

Grant Park Watch / Friends of Grant Park Minutes July 13, 2017

Attending: Lynn Crawford, Betsy Abert, Debby Pizur, Jackie Benka, Jody Johnson, Keith Schulenburg, South Milwaukee Police Officer K. Walusay, Debbie Wilhelm, Pam Uhrig, Lynn Meidam, Tom Gardner, Julie Holmstrom, Jeff Johnson, Ed Simmons, JoAnn Simmons, Sue Hebner, Lois Schreiter, Jan Marsh

According to Unit Coordinator for Grant Park Jake Klingforth, everything went well on the 4th of July. That was confirmed by Officer Walusay from South Milwaukee Police Dept. Attendance was estimated at 3,500 people, but was less than last year. The park staff had the area all clean again by 9 am on the 5th. Hard work or magic?

Treasurer's report from Lynn Crawford:

\$4,174.12 Guardian Credit Union

\$9,558.97 The Park People

\$184.55 in expenses

Our parent organization, the Park People of Milwaukee County, has a new executive director. Dawn St. George has replaced Jim Goulee who has retired. We wish him well after his many years of service.

We are proposing new signage for the ravine area. A large colorful 24"x30" free standing interpretive panel designed by Sue Hebner and Rick Kaiser with the heading "Save the Ravine" includes a description of our ravine system's unique attributes and guidance for visitors, including why to avoid "social or volunteer trails" which has long been an issue causing erosion on the fragile slopes above the lake and ravine. It's thought that two signs would be effective; one at the main Seven Bridges entrance, and the other at area 5 parking lot's trail entrance. Each sign will cost \$1214 (installation cost *not* included). Rick Kaiser estimated a total cost of \$2,000 for each sign, or \$4,000 total. If we apply for Milwaukee Parks matching grant, we could be reimbursed for half of that, or \$2,000. Lynn Crawford moved that FOGP spend up to \$4,000 for two signs. Betsy Abert seconded. The motion passed by consensus.

YouthWorks volunteers need projects. **July 19** - Betsy will direct them in burdock removal. **July 26**, Lynn Crawford will find a project. **August 2 - volunteer needed!** Please contact Rick Kaiser or Debby Pizur to volunteer to set up a project for these middle school volunteers, who work Wednesdays from 9 am - 3 pm. We are not required to work alongside them. It is the supervisor who needs to know what project to work on and where to work that particular day.

South Milwaukee Community & Business Association's July luncheon will be attended by Debby Pizur. We need someone to volunteer for the August 15 luncheon. Evening on the Avenue is a SMCBA event and FOGP will have a table there. Pam Uhrig will attend and Debbie Wilhelm volunteered to assist.

Wulff Lodge's Centennial Anniversary event went very well with good attendance at both the garden tour early in the day, and at the Centennial Anniversary in the afternoon. County dignitaries, local historian Nels Munson, and Wulff family descendants were in

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attendance. The South Milwaukee Municipal band played period music and marches from the era. Boy Scout Troop 252 assisted with food concessions and a campfire, closing the event with a solemn flag retirement ceremony. Thanks to our fundraising committee members Jackie Benka and Debby Pizur for the bulk of the planning, legwork and gardening flair. We raised almost \$170 in sales and donations.

Betsy spent \$114 on the plants for the flower boxes, \$40 of which was donated by Jan Marsh (nice!). Thanks to Pam Uhrig and her grandson, who worked to pull weeds from the beds by the clubhouse.

Brainstorming was on the agenda for a list of priorities for FOGP to address in the coming year. We each listed a concern and came up with 15 suggestions:

1. **WeedOut - removing invasive species**
2. smaller focus areas recommended for WeedOut
3. **better communication with the public**
4. security at 7 bridges & safety (dogs on leash, for example)
5. **access to history of Grant Park**
6. Outreach to schools re: social paths & erosion
7. habitat for butterflies - milkweed!
8. Adopt a plot for WeedOut: individuals or groups take on certain areas annually.
9. Birding - visit schools, post birding list; set up way to report bird sighting, where & when
10. **beautification - flowers, painting, landscaping**
11. 2 major fundraising events - marketing
12. **ravines**
13. water quality related to ravine and beach health
14. increasing membership
15. partnering with other community events

We each voted for our top 5 priorities. The categories with the most votes are in **bold face type** above. Jan Marsh suggested a subcommittee to reduce the number of categories by combining related priorities. Debby Pizur, Jackie Benka & Lynn Meidam volunteered.

We discussed adding education as a tenet of our mission statement.

Lake Michigan Trail Marathon will be Sunday, Sept. 3rd. Volunteers are needed to staff a hydration table near the clubhouse. 1st shift: 6 am - 10 am; 2nd shift: 10 am to 2 pm. Debby Pizur volunteered for 1st shift. FOGP receives a portion of the proceeds in return for our voluntary work.

Pam Uhrig is hoping to find *nature related* sponsors for Trek 'n Treat in October. Share your suggestions with Pam! Also, she is seeking natural oddities and specimens of bird nests, bee hives, owl pellets, etc. Let her know what you have collected.

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It was noted that lately we have missed having Milwaukee County Sheriff's deputies attend our meetings. We will ask August Ball, our County Parks volunteer coordinator if there were any Parks Rangers hired this year. We have not seen any of them so far.

Rick Kaiser had asked us to utilize the kiosks more fully. A suggestion was made to post the emergency contact phone numbers of police and sheriff's department.

Sue Hebner asked about photos for the calendar; at this point we've only been offered a couple. Betsy will put out the request again.

Former county supervisor Pat Jursik wrote for the online UrbanMilwaukee.com about lackluster Parks funding. Betsy added it to our FaceBook page on July 13th.

Lastly, the Grant Park clubhouse will be 125 years old this year. We will offer tours of the clubhouse for our September meeting. We discussed how to encourage more rapid repairs of the railings, etc. currently in such dire need. As well, railings along the Seven Bridges paths are a disaster and a danger. We'd like to offer help, but only one carpentry crew remains working for our southern unit of the park system, we've been told, and the needs are apparently more substantial elsewhere.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, Aug. 10th at 6:30 pm at the Golf Course Clubhouse.

Respectfully submitted by
Jody Johnson, Temporary Chair and Secretary

www.fogp.org

Facebook: Friends of Grant Park (membership must be requested)