

The meeting was at the Golf Course Clubhouse. Along with the FoGP "regulars" we had a number of area residents, and the following people:

Attending:

Erin Napier, Mike Napier, Jan Schumacher, Michael McCarthy, Glen Brower, Sue Hibben, Don Lawson, Betsy Abert, Jody Johnson, Jackie Benka, Debby Pizur, Mary Holtz, Michael Tuma, Rick Kaiser, Nancy Lange, Pam Uhrig, Dave Maass, Craig Maass, Robin McFadzen, Gene Johansen, Keith Schulenburg, Jan Marsh, Debbie Wilhelm, Lynn Crawford

Officials:

Milwaukee County Supervisor Pat Jursik
Parks Director John Dargle; Parks Director of Safety, Security & Training John Nelson
South Milwaukee Mayor Erik Brooks
SMPD Chief Ann Wellens; SMPD Investigator Mike Hill; SMPD Captain Jill Kallay
Milwaukee County Sheriff's Dept. Deputy Dean Zirzow; Deputy Inspector Tobie Weberg
Bill and Jeff Ferchoff (of Ferch's)
Bernie Harrigan ("Cities and Sports") - the organizer of the beach volleyball program

Jeff Ferchoff: Discussed Ferch's opening up at the Beach House. Ferch's expects to be opening sometime in June. They know all the issues involved in running a facility like this, because they have been operating a similar concession at Bradford Beach for several years. Volleyball tournaments will be a regular tie-in for their business.

A "south shore" beach combing/grooming machine has been purchased, and it will be used primarily by South Shore Park and Grant Park. By maintaining the beach, Ferch's anticipates further additional people visiting the beach, adding to their business.

Bernie Harrigan: Volleyball tournaments will be held on Thurs. & Sunday evenings, and also possibly Tuesdays. Will probably have 10 teams participating. People are already signed up for the teams so the program is close to meeting its goals.

Chief Ann Wellens: Technically, Grant Park is County property, not City of South Milwaukee. Therefore, the park is officially in the Sheriff's Dept. jurisdiction, not SMPD. However, SMPD patrols the park in providing assistance to the Sheriff's Dept. The staffing situation at SMPD does not allow the Police Dept. to assign anybody full time to the park, so the park patrols are done when other circumstances allow.

When cell phones are used to place a 911 call from within the park, the calls get routed to the Sheriff's Dept. However, the Sheriff's Dept. typically transfers the calls back to SMPD in the interest of fastest speed of response.

Ferch's beer license (at the beach house) means that police enforcement of alcohol regulations become a moot point at the beach. (Beer sales stop at 9 pm, but park closes at 10 pm.) Parking at the beach is already a problem, and SMPD will be down by 5 officers this summer. (Three are out on family leave) The officers know where the kids hang out, but Police Dept. cannot send in single officers to handle these situations.

Repeatedly through the evening, Chief Wellens and her assistant asked that when people observe something that needs attention, they need to call the South Milwaukee police and give specific info (including car license numbers etc.). Also, they need to be willing to leave their

name and contact info, so that if the troublemaker gets a ticket and contests it in court, the testimony of the officer has additional weight via an independent witness.

SMPD non-emergency number: 768-8060

SMPD's big challenge right now (being "down" by 5 staff this summer) is to always have enough staff on hand to respond quickly to nuisance situations (drunk kids, trash, public urination, etc.) Pat Jursik pointed out that much of this problem is due to the "tax cut" culture that is so prevalent in politics. Jursik told us that County Executive Chris Abele would have completely killed the Targeted Enforcement Unit to save money, but the County Board put the funding back into the budget. Sheriff Clark is currently suing Milwaukee County for more funding because he does not have enough money to pay for the deputies he requires to attend to his department's responsibilities.

During later discussion of the "drunken kids" problems, SMPD staff and Sheriff Dept. staff stressed that residents need to call in. Although information will be recorded at SMPD or MCSD, the residents are encouraged to keep their own log of car license numbers, parking locations, times of arrival, times of departure, and the times that phone calls were placed. Noting patterns of behavior not only helps the police, but these records can also be used when dealing with the politicians in demonstrating that more law enforcement staff needs to be available for residents.

A question was asked: Who is responsible for the security cameras at the beach house? Ferch's will take on responsibility for the cameras and 8 additional cameras will be installed.

Regarding the gates: Primary responsibility for the gates is with Grant Park's Matt Collins and his staff. The gates are supposed to be opened at sunrise, and close at 10 pm. If Matt requests SMPD to close but then SMPD is busy elsewhere in the city, the gates may remain open, possibly all night. The opening of gates (in the morning) is typically done by employees of the golf course.

Sheriff's Dept: There are 158 parks to patrol in Milwaukee County. The deputies are spread thin, and they rely on SMPD for close-by assistance. The Sheriff's Dept. will try doing lots of patrol work, but cannot promise. Overwhelming trend is that calls for service (i.e., Deputies respond to an incident) occur at night. Normal patrols during the day are nonexistent.

