

Attending: Michael Timm, Keith Schulenburg, Rick Kaiser, Betsy Abert, Jan Marsh, Jordan Hamidi, Don Lawson, Jody Johnson, Rob Vajagich, Jackie Benka, Debby Pizur, Milwaukee County Sheriff's Deputy Brian Morgan, Annemarie Adsen

We discussed park security issues with Deputy Brian Morgan. He said the last month was quiet in the park with deputies spending time looking for homeless inhabitants to see if they survived the brutally cold temperatures. It is unknown where one possibly homeless person, often seen in the park without a pack, spends his nights.

Due to county budget cuts, the Sheriff's department will downsize the Targeted Enforcement Unit that covers our county parks from 25 to 10 or 15 officers. Patrol zones will also be reduced in number, although increased in size. Parks receiving the most patrol time will be those used the most.

Matt Collins, Grant Park's unit coordinator, had mentioned earlier that a few times the chained gates at both ends of the park had been forced open probably by a vehicle, possibly for illegal hunting.

Regarding the issue of the Cudahy Sportsmen's Club and cleaning up the site, we learned by phone from Guy Smith, Chief of Operations for parks, that a meeting did take place on Jan. 21 between Parks Director John Dargle and the club. No specific course of action was outlined, although clean up of the wadding was discussed. The club was told they would be monitored. It was suggested that the club enlist the help of our group to clean up the beach, though many in attendance expressed disagreement with that proposal. When Guy was informed we had further concerns and would forward them by way of a letter, Guy asked us to allow Director Dargle to sift through those concerns first. We have filed an open records request with the DNR. We have had some contact with Alliance for the Great Lakes regarding this issue. We discussed writing to the club suggesting a short term solution to prevent further contamination of the property, as well as a letter suggesting a long term solution to parks administration. We have received a request to meet by the club's vice president, but are choosing to wait until parks has reviewed our letter.

Briggs & Stratton has offered 250 volunteers for a work day at Grant Park! Projects needing attention on that day may include installing a railing around our restored bluff area. Other projects to be determined by parks staff.

The city of South Milwaukee hosted a review of a 2013 contracted street assessment by a forester. The forester recommended three possible scenarios for dealing with, especially, the emerald ash borer, with her favored recommendation being that South Milwaukee hire a full time forester. South Milwaukee is one of two communities of our size in the state to not have a forestry department. With numerous ash trees in the city, unless they are treated, they will likely succumb to the borer. Or they can be proactively removed. Ash trees in Grant Park are being removed and can be seen in stacks near the tennis court's lot.

We agreed to purchase 5 signs from Natural Areas unit for the trail next to the bluff that remind people to Stay On Trail at a cost of \$15 each. Michael Timm and Betsy Abert met with Natural Areas Coordinator Brian Russart and artist/ecologist Leah Cutsworth who is preparing 3 interpretive signs:

1. Rain Gardens; as storm water infiltration site and beneficial to insects and birds

2. Bluff; highlighting the migratory importance of bluffs as a stopping point for birds
3. Bird introductory sign; highlighting 4 different birds frequenting the park

The signs will have concrete footers for mounting.

Another opportunity for fixing Grant Park comes from the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative: Parks should apply for a \$250K grant to fix washed out areas in the parks and to stabilize the bluffs. And Mike Maerek, who assisted our group last June with our slope restoration project, suggested yet another grant to do more slope restoration, though we lack personnel this year to complete that plan.

Our next meeting is on March 13th, but will be devoted mainly to decorating the clubhouse for our Irish party fund raiser, Pullin' o' the Green.

Submitted by
Jody Johnson, member
Friends of Grant Park