

## Westgrove Pack General Meeting 3/4/2020

The meeting can be view here:

<https://www.facebook.com/meganginna/videos/10158109476451382/>

Meeting Started at 7:02

### 1. Chair Greeting

Melissa welcomes and thanks those in attendance. She also explains that for those watching live on Facebook we won't be able to answer questions in real time and suggests they email their questions to [westgrovepack@gmail.com](mailto:westgrovepack@gmail.com).

### 2. Budget Vote — You can find the budget on the website here:

Jeff goes over the budget. The first two pages are the financial statements from 2019 so the users can see what we did last year. The third page is our budget performance for 2019 so you can see what we budgeted and what we expended. We went a little under in operations because we did not end up seeding the south end of the park. This year we will be doing spring seeding so that will not be a directly comparable amount this year. The fourth page is the proposed 2020 budget.

We had already budgeted for the south end water fixture and the fence numbers. We can amend the budget later this year if we move forward with other projects.

Jan Speakman asks what the income was from the caretakers in 2019. It was ....Melissa explains that we don't have the number for 2020 yet. Jan asks if the number has been static over the years and Jeff says it has been growing a little bit, but no radical changes.

More discussion/questions about the budget continues.

Anne says that we want to make sure that the users know that we have all the money for the things that we are proposing to do. We feel good about that.

Melissa asks for a vote and the budget passes unanimously.

### III. Update on the North and South End

Melissa give a quick update on the North (small) end of the park. She explains that the north end has a big drainage/mud issue and the county is fixing it for us. Anne and Melissa met with the County in Feb and we expressed that they were not happy with the project as it was and the county said they weren't either. They are going to build a french drain—dig the swale that is already there deeper. She explains they will fill it with landscape cloth and top soil and seed. They had hoped to get it done in Feb, but were delayed by other projects. They promised to finished the project in March. We will take the promise with a grain of salt, keep our fingers crossed and give them an occasional polite nudge.

Michelle asks if the County is covering all the costs associated with the project and Melissa answers “yes.”

Melissa explains that the south end water project has been approved. We will get another water fixture in the south end. We were holding off on that because we are not supposed to have both sides of the park closed at the same time. Since the county has delayed the work in the north end, the board has talked to our plumber about getting us on the calendar ASAP. We aren't going to wait for the county any longer. It will be done in March. It will involve some trenching and disturbing of the ground so we want to get that done before the spring grass seeding. If the park authority decides to start working in the other end there is a slight possibility both sides will be closed for a day or two.

Once the seeding happens then the south end will be closed anywhere from six to ten weeks.

#### 4. Lucky Dog Event

Melissa explains that Lucky Dog Rescue has reached out to us again. Last year they had an adoption event at the park and want to do it again. They asked if the park was available and sent us a list of dates. Technically, they don't have to ask us because it is a County park and the County can approve it without us being on board. We are perfectly fine if they use it. The users can say they aren't fine with it if they want and the Board can communicate that to the county.

The members at the meeting said it was a great idea.

They gave us three dates —Feb 29th, May 30th and Nov 28th. Melissa explained that the Feb date wouldn't work because the park was too muddy. The board also thought Nov 28th wouldn't work because we are all busy for Thanksgiving. We are fine if they use the park, but the board members wouldn't be able to be there for support. We didn't think we could properly represent the PACK that weekend. We thought May 30th was fine. Also, We are going to ask them to participate in our Fall festival on Oct 3rd.

Anne explains the event —they bring about a dozen dogs, there is a handler for each. We close the north end so they can run around. It aids in getting them adopted. Other users are still able to use the south end of the park. She also explains that we like to have a board member there the whole time to keep an eye on things—that's why we didn't think Nov 28th would work.

Melissa explains that last year they got about 30 dogs adopted. She also says that they do all their own advertising , but we can put up a flyer in the kiosk and post to our facebook page. They don't ask us to do anything. It is no cost to us.

Some discussion about whether the grass will come back by May 30th or not ensues. It should not matter in the north end where the event.

#### V. Projects

Melissa explains that we would like to keep the park as nice as we can and improve it as we can. Liz holds up a poster board that shows a of list projects that the Board and the PACK users have voted on to do in the next year and beyond. (This board can be found in the kiosk at the park and the list of projects can be found on the PACK's website) The Board wants to make it

clear that any project managers will have assistance from the Board and other members of the park should they choose to take on the project. Anne has many years experience as a project manager and can answer questions too.

She explains that we are looking for volunteers to be project managers for the projects—someone who can step up and run the project from start to finish.

