

Attending: Debby Pizur, Rob Vajagich, Jan Schumacher, Betsy Abert, South Milwaukee Mayor-elect Erik Brooks, Kathleen Arch, Jan Marsh, Rick Kaiser, Don Lawson, Lynn Crawford, Kathy Slamka, Jody Johnson; Milwaukee County's Safety, Security & Training Manager John Nelson; Milwaukee County Sheriff's Deputy Stephen Mills(?)

Graffiti has been an issue this spring; the pavilion at Area 5 was tagged as was the Mill Pond area. Vehicles doing donuts in the beach parking lot brought up complaints, and after-hours violations and drinking were responded to by law enforcement. Deputies and at least one of our members believe an individual continues to make his home in the park. Arrests were made related to heroin addiction and 2 people were caught with stolen property.

John Nelson informed us that the security camera had been re-installed at the beach house. This is the same camera we installed two years ago, that was malfunctioning last year. Extreme cold over the winter may have shut it down, but now it's working again. Tech equipment contractors are in a heated battle with the county. Information Management Services Division (IMSD) compliant cameras are needed. The current vendor's quality is lacking and complaints are mounting. A solar camera intended for the 7 Bridges trail has too many problems to install, including having to climb up to the camera (if mounted on a pole) to view the footage recorded, as well as needing a dedicated laptop to read it.

Fifteen deputies will be assigned to Milwaukee County's 144 parks in 2014. Two deputies will be assigned to Grant Park (last year we had four). There will be daily coverage. One deputy will be assigned to day shift; others will work 4 p.m. to midnight.

Erik Brooks asked our group to consider sponsoring outdoor movies at Grant Park Beach. In 2011 & 2012, movies were shown at the Downtown Farmer's market with 200 to 300 people in attendance. He thinks a fun event like this could reintroduce families to the beach. We could pass the hat for donations, call for volunteers to help out, etc. A company in Racine has the needed equipment and sets up everything. Movie rental is extra. And of course, the weather can make or break the event. Cost is estimated to be \$1200 to \$1400 per event. We discussed using a screen owned by the county. Wind is an issue at the beach, biting flies in August, and the park closes at 10 p.m. We agreed to let Erik know of our decision as soon as possible. (Another good suggestion was to have an intimate symphony quartet play at area 5...)

The Emerald Ash Borer continues to be an issue in the urban treescape. Erik Brooks reported that the city of South Milwaukee has secured a \$300,000 loan to remove ash trees affected, and those that likely will be affected in the near future. The city's streetscape inventory also identified diseased trees of other species that should be removed in the coming year. Erik believes in treating the urban canopy as a community resource. It was noted that the County Parks has undertaken ash removal in earnest for the last year, with a large stack seen in the Tennis courts lot.

Briggs & Stratton will flood the park with volunteers on May 17th for a work day. Gathering at the 5A parking lot, they have plans to install fencing along 300' of trail along the upper southern slope of the Seven Bridges ravine. The fencing is treated cedar, similar to the wood used on the bridges. FOGP was asked to donate \$3,500, roughly half the cost of supplies. We still have that amount left from last year's slope restoration grant. Betsy asked that we add \$500 for more plants to finish the slope (some vegetation was lost over the winter months). Our bank account has \$11,400. Caterpillar Corporation is sending a \$700 donation soon. We voted unanimously to donate \$4,000 for the fencing and extra plants.

Four members of FOGP, Betsy Abert, Jody Johnson, Rick Kaiser, and Michael Timm, reported on their meeting with three members of the Cudahy Sportsmen's Club at their clubhouse atop the bluff in Warnimont Park on April 7th. They described the meeting as congenial and informative saying that the Gun club hopes to improve the condition of their property by scheduling clean-ups 4 times a year, and repair the flexible fencing meant to prevent clay trap debris and plastic wadding - our beach cleanups have been removing plastic annually from Grant - from washing into the lake. Our group noted the issues with access to the base of the bluff and its shoreline, accounting for the constancy of littering on the slope and even on the ice shelf over the water. As well, it was mentioned that our group was surprised that the bluff top was quite littered with plastic wadding upon our group's arrival for the meeting. The Gun Club proposed to do a Grant Park beach cleanup on the following Sunday .

Our members reported they were in the process of composing a letter to Parks director Dargle reporting on the meeting proceeds and providing a summary of followup concerns regarding plastic and lead shot being deposited in Lake Michigan at a reported (by the Club) rate of "99.9%" of shot fired; the continued challenge of cleaning a slope that is not scalable or accessible; the constancy of erosive forces on an unvegetated and sloughing slope; and the threat that erosion has on the future of the bluff and the Club's housing itself.

Weed Out was agreed upon to begin on Saturday April 26th. **NOTE! this has since been changed given the length of cold weather days that has slowed the growth and subsequent "removability" of Garlic Mustard.** Weed Out will take place every Saturday morning in the month of May, with the exception of May 24th.

The Friends of Grant Park will participate in a Spring Clean Up on Saturday, April 26th at 8 a.m. at the beach house, and The Friends of the Mill Pond are having a clean up the same day for Earth Day.

We discussed having our future meetings be more traditional, including reading the previous month's minutes & approval, and a treasurer's report.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, May 8th.

Respectfully submitted by

Jody Johnson