

**Horner Park Advisory Council
Monthly Meeting
Wednesday October 4, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.
Meeting conducted at the Horner Park Fieldhouse**

Attendees:

Athene Carras
Daniel Honigman
David Harris
Diane Sutliff
Erica Beutler
Jeffrey Walter
John O'Connell
Pat Casler
Peter Schlossman
Kirsten Southwell
Sara Zimmerman
Deb Groh (Chicago Parks District)
Carlton Jones (HPNWLL)
David Post (HPNWLL)
Lola Post (HPNWLL)

Peter called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Introductions

Review of September 2023 Minutes:

- Daniel made a motion to approve the September minutes. Diane seconded. All were in favor, with none opposed. The motion passed, and the minutes were approved.

Reports:

Nominating Committee / Election of Officers:

- The committee nominates the following individuals for two-year terms:
 - **President:** Peter Schlossman
 - **Co-Vice President, Stewardship:** John Friedmann
 - **Co-Vice President, Communications/Community Outreach:** Kirsten Southwell
 - **Treasurer:** Diane Sutliff
 - **Assistant Treasurer:** Athene Caras
 - **Co-Secretary:** Daniel Honigman
 - **Co-Secretary:** Sara Zimmerman
- Diane made a motion to vote on the slate. Daniel seconded the nominations. There were no other comments or officer nominations.
 - **Vote:** All were in favor, with none opposed. The motion passed, with all elected.

- John O. moved to adopt a resolution thanking Amy Jahnke and Gretchen Helmreich for their many years of service as Vice President of Communications and Community Outreach and Assistant Treasurer, respectively. Peter seconded the motion.
 - **Vote:** All were in favor, with none opposed. The motion passed.

Bylaws Revisions:

- Suggested edits to the bylaws were sent under separate cover.
- An additional suggestion was made about term limits.
- Bylaws revisions will be voted upon in the November 2023 meeting.

Treasurer's Report:

- The September 2023 Financial Reports show the final numbers for the fiscal year ending September 30, and were sent under separate cover.
- The Treasurer expressed her appreciation to the team leadership and innumerable volunteers on the initiatives below for such a successful season.
- HPAC has paid the Phase Two invoice to the Chicago Park District (CPD) for the Dog Friendly Area (DFA). Additional DFA funds totaling \$50,000 were invested in a six-month CD; interest generated from that will be allocated to the DFA.
 - The Treasurer made a motion to recognize Erica's efforts with the DFA. Peter second the motion.
 - **Vote:** All were in favor, with none opposed. The motion passed.
- Fundraising for the Concert Series was on par with last year. While the cost for artists' fees was essentially unchanged, there were additional concert infrastructure expenses this year.
- HPAC received the payment from Brown Paper Tickets for the BrewFest.
- The Treasurer will work with the Needs Assessment Committee during the winter on recommendations for using money to enhance the parks under HPAC's umbrella.
- Please email treasurer@hornerpark.org with ideas for new initiatives or other suggestions.

Park Briefs:

- **Horner Park:**
 - **Exercise Equipment Progress:**
 - Installation should begin in the first week of November.
 - **Walking Path Repair/Replacement and Parking Lot Progress:**
 - Peter sent thank-you notes to the appropriate CPD contacts.
 - **Fieldhouse Bottle Filler:** No update.
 - **Elevator Repair:**
 - The inspection will occur on October 5.
 - **Mini Pitch Repair:**
 - The mini pitch work is still incomplete.
 - **Gym Floors Repair:**
 - The gym floor repair will be delayed due to moisture problems.
 - **Earth Mound Progress Report:**
 - The two oak trees must still be replaced by the contractor.

- Some minor construction is required for the pathway and mound top repair settling and water damage from heavy rains.
 - **Front Lawn Tree and Grass Replacement:**
 - Steffan Schoenauer is the new CPD contact for trees.
 - Planting of new trees remains on hold until the old trees are removed.
 - Grass replacement will likely occur once the trees are replaced.
 - **Fieldhouse Front Native Shrub Garden:**
 - Bogdan will meet with Peter and others on the 16th. Please tell Peter if you want to attend.
 - **Other:**
 - Several additional trees came down; Peter will take photos and share with Deb.
 - Those dwelling near the Nature Play Space have been rehoused.
 - Diane motioned to spend up to \$150 on supplies for the upcoming bonfire event on October 11 and up to \$300 on supplies for the Turkey Trot. John O. seconded the motion.
 - All were in favor, with none opposed. The motion passed.
- **Ravenswood Manor Park:**
 - **Kiosk Maintenance / Alley Fence Repair:**
 - The alley fence has not been repaired yet. Deb reached out to CPD.
- **Jacob Playlot Park:**
 - The loose wire is not electrical, but a cable or data line. Deirdre from the 40th Ward office reached out to see if it can get addressed.
- **Sunken Gardens:** No report.
- **Buffalo Park:**
 - A new tree has been staked and will likely be planted next year.

Farmer's Market Committee:

- The market has two weeks left, with the last one on October 14. The committee is excited about the CPD pumpkin patch that day as well.
- A full season summary will be sent after the market closes for the year, and before the November 2023 meeting.