Parking is a concern. Parking needs to be managed in a way to always allow access by emergency vehicles. (Director Dargle promised to provide better marking on the road that provides access to the beach parking lot, both in terms of signage, and in terms of striping.)

Sheriff's Dept. has deputies assigned to specific zones in the county. This allows the deputies to become familiar with their territory (similar to an officer getting to "know his beat.") Grant Park is in Zone 7, which extends from South Shore Park to Bender, and goes a considerable distance inland.

Deputy Dean Zirzow asked that we provide specific license numbers (not just a generic description like "green four door") when we think something is going on, and calling in a report.

Park Rangers: PARKS has a total of 10 rangers, who work 32 hours per week. The "Rangers" program starts on Memorial Day. The majority of enforcement work was issuing parking tickets. The rangers spent more than 130 hours last summer in Grant Park.

The rangers do not have authority to detain people - they are not sworn law enforcement, but rather are civilian employees. Therefore, when a situation appears to be a crime, Sheriff's Dept. or SMPD are pulled in.

Rangers are active on weekends and on days that have special events, in attempt to be pro-active in preventing trouble.

Nuisance problems: Regarding the issue of drunken teenagers, the Sheriff's Dept. supervisor suggested that these situations are best handled by a targeted sweep of the teenagers' party area by numerous law enforcement officers. (It's useless to send in a single officer.) As long as the kids can be arrested on Park land, they can be ticketed with a fine which is nearly \$500, and if they are over 18 they can be transported to an inconvenient location (perhaps a holding area in Wauwatosa) and held overnight while waiting for their parents to have to come and collect them.

Parking: Parking near the beach is going to be a big problem in Grant Park, particularly given the number of people who will be driving in for the volleyball games. The "overflow lot" on the driving range is typically rather full in good weather. At 4th of July the Sheriff's Dept. assigns 3 employees to manage the beach parking lot. Can Guy Smith (the PARKS Operations Manager) come up with shuttle service to bring people in from outlying lots into the hard-to-reach areas?

Also, it is anticipated that some people will start parking at the yacht club, which will create hardship for SMYC members.

Security Cameras: Additional cameras are to be installed at Pavilion 5. Do we add a camera at the Seven Bridges parking lot? It would need to be solar powered. The idea of installing a dummy camera was brought up, but it was noted by the Sheriff's Dept. supervisor that this opens up a liability for the organization which puts up a dummy camera: People think they are safe when actually they do not have the protection of the camera.

Contact information for safety issues within the park:

For crimes in progress or for life threatening emergencies, dial 911

South Milwaukee Police Department (414) 768-8060

County Sheriff's Department (414) 278-4788 for immediate matters
needing Law enforcement action

"Zone 7" Deputies: Dean Zirzow (414) 534-3696 (3 - 11 pm) cell

Alex Colon (414) 640-6939 cell

Cell numbers; non-emergency issues only.

Grant Park Unit Coordinator, Matt Collins (414) 762-1550; (414) 218-4111 cell

County Parks' Rangers, John Nelson (414) 651-3681

The Park Avenue and Lake Drive intersection: Supervisor Jursik reports that a pedestrian entry will be installed as part of an upcoming upgrade on the Oak Leaf bike trail. Also, local residents at the meeting complained about the frequent "drive through" of the 4-way stop at this intersection, and it was mentioned that the blinking lights no longer blink. It was suggested that the lack of blinking was in response to local residents' complaints about the blinking pattern at night. Complaints of this nature need to be provided to the South Milwaukee Traffic Commission.

Cudahy Sportsmen's Club notes:

The Club has \$30,000 on hand, which is being used by the County to pay for a study of the soils etc. at their old site (part of assessing if a clean-up is required).

Upcoming Events

May 17 (Sunday) at 8:00 AM to noon: Birding event at Mill Pond Warming House. (An adult and kid-friendly event sponsored by FoMP)

May 19 (Tuesday) - Cudahy Sportsmen's Club makes an appeal to Cudahy Common Council at Cudahy City Hall at 7:00 pm.

June 3rd (Wednesday) - Public meeting on Cudahy Sportsmen's Club, at Wintergarden Room (seating capacity 150) of the Cudahy Library. Meeting starts at 6:30 pm. Get there early to have a seat.

June 6 & 13: Burdock Busters (meeting at the parking lot by the Service yard, 9 AM)

June 17 thru 28 - Sprecher's Traveling Beer Garden at Picnic Area 5 pavilion. FoGP needs to organize volunteers to paint the restrooms (prior to June 17) after renovation work has been done. Sprecher Brewing has put forth \$40,000 to sponsor facility repairs/improvements at PARKS facilities, and FoGP (via Don) will send them a thank-you letter.

Our next meeting will be on June 11th.

Submitted by
Don Lawson and
Jody Johnson