

Attending: Jan Schumacher, Debby Pizur, Larry Pizur, Jackie Benka, Denise Chojnacki, South Milwaukee Police Chief Ann Wellens, Betsy Abert, Kate Prange, Robin McFadzen, Sue Hibben, Mary Holtz, Mike Napier, Erin Napier, Keith Schulenburg, Milwaukee County Supervisor Pat Jursik, Jan Marsh, Michael Tuma, Bryan Meyer, Milwaukee County Sheriff's Deputies Steven Geason and Toby Weburg, Bill Kurtz, Rick Kaiser, Lynn Crawford, Pam Uhrig, Jody Johnson

The meeting began with a presentation by the newly formed group, Grant Park Neighborhood Watch. Erin Napier pointed out that they believe the neighborhood is affected by various activities taking place in the park after hours such as gang activity, drug activity, and traffic/parking issues. They collectively observed 22 disturbances from June 28 - July 28. Their requests are these: 1. proactive strategy 2. 3rd shift coverage needed for the park 3. Close the gates at 10 p.m. 4. Park hours posted outside of the gates.

Supervisor Jursik informed us that Milwaukee County has approved the hiring of 40 additional deputies, but because of training, they will not be actively patrolling until next year. She says the problems the neighbors are experiencing are not unique to Grant Park. Deputy Weburg agreed that leaving the park entrance gates open past closing didn't have much effect on behavior of after hours violators. Posting signage with park closing hours would be helpful. Chief Wellens asked the watch group to invite SMPD to their meetings. Graffiti appearing in the park may or may not be gang related. Police have been observing this in the park for years, and believe it may be younger kids trying to act tough, as copy cats. No other activity has confirmed a solid connection to gang activity. If graffiti is found, call Grant Park yard office. SMPD & MCSD will document. Then parks will remove it.

Debby Pizur sent a letter to Supervisor Jursik, County Executive Chris Abele, and Sheriff David Clark requesting an increase in funding for security. Supervisor Jursik responded by saying that the key time to make such a request is when the budget is being drafted.

Rick Kaiser gave us an update on the status of the Cudahy Sportsmen's Club (CSC) issue. The club's proposed move to another location in Warnimont Park was rejected by the County Board. We are hopeful that Parks Director John Dargle will send a letter soon terminating the existing lease with the club. Unknown is the county executive's position. Letters and calls to Executive Abele may be helpful at this time. Also, call or e-mail your county supervisor to express disfavor with the CSC. Another serious concern is the likelihood that a supervisor who supports the club could slip another lease extension into the county budget at the last minute, just like last year. Supervisor John Weishan did so last year but there was no time to gather information about it.

An article written by CSC's president, Tom Ahmad, was printed in a spring 2015 newsletter of the NRA expressing gratitude for generous support from the NRA Range Technical Team for legal advice. He also suggested the club previously held the deed for the land where the club was located, although county's corporate counsel found no such evidence. We anticipate the club will use whatever resources they can find to stay put.

Vandals damage to Wulff Lodge is being repaired. Workers are replacing the windows, roofing, downspouts, and clearing the underbrush away. Parks' staff is now required to drive by every night at closing. If you see vandalism damage in the park, call the Sheriff's dispatch at 278-4788. If you have other security questions or concerns, you can contact Deputy Steven Geason by e-mail: steven.geason@milwaukeecountywi.gov

Anyone with suggestions for an Eagle Scout project, please talk to Betsy or Jake Klingforth, Grant Park's new unit coordinator. We have a candidate who is anxious to take on a project. One immediate idea surfaced: a small project at Wulff Lodge... see paragraph below.

Jan Marsh tried to contact Dr. Julie Kinzleman of the Racine County Health Dept., regarding signage that should have been included in the rain garden installation in the parking lot at the beach. Apparently, Dr. Kinzleman has left the health dept. and is now working at the School of Freshwater Science. Jan will attempt to follow up with her.

The Lake Michigan Trail Marathon (LMTM) is on Sunday, Sept. 6th. FOGP is assisting with a hydration station again. If you would like to volunteer to work, please notify Pam Uhrig. Pam will be our contact person this year with the organization.

Getting back to Wulff Lodge... two of our members (Jackie B. and Debby P.) informed us that Wulff Lodge will celebrate its' centennial in 2017. Let's do something! Ideas suggested include:

1. registering it as a historic building
2. Fix it up; Eagle Scout project?
3. Give tours with historian (Nels Munson is interested)
4. Ice Cream social
5. Boy & Girl Scout Alumni camper's reunion (smores anyone?)

Plan to join us on Saturday, Sept. 19th, from 9 - 11 a.m. for the Adopt-a-Beach Cleanup, in partnership with Alliance for the Great Lakes. We'll meet at parking area 5 and focus on the 7 Bridges trail beach. If you plan to come, pre-register at www.greatlakesadopt.org, and select "Grant Park - 7 Bridges trail beach". We'll also be collecting shotgun wadding.

Fall Weed Out (focus on buckthorn) will be held on Oct. 3 and 17, from 9 - noon? More details to follow, and should be posted on our website fogp.org as soon as available.

Lynn C. reported a very productive bluebird nesting season. Our bluebird houses had 11 nests, 37 eggs, and 24 fledglings. That should bring a lot more happiness to the area.

We have a set of Milwaukee Buck's tickets to raffle off as a fundraising project. They are good for the whole year. We need a permit to stage a raffle, and the Park People have usually provided one for us to use... we need to check on its availability with Jim Goulee.

It was suggested we form some committees to handle different tasks undertaken by FOGP. We will follow up at our September meeting.

We need to acknowledge the Friends of the Mill Pond for their flower garden plantings at the top of the hill by the beach entrance road, and 2 more by the new kiosks and soccer field. Jackie B. will send a card of thanks.

We will consider a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new bike path at our next meeting.

Our next meeting is Thursday, Sept. 10th.

Respectfully submitted by
Jody Johnson

