

**Friends of Parks and Rec Minutes**  
**January 7, 2020**

**PRESENT**

Karen  
James  
Jenny  
Mary  
Roberta  
Audrey  
Charley  
Olga  
Stephanie  
Ken

**ABSENT**

none

**GUEST**

Bob Rothschild

**SKATE PARK GRANT**

The meeting was convened at 5pm. Karen reported that Parks and Rec applied for and received a grant for the new skate bowl at the skate park in the amount of \$40,000. An anonymous donor matched the amount of the grant. **Mary made a motion to adopt the skate park improvement as a project. Roberta seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.**

**MLK PARK UPDATE**

James reported that the group that Jimbo Ivy has put together to put together the interpretive information at MLK park will have its first meeting in January and conclude its work in April. A presentation to the Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Advisory Board (PNARAB) and the City Council for adoption will happen in May or June. The group consists of 2 persons from the King Legacy group, 3 persons from OSU, and one person from the NAACP. He is seeking a seventh person from the academic community. Bob asked that when the plan is finished, that it be presented to the park design committee or to the whole Friends group. This should happen before the plan goes to the City Council. Mary agreed that we should see it first. Olga suggested sharing what has been done at the March or April meeting.

James said he will check with Jimbo as to when they would like to present ideas to us. Audrey pointed out that this group is looking at content and not design. She is cautious about dictating what they are doing and wants it clear that our intention is to be supportive. Mary asked about the breadth of ethnicities they are considering including. Olga asked if Jimbo had connected with Native American tribes. James said Jimbo is seeking broad representation. Karen said the City Council will make the final decision in May or June.

Karen discussed that before fundraising begins, Friends needs to raise its visibility. Half the money for the project will be available July 1. This is the money from the SDCs. Olga asked what the city money can be used for. Karen said the use of these funds is determined by state law. Bob said we need to be clear on how much we need to raise and we need to know what city money can and cannot be used for. Karen said she would make a list of what this money

can be used for. For example, it could be used for a parking lot. Ken offered that he does not want to see money going to build parking lots at a park where most people need to drive to get there. He would prefer to use funds to improve parks and not to build parking lots. He suggested that the people who will be living in the new houses in the area should be asked to donate. Roberta offered that the houses are not there yet. Bob said the new residents are paying for the park through the SDCs. Charley pointed out that the park is on the bus route.

## **REVIEW OF MISSION AND GOALS**

Olga suggested that as we review our mission and goals, that we make the language more careful and concise. A discussion ensued about changing certain words and adding language about fundraising. Bob offered that on most boards, fundraising is something board members are expected to do. Jenny pointed out that too much emphasis on fundraising is not why she joined the board. Mary said that changes what we are trying to do. Charley said that there is already mention of fundraising. We have already raised money for projects. MLK Park is just a larger project. Karen reminded the group that Friends started because Parks and Rec needed a 501C3 through which people could donate money for parks. Charley said we really need to receive some education on how to fundraise. Ken suggested our mission should be simple: to promote donations and solicit additional funds for our parks, recreation, and cultural programs.

Olga suggested we discuss our objectives. She pointed out that we are good at small projects, but we have not had the resources to do a big project. Roberta questioned how we can manage this large project since we have never been involved in such a large project. Charley mentioned that the new museum has hired a professional fundraiser from the community and even so, to raise the money took many years. James said that the consultant said that Friends lacks visibility. People don't know who we are. He pointed out the ad in the Activity Guide and said we would have that space again in the next issue. Olga said we should add a call to action. James said raising awareness of who we are is the first thing we need to do. Bob said we need, literally, a billboard asking for donations. James said the map with all the parks on it is very popular with realtors and that our logo was added to it. Audrey offered that there needs to be a simple message to go to our website and donate. Mary said we need to continue ads at the Whiteside, Darkside, and Majestic. Stephanie mentioned that there are many ways we can use the Majestic Theatre to help us raise our profile.

James said we need a marketing plan. Bob said we need some sort of benefit event in the summer outside. Mary added that we have brainstormed quite a bit, but we often don't follow through. Mary said it would be nice if we had an annual signature event.

## **COMMITTEES:**

**Marketing & Publicity:** Ken, Olga, and Bob will participate.

**Technology:** (Facebook, website, etc.): Olga

**Fundraising:** Bob, Charley, Mary, Don Chalmers

**Design and Writing:** Roberta, Audrey, Ken

**Events:** Jenny, Charley

### **RECRUITING NEW VOLUNTEERS AND BOARD MEMBERS:**

We discussed raising the number of board members to 10 or 12. Karen said she emailed Rocio Munoz about being on the board and will talk to Linda Wolfenbarger. Stephanie will talk to Dan Eden. Charley will talk to Tom Kirch and Jon Nelson.

Bob pointed out that it is important to interview any potential candidates to see if they are a good fit and if they fill in any gaps we have. He suggested we invite at least the president of the Board to these interviews or schedule them during the normal meetings. Audrey suggested we look for folks who are at least “open to fundraising and care about natural spaces and parks.”

Olga mentioned that we don't have to always expect the folks to join the Board right away and that they can just volunteer with us on a project basis.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- **Karen will send a description of the project to Olga for addition to the website.**
- **Karen will get list of projects that can use SDC money to the Board.**
- **Roberta will work on editing the current mission and goals based on the discussion.**
- **Marketing Committee will renew logo ads at Darkside, Whiteside, and Majestic**
- **Karen will get ideas and bring them to Marketing Committee for increasing profile at OAC, CCC, Movie and the park**
- **Stephanie will talk to Jimbo about ways to involve the Majestic more in raising our profile.**
- **Karen will add Friends logo to the MLK Master Plan document and keep an eye out for other printed materials for projects we were involved with going forward.**
- **Ken and the Marketing Committee will get sizes and quotes for the banners for Arts Center Plaza. Banners can be rotated at different temporary locations: OAC, MT, CCC, Market, etc.**
- **Events Committee will brainstorm the signature event – Benefit Gathering at the Park(s)**
- **James will connect Olga with Allison (P&R marketing coordinator) for tagging on Facebook from the P&R Page.**
- **Olga will do research on which social media outlets would provide a better return on our time and how to increase our social media presence.**
- **Design and Writing Committee will work on news stories to highlight P&R announcements and happenings.**
- **If appropriate and practical, schedule an interview with the potential candidates and invite Olga to the meeting prior to offering them the Friends Board Application.**

There was a discussion about changing meeting times. A decision was made to meet monthly as usual for the next three months and then see if we need to change that.

The next meeting will be Tuesday February 18. Stephanie will be absent and Jenny will take minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Mehlenbacher