

**Friends of Parks and Recreation  
Minutes  
October 15, 2024**

**Attending**

Laurie Mason  
Doug Severs  
Ruby Moon  
Meredith Petit

Charley Fisher      Tom Kirch  
Olga Loza  
Stephanie Long  
Ken Haines

**Absent**

Jean Scott

Guests: Jessica McDonald from Greenbelt Land Trust, Christel Birdwell – Majestic Theatre

**Minutes**

The meeting was brought to order at 4:30. Laurie made a motion to approve the minutes. Doug seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report**

Laurie reported that money has been moved from the Citizen's Bank money market account to Edward Jones money market which is paying between 4 and 5 percent interest. October did not have a lot of activity, other than some small donations. There was a discussion about adding Give Butter to our list of ways to donate since they do not charge fees. Olga made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Doug seconded. The report was approved unanimously.

**Majestic Gala 2024**

Christel Birdwell reported that our \$5000 donation to last year's event was turned into \$25000 for programming. Many scholarships were awarded (50% discount) for programs and summer camps. There is a new youth program called Majestic Mondays which is free for youth. Christel asked that we donate again to the event at the Corvallis (Country) Club. To be the exclusive sponsor would cost \$6500. The event is 12/14/24 with dinner starting at 6:30 with a silent auction and music and dancing. Willamette Apprentice Ballet will be a "surprise" guest. Charley moved to donate \$6500. Stephanie seconded. The vote was unanimous.

**Owens Farm Project**

Meredith gave an overview of the Owens Farm Project along with Jessica McDonald from Greenbelt Land Trust. Jessica had come to a meeting several months ago and now returned with a list of roles and responsibilities, should Friends decide to become a fiscal sponsor for the project. The partners involved are Greenbelt, City of Corvallis, Benton County, and Good Samaritan. Ruby asked what percentage of the land each group owns. Jessica said the bulk of the land belongs to Good Sam. The first thing they want to do is to build a trail through the property. Stephanie asked how much the trail will cost. Jessica said \$400,000. Half of the money has already been acquired and now the parties need to raise the other half. Meredith said there is a steering committee formed through an MOU and that Meredith would be the designated contact person.

Laurie asked if any other entities had been approached about being a fiscal sponsor. Jessica said that there were discussions with the Benton Community Foundation and the Oregon Community Foundation to act as fiscal sponsors, but neither was a good fit because they are not set up to be fiscal

partners. She mentioned that Friends was part of the very early discussion about Owens Farm because we helped raise the funds to move the historic house that was on 7<sup>th</sup> Street to the farm years ago.

During the discussion, many concerns were raised. There is currently no road access to the planned trail. Although the road is supposed to be built, it could take 10-20 years for that to happen. Stephanie suggested that that is a long period of time to try to sustain interest in the project. Laurie voiced a lot of concerns: will this change our insurance needs. If we add to the project to our donation drop down menu, it could potentially take away from our other funds. Has anyone on the steering commission questioned our 3% admin fee? Who will write thank you letters for small donations to Owens Farm? Stephanie asked about the term fiscal sponsor. Tom said this sounds more like Friends will essentially be a pass through for funds. Olga asked: wouldn't it be strange for folks to write checks for Owens Farm to Friends? Stephanie asked about the planned bike bridge across 99W to connect Jackson Frasier to Owens Farm. ODOT has offered an \$800,000 grant towards this. Stephanie wanted to know how much the entire project would cost. After some back and forth, Jennifer said it will cost many millions of dollars and that this grant might cover the initial engineering and design costs. Laurie suggested that a group of Board members meet with the partners in this venture to discuss it further before any decision is made about any Friends' involvement in the project. Laurie made a motion that she, as Treasurer, and Doug, as president, meet with the partners. Doug seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

#### **Board Changes/Officers**

Olga said, as she steps down as President of the Board, she would like to do as little as possible after this, but would still do the website and Facebook for now. She moved that Ken will continue to be VP for now and Doug is the new President. Laurie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Ruby mentioned that we should have some younger people on the Board. Stephanie suggested we look for specific people for specific jobs.

#### **Yearly Donation Letter**

Olga will send out last year's letter to all. Ken had already made some notes about things to change or update. Olga said Parks and Rec would do the layout for the letter and the brochure and Eagle Press in Salem will do the printing. It was decided to do a letter with a return envelope and not a postcard. Send suggestions to Ken for changes.

#### **Our next meeting will be held on November 19 at 4:30.**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Long Mehlenbacher