

**Friends of Parks and Recreation**  
**Minutes**  
**November 8, 2023**

**Attending**

Ken Haines	Laurie Mason	Meredith Petit
Doug Severs	Charley Fisher	<del>Jenny Meisel</del>
Mary Buckman	Stephanie Long	Olga Loza

**OVERVIEW / MLK**

Olga opened the meeting, spearheading a discussion about Friends' future. We discussed being more pro-active with planning in the next year and also how we felt about doing large vs. small projects. We discussed MLK park. Most of the work ended up falling on Audrey's shoulders. Olga mentioned that there was and is reluctance around the project. Mary offered that what we were told at the beginning about budget, hiring a fundraiser, etc. did not happen. Charley agreed and offered that Friends was set up to fill in the cracks, not spearhead big projects. Stephanie said she was never comfortable with the amount of money the project was costing and thought that when we received the funds from the state, that would be the end of fundraising for the project. Olga asked Meredith when the actual construction will begin on the park. Meredith said because of how complex it is with all the moving parts (design, public art, interpretive signs, etc), it will not be completed for two to three years. She said they hope to start on it in early 2025. Mary said things happened and we were told after the fact. We spent \$30,000 for a PR person that we never met and the nexus between the Board and the Fundraising committee was never developed. Olga asked if we want to do projects like this again. The Fundraising Committee has sunsetted. It was Bob Rothschild who pushed the fundraising and pushed the idea of us raising our profile as a group. Meredith asked what this means for any involvement in the Owens Farm project. Ken suggested that we work on smaller, more manageable projects like small neighborhood beautification projects. Perhaps we could offer small grants. Stephanie suggested smaller projects like Roberta's idea for new trash cans downtown.

**WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?**

There was an in depth discussion about what kinds of projects we want to support. Ken would like to see small projects in a lot of neighborhoods in town. Meredith mentioned that the Rotary Club is re-purposing some of the old concrete trash cans downtown as little libraries and will "adopt" them out. Olga would like us to do what we have done historically. Meredith said there is no longer a Parks and Rec advisory board. Laurie wondered how much we can ask of ourselves. We are a small group. Olga said we would need new board members with specialized skills. Doug said we need someone good at social media. Mary said we need more diversity on the Board.

We created some action items: Ken will work on the donation letter and look at possible criteria for neighborhood grants. Charley will (when available) book dates for the 2024 Farmer's Market. Stephanie will make sure we are on the Majestic olivio ads and perhaps get our logo on the wall. Olga will talk to local schools about re-designing the logo. Mary said she will look at some of the projects we have done around town and see if our signs are up. Laurie suggested we sponsor the Majestic Gala by donating \$5000 and buying a table at the event. We voted unanimously to do that.

### **ADJUSTMENTS TO TREASURER'S REPORTS**

Laurie met with Vicki at A and S. She is working on getting a monthly file that is more usable. Laurie would also like to see the ending balance of one report match the starting balance of the following month's report. Another change would be to record the donation on the date of receipt rather than the date of the check. Laurie also suggested that we need an annual audit.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Long Mehlenbacher