1. Drainage-It has been on our list for 5 years and it is not a project that the PACK is responsible for. The county is doing that and it is costing us nothing.
2. South End Water Fixture- This project is being handled by Jeff because he has been there working on it from the start. This project has been approved and we have the money for it. This project will also start any day now.
3. Number signs- These signs are to direct people to where their dog has pooped. She explains that poops are often lost and these are directional guides to find “whatever they want.”The project manager can research and decide the size and color. it is about 100 signs. Anne explains that whoever the project manager is , is going to have to go out with a mock sign with some people and test what size is appropriate. “They need to be bigger!” for example. More discussion ensues about the color of the signs. Everything that is decided has to be presented and approved by the board. Liz says that board members will assist with the install.
4. Cement Pond/Swimming Pool- We don’t want plastic pools in the park—they aren’t emptied out and they breed disease. They also kill grass. Last year people were good about not bringing them. A lot of people were sad because their dogs like to play in the water. Melissa explains that she was in Pennsylvania a couple of years ago and she saw a cement pond underneath their water fixture. It had a slow drain so that if you forgot pull out the plug, it would start to drain itself. The cement cleans itself in the sunlight and it is pretty sanitary. She said that a park user had offered to manage this project if it is approved. It will probably be expensive—it will be tied into what will eventually be a canopy area in the north end of the park (which is not on the list yet.) Mary Tracey says that the county might not approve it, but Melissa assures her that the MOU gives us permission to do that. Jeff says we have floated the idea to the county and the county has tentatively liked the idea. Anne says the county will have to approve the actual design, etc, but they have no problem with the actual project.
5. Agility Equipment- This project has anonymously funded already, but we do need a project manager for that. It is a simple thing of sitting down with a dog equipment catalogues and perhaps visiting other dog parks to see what is the best for our park. It is most likely that the equipment would be in the north (small) end of the park so there can’t be too many pieces. It is another very simple project and we need someone to step up. Anne says that some work has already gone into it and the board can give the new project manager some of the preliminary research.
6. Entrance Improvements- She explains that in the south end entrance closest to the kiosk that entrance was paved. We want to do that at each of the entries, but with self-funding memorial bricks. The bricks themselves are relatively inexpensive. We will you sell them to the park members and that will buy the bricks and fund the workman who will have to install them. It is not such an easy project, but and important one. Jan asks how much and Melissa said when we first looked at the project a few years ago we were going to sell them for \$100 a brick, but if you bought two you would would get them for \$150. The project manager can research the price of bricks now and decide what they should go for now. One of things that the project manager will have to research is also how many bricks we will need for the project and how much the overall project will cost. They will have to do that math. Our

landscaper also does hardscaping so we can also get a price from them. Liz proposes that she will help with the marketing aspect of the project. She will be a co-partner for that.

7. Invasive Species project- If you're in the park sitting at under the canopy and you look across towards the potomac river —the east side is all those trees, scrub, etc. We have been given permission from the county to clean that up. This will be an ongoing project that will take as many as five years before it gets all cleaned-up. Anne and Emma are heading up this project. They've had to do some training in knowing how to identified the plants and how to manage volunteers. They will go to another project that is county to run to learn county procedures. The county provides us with seeds, plants, tools and volunteers. If we wanted a specific plant the county would have to approve it. This project also costs us nothing.
8. Irrigation (not on the board)- If we had all the money the word we would like to put in an irrigation system for the grass in the summer time. Melissa says that if anyone has the inclination or knows someone they can get us an initial estimate. At this point it is not a priority, but it is on our back burner.
9. Fall Festival- We currently do not have a Director of Membership and Fundraising who is usually in charge.. We would like to fill this position immediately, but in the meantime we need a project manager to head the Fall Festival. This is where we get the majority of our funds to do the projects (the county does not pay for anything inside the fence.)

Melissa asks if anyone has questions or concerns. She also asks if there are projects the members would like to see that we have no listed tonight. We will certainly take those into consideration.

Liz says the projects that are on the board that we created for the meeting are also on the PACK's website [www.westgrove.org](http://www.westgrove.org) We will also put this board in the kiosk.

#### VI. Notable Dates on the Calendar

1. Dates Spring Opening - We don't know when that will be because we don't know when we will get the grass planted. TBD. Hopefully, mid-to-late May, depending on the weather.
2. Caretaker Saturdays - These will start on April 11th. If you have any questions then there will be Board members in the park to answer. We will do these on the second Saturday of every month through the Fall depending on weather.
3. Hot Dog Friday Nights- Start May 29th. On Friday Nights in the summer time we pull out the bbq and throw hot dogs on the grill. Jeff makes french fries. Last year we even had a park goer bring hamburgers. Other members bring sides and desserts. Nothing is expected, but it has started to become quite a community affair. You never know what treats might be there. We are not allowed to sell food at the park—this is all free, there is a jar for donations, but it a social affair. People are very generous. Any money that is donated goes directly to the pack. All the supplies are donated so it doesn't cost the PACK any money.
4. Fall Festival- Will be schedule for Oct 3rd.

#### VII. Other stuff-

Melissa also mentions poop—because it wouldn't be a a meeting with out mentioning poop. She says that lately the problem hasn't been as bad. She used to have to pick 20+ poops up every time she was there. Today she only had to pick up one. She thanks everyone who is on top of their dog's poop.

Jan mentions that it looks like dogs have been chewing on the edges of the plastic Adirondack chairs. Liz assures her that her neighbors donated them to the park because it was squirrels attacking the chairs in their backyard—so they got rid of them. The dogs don't chew them. There are no squirrels inside the park.

Jan also asks about signage about the numbers. Are they plastic? Melissa says they will be metal like the street signs. Jan asks if everyone is ok with them being attached to the inside of the fence. Melissa says they have been approved. Jan was just worried about dogs jumping and getting cut by the edges might be a problem. Melissa says that is a good concern and this is something for the project manager to think about. More discussion ensues about this. How they would be mounted...etc.

Meeting Ended at 7:45pm