

## Westgrove Pack Board Meeting Minutes 7/3/2019

In attendance: Melissa Pandin, Megan Kesling, Emma McAlary, Anne Street, Liz Yap and Jeff Pandin, Marissa Vesay

Meeting starts at 6:07 pm

Melissa hands out updated contact info for all board members.

Melissa passes out passwords and combination to shed.

Agenda

### **Old Business**

#### **1. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes**

Melissa motions to approve the June meeting minutes. Jeff seconds. We all agree.

#### **2. Chair's Report**

Anne presents us with what Melissa and Anne talked about at their meeting with the County (Todd). They discussed the MOU and related that we only wanted 60 days of the park to be closed. He didn't realize this, but he is very happy with our change. He will ask his boss and get back to the Pack. Todd said we should take the dates out of the MOU and Anne and Melissa agreed. The dates would now be dependent on the weather. He also asked about the percentage of the people in the pack that pay dues. We told him about 25% of users are part of the pack. He wants to reword a few things in the MOU and it should be ready about the middle of July to sign. He said he really liked our approach.

Anne explained what the County thought was the best drainage approach come Fall. They compromised with Todd on terminology. They agreed it is not a ditch, but a swale that will be dug. A swale is a shallow contour in the ground—much like a french drain. It would have a couple of inches of stone dust. Todd believes grass will grow through the blue stone dust and that is ok. Melissa suggested placing river rocks over the swale to protect it. Todd said the County would think about that.

As a board we discuss the rocks and whether they would work or not.

Melissa and Anne also relayed the message that the Pack would not mind having a little more stone dust in the north (small) end if THE COUNTY HAD TO DO IT, but a mostly grass park was preferable.

Melissa and Anne also explained the proposed cement pool idea and Todd thought it was very clever.

Melissa and Anne explained to the board that the Park Authority is undertaking a big dog park survey. They are going to look at dog parks around the country and study the common practices.

The Park Authority's plan is to then create a system of three tiers of dog parks. The first would be very basic with no amenities (maybe picnic tables) like Gristmill. The second would be the standard level with picnic tables and faucets. And the third would be a super dog park. Todd told Melissa and Anne that Westgrove Dog Park is and will be a SUPER DOG PARK! This level includes what we already have in the park and many more projects to come! Todd and the county recognize our PACK and are looking forward to working on our SUPER projects in the future. He said he supported Westgrove as an exception to the dog park norms.

He asked if Anne and Melissa will come to talk to the experts doing the nationwide dog park survey and they agreed to it.

He also said to make sure we let him know if we have any members who are unhappy about anything happening in the park or any goings-on. He said the County likes to be prepared.

Anne explained that Jeff Winkle is Phil's new boss and that we should also meet with him. The structure is now Phil, Jeff, and then Todd.

We discuss that Phil's mother passed away and that we will send him a sympathy card.

Todd reiterated that he liked the two months for seeding and that one end of the park will be open at all times. He agreed that it didn't matter which one.

Melissa found out that Erin Stocksclaeder is the invasive species expert for the County. We can work with her on learning which species are invasive and how to properly clean them out. If she educates us then we can remove the species ourselves.

Todd said he would like to meet with the Pack's board reps (Melissa and Anne) quarterly.

After this discussion, Jeff motions that Todd had explained the drainage plan to Melissa and Anne before our deadline of July 4th. We are all happy with the swale that he has described. Anne seconds the motion that we have a drainage plan. Melissa also seconds. We all agree. we don't need to take any more action right now.

### **3. ADA Project Update**

Melissa explains that there really is not an update. Everyone has seen the path and we agree that it looks great. She does explain that we have extra pavers that we can use for a future project.

Anne says they will move the equipment that is still in the park, but are waiting for another job assignment. Their usual MO is to keep it at the finished project site until a new project starts at another site so that they don't have to drag it all the way to home base. Home base is often much farther away than the next project.

Jeff says that our landscaper said he can remove the plastic edges around the bricks under the canopy and clean the dirt. He can reset the edge and secure it with more nails so that it doesn't separate from the bricks again. He said he could then put hold a ton of stone dust around the bricks to level it out. It would cost \$445. We do have this money approved in the ADA budget already.

Anne said it would be good practice to inform Phil of this small amount of work. He will let us know if we need to submit paperwork for this or not. Even if he doesn't need to approve it, it is good practice to keep him informed. We all agree. **Melissa will contact Phil about this subject.**

Melissa told Todd about how one of our members who walks with a cane said the new path is wonderful. She could only come to the park with her husband because he was able to hold her arm and guide her in the park. She said that she now feels like she can come on her own with the new path installed. Todd asked if this park user could write a positive comment to the County about this. Melissa said she would ask her.

