

Attending: Keith Schulenburg, Rick Kaiser, Betsy Abert, Jan Marsh, Don Lawson, Jody Johnson, Lynn Crawford, Jan Schumacher, Rob Vajagich

We had a brief meeting at Fixx's coffeehouse in St. Francis prior to the friends group get together at South Shore Park. A group called Long Run Athletics, LLC has proposed a Lake Michigan Trail Marathon along the south shore including Grant Park. Set for September 7th, 2014, the run benefits a few charities, including Friends of Grant Park and the Colitis Foundation. We have been asked to assist with the race as a group, and we are intent on protecting the trails in sensitive areas of the park. We talked about printing t-shirts to identify members of FOGP so that runners recognize why we may be redirecting them if they should stray from the course. The course enters from the north along the Oak Leaf trail, passes through the park, past the golf course clubhouse, down to the beach, along the beach to the 7 bridges trail and up the trail to picnic areas 7 & 8. We assume the sponsoring organization will assume full liability for runners. Jan Marsh will handle our PR for the event.

Lynn Crawford will be moderator for the new Friends of Grant Park Facebook page.

The Friends Group potluck was attended by about 35 people from South Shore, Sheridan and Grant Parks. Cary Solburg from South Shore Park watch welcomed us to the gathering. Milwaukee County Supervisor Pat Jursik introduced John Dargle as the newly approved director (as of Nov. 4th) of Milwaukee County Parks. Mr. Dargle has served in this position since the summer, having directed a large park system in the Washington DC and Virginia area prior to accepting the position here.

Pat reported that the county supervisors had worked to keep Grobschmidt, Pulaski and Noyes pools open. There had been recommendations to close the pools, replacing them instead with skateparks and splash pads. Supervisors voted 18 - 0 to keep the pools open. Funding has been approved to redesign South Shore's parking lot, the current problem being runoff going into the lake, exacerbating problems of a highly polluted beach. Also a beach comber has been purchased for the south shore parks, from South Shore Park to Bender. Block grant funding was sought for Sheridan Park's centennial year to develop pride in our string of lakefront parks. There will be a \$66,000 grant upgrade of the Sheridan Park pavilion. And the Friends of the Mill Pond installed new doors and shingles on the Mill Pond hut.

Regarding police patrols of the park, County Executive Chris Abele had proposed elimination of the county sheriff's Targeted Enforcement Units (TEU): deputies currently covering the parks system. The board of supervisors opposed the cut, and voted to restore funds to the budget for the sheriff's department to continue coverage.

According to John Dargle, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District has pledged \$100,000 to help with the project at South Shore beach, and Miller-Coors also has pledged \$50,000. Laura Schloesser reported that 2014 will have a higher tax levy than 2013, so for once, the park's budget DID NOT SHRINK! Revenue targets are realistic, the outlook is good on the tax levy, and there is substantial capital from the board of

supervisors. Learning from projects at McKinley parking lot (lots of asphalt, storm water runoff into lake), new designs will incorporate rain gardens and swales to fix the runoff problem. At Grant Park, there are newly restored natural areas, and Eagle Scout projects including a firepit, Kiosk, and picnic table patio. A vagrant was arrested at Grant Park. Security cameras at the beach house need replacement. The DVR is not holding up to moisture/freezing conditions. Laura is seeking higher quality equipment.

Dr. Julie Kinzleman, from UW-Oshkosh, studied the watershed in SE Wisconsin to explore sources of pollution. She received grant funding to plan for mitigation of polluted runoff at Grant Park's beach parking lot, a still in-planning mode project. Funds for the Great Lakes & the School of Freshwater Science at UW-Milwaukee are participating in watershed studies as well.

Milwaukee County Sheriff's Deputy Avila spoke about the Targeted Enforcement Unit's (TEU) scope of activities. Deputy Colon said there were 25 units of the TEU, dealing with everything from 4th degree sexual assault to lewd & lascivious behavior. Some sting type operations have been used. Regarding police patrols of the park, County Executive Chris Abele had proposed elimination of the county sheriff's TEU: deputies currently covering the parks system. Pat reported that the board of supervisors opposed the cut, and voted to restore funds to the budget for the sheriff's department to continue coverage.

Parks Director Dargle is seeking vendors for food & beverage concessions at the parks and is working on a strategic plan for the next 5 years to include focus on matching customer and business needs, exploring the current workforce, and associated financial needs. And he hopes to meet national accreditations standards.

Friends of Grant Park's Betsy Abert reported that the bluff restoration is $\frac{3}{4}$ done, with more to be done next spring. We sponsored a beach clean-up with Alliance for the Great Lakes and once again found shotgun wadding along the beach. We hope to meet with the gun club responsible for preventing the wadding from reaching the beach. A marathon is scheduled for Sept. 7th, 2014.

Sylvia Gear from Sheridan Park spoke of the pavilion upgrade project. To celebrate Sheridan Park's Centennial, Friends of Sheridan Park are selling raffle tickets \$10 each or 5/\$40. The grand prize is a trip for 2 to New York's Central Park, a \$5,000 plus value. Winner will be chosen Feb. 14 at a "Love-in" dinner for Sheridan Park at Pulaski Inn; tickets are \$30 each. The keynote speaker will be Sue Black, former head of Milwaukee County Parks. Sheridan Park will host Music Under Glass at the Domes on Dec. 26th. Their goal is to have 100 members by the Centennial, including business & organizations as sponsors. Their very big vision is to build a band shell in the natural amphitheater by the main entrance to Sheridan Park.

Cary Solburg told us that South Shore Park Watch is now a 501(c)(3) organization. They have been at work for 2 years now on bluff restoration there. In September, they worked with Alliance for the Great Lakes to have the ultimate beach clean-up

experience: after all the hard work, there were beverages from Barefoot Wine and Horny Goat Hideaway. 35 people attended, and 65 lbs. of trash was removed!

In April, they hosted their 17th Earth Day event. Bea Reinders organized the annual event, inviting 400 to 500 school kids to visit over 13 different stations in the park for a 1 hr. session of their own choosing, ranging from threatened injured species; water quality; tree tours, tree plantings, a bee keeper, MMSD, DNR fishing clinic, an amphibian collection, invasive species, composting, etc. WOW! The South Shore Farmers Market continues to be a huge draw to the park all summer long, and they were able to advertise the beach clean-up on market days. And the South Shore Frolics continues at South Shore park; the friends group acts as liaison.

Finally, Jim Goulee thanked the volunteers on behalf of the Park People, the umbrella organization for parks friend's groups. He extended the raffle license for use to parks groups and also liability insurance coverage.

Our next meeting is Thursday, Dec. 13th.

Respectfully submitted by
Jody Johnson