Concerts Committee:

- The committee thinks the 2023 season was a success and will soon begin work on the 2024 season.

Needs Assessment Committee:

- The Needs Assessment Committee is continuing to research the following initiatives:
 - **Placement of benches along the RiverBank Trail:** Per Deb, the Natural Areas team has discussed ways to get more benches and are trying to produce a template that would allow our in-house crews to build/install. Until that gains more traction, we must look at our contractor. This approach will cost more.
 - **Basketball court resurfacing:** The price is estimated at \$65-\$70K, with a four-year queue, and research needed for funding avenues. Kirsten will be doing further work on the steps needed to generate the design aspect of this project,

so we will be ready when the resurfacing contractor is funded and on board. It has been suggested that this be submitted for Participatory Budgeting.

- **Retaining borders for the Riverbank Trail:**
 - Wood retaining borders remain the best option, even if it will need ongoing replacement/repair. Deb reports there might be money left in the budget at the end of this year to begin. Because of the project's size and nature, it can be done in segments, with lower trails a higher priority.
 - John F. presented at the CPD's annual budget hearing in mid-September, and the park board agreed to fund the improvement. The budget is to be determined, but John F. will work with CPD to see if funds cannot be released to begin work this year, and complete work by River Day 2024.
- **Jacob Park sandbox sunshade:** Jacob Park stewards to research vendors.
- **"Northwoods" Nature Play Space near the Horner playlot:** A cost proposal request (with features included from an earlier plan) was made to Sean Schaffer (CPD Nature Play Space coordinator) in late August. There has been no reply.
- **Light for the Ceriale Memorial:** Deb is researching a solar option.
- **Dumpster enclosure behind the Horner Park Fieldhouse:** Peter to research.
- **Bulletin board for Jacob Park:** Waiting for a quote from CPD.
- **Native shrub garden for the front of the fieldhouse:** The committee is scheduled to meet Bogdan so he can create a proposal to consider and vote on.
- **Other:**
 - Erica will create a spreadsheet to track all suggestions.
 - Erica suggested that the committee prioritize a suggestion and determine an ask and submit for 33rd Ward Participatory Budgeting consideration.
 - **Air conditioning:** John F. reported that CPD leadership agreed to investigate the air conditioning assessment for Horner Park conducted several years ago and will get HPAC that report.
 - **New suggestion:** Jeff W. and David H. suggested realignment of existing pickleball courts.
 - **New suggestion:** John O. suggested a stage for Horner Park concerts.
- Suggestions for additional needs are welcome, and people with a particular interest in any initiative are invited to join the subcommittees that are forming now. Thanks to Deb Groh for making inquiries on our behalf and helping us move these ideas forward.
- There are no actionable items yet.

Signage Committee: No report.

Dog Friendly Area (DFA) Committee:

- **Fundraising:**
 - Phase Two has been paid for, with money transferred to the Park District.
 - The Dog Days at Burning Bush fundraiser is complete, and funds were received.
- **Build and Maintenance:**
 - The committee requests assistance to regrade the dog park mulch, as it is piling up at the edges and leaving muddy spots in the middle when it rains. (Is this something the baseball stewards could potentially help with?)
 - Erica will connect David and Laura.
 - There will be a volunteer recruitment meeting pizza party on October 16 at 7:00 p.m. at the Horner Park Fieldhouse.

Stewardship Committee:

- There will be a Horner tree pruning on October 16, starting at 9:00 a.m. with Openlands TreeKeepers.
- Ravenswood Manor and Buffalo Parks (and nearby parkways with newer trees) will have a tree trimming with Openlands TreeKeepers on October 23, from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- TreeKeepers hosted a recent event at Horner Park to inventory trees.
- Buffalo Park was planted by Bogdan. A Serviceberry will soon be planted. They will water three times a week into September.
- Erica made a motion to thank KPMG volunteers for its recent stewardship efforts on September 14. Daniel second the motion.
 - **Vote:** All were in favor, with none opposed. The motion passed.

Communications Committee: No report.

Website Committee:

- Minutes through August 2023 have been posted to the HPAC website (hornerpark.org).
- There are lingering issues with the Stewardship email address. Kirsten will investigate.

New Business:

- **Pickleball concerns:** Erica will meet with the pickleball group to learn more.

Old Business:

- **Arboretum designation:** No update.
- **Strategic planning follow up:**
 - We need a chair of the Diversity subcommittee.
 - Erica formulated a DEI approach, but there is no report yet.
 - We should also revisit our conclusions document and decide on other priority goals, which we can prioritize and seek to accomplish.

Announcements:

- **Events:**
 - **October 11:** Bonfire at the Nature Play Space.
 - **October 14:** Pumpkin Patch from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Horner Park.
 - **October 23:** Tree Trimming
 - **November 18:** Turkey Trot at Horner Park.

Motion to Adjourn:

John O. motioned to adjourn at 8:08 pm; Peter seconded. All were in favor, with none opposed. The motion carried.

Next Monthly Meeting:

The next HPAC meeting will be Wednesday, November 1 at 7:00 p.m.
at the Horner Park Fieldhouse