling sent word that prices for recycled metal commodities have gone down, but they will be sending a check.

Goals for our 2015 year should be sent to Debby Pizur. We will review them at our January meeting.

Our next meeting, Dec. 11th, will be a special event "Owl Prowl." Our next regular meeting will be in the new year, January 8th.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jody Johnson