Jeff notices some grass is growing up through the bricks. We talk about solutions. We won't use round-up Round-Up of course. He said he would clean it with a small blow-torch. Liz suggested a solution of epsom salt, vinegar and a little eco-friendly dish soap would also work. Jeff will complete this task.

Liz asks if the other entrances will be paved with brick. Melissa says it won't happen now because it wasn't part of the county's budget. She says we don't have a price on it yet. The extra bricks that we have now probably won't cover the vestibules and they will go under the double bench near the canopy.

Jeff said he should have an estimate for pavers under the benches after he talked to the landscaper.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

Jeff explains that he is showing us just the second quarter.

Sustaining caretakers and caretaker membership is up a bit after the past few weeks of outreach work (ie Caretaker Saturday).

\$6308 of the \$6900 allocated for the ADA project has been used.

All reports are within budget.

That leaves our total at \$16,192

Melissa moves that we approve the Treasurer's report. Anne seconds. We all agree.

Westgrove P.A.C.K  
Statement of Income and Expenses  
Second Quarter - 2019

Income:

Dues Received	\$	520.00
General Donations		187.00
Sustaining Caretakers		2,355.00
Caretaker Weekend Donations		311.13
Hot Dog Friday		631.00
Amazon Smile Commissions		<u>30.17</u>

Total Income: \$4,034.30

Expenses:

Projects:

ADA Improvements	6,308.00
------------------	----------

Operations:

Waste Bags	\$128.25
Portable Restroom	567.08
Straw	70.00
Turf Management	855.00
Survey Monkey	111.00
Tarp Straps	26.27
Total Operations:	1,757.60

Administration:

P.O. Box Rental	140.00
Paypal Fees	<u>91.81</u>
Total Administration:	<u>231.81</u>

Total Expenses: \$8,297.41

Net Income (Loss): (\$4,263.11)

Breakdown of Expenses:

Projects: 76%  
 Operations: 21%  
 Fundraising: 0%  
 Administration: 3%

Balance Sheet  
 6/30/19

Assets:

Burke & Herbert Checking \$6,258.02  
 Paypal 14,361.29  
 Held in trust by FCPF 1,603.50

Total Assets: \$22,222.81

Total Liabilities: 0.00

Net worth \$22,222.81

Budget Performance Report  
 Through 6/30/19

	Budget	Expended	Remaining
<b>Operations</b>	7,800.00	1,885.85	5,914.15
<b>Administration</b>	1,600.00	393.00	1,207.00
<b>Fundraising</b>	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00
<b>Projects</b>	22,500.00	6,308.00	16,192.00

## 5. Dog Park Survey

Jeff and Marissa discuss the survey. Survey number two for the follow up for number one. We wanted clarification of the first results.

We discuss the need to even have a survey based on the recent conversation with Todd and the County. The first survey was to clarify the stance of Westgrove Pack's stance to the county . The county and the pack are on the same page and the results reflect both what the Board and the County have been discussing for months. The Pack's priorities are natural turf and drainage followed by the other projects on the list. We decided to remove the turf question for this reason. We move on to discuss new questions.

We discuss that we have gotten a lot of feedback about the ports-potty. Many users say that they would like to bring it back. We discuss that the second survey can be focused on this.

Jeff also suggests that we ask the PACK something along the lines of: Would you like to participate in a dog committee to pick up dog poop or would you like us to hire someone? We can tell them if we hire someone it would cost "this" amount of money.

Marissa says we can ask this question in the survey and then present how much it would be at the general meeting. Pack members would then vote to move it forward at the general meeting.

After discussion of the first survey and poop issues we decided on a three question survey:

1. Do you want a port-a-potty in the park?
  - A. Yes all year
  - B. Yes, during May-Nov
  - C. No
  
2. Would you be willing to participate in a weekly dog poop patrol?
  - A. Yes!
  - B. No. Hire someone to pick it up weekly
  - C. Neither
  
3. If you answered 'C' to question number two, what is your proposed solution?  
( fill in the blank)

Anne suggests that we make the survey a permanent thing. She suggests that we send one out every month so that people can look forward to it. We can also ask them to suggest questions for the survey.

Marissa said we can do a follow-up survey or another question about poop-pick up ideas.

Liz says we need to make sure we have the results for people to see. If we have it monthly the results can go out with the new questions. We agree

Marissa says we also can put the results on the website.

Liz asks if we want to put an explanation of why we are sending this out? Or explain why it is bad to have dog poop lying around? We ultimately decided that we won't send it out with the questions and Megan suggest we include them with the results. We agree.

We discuss the questions some more.

Liz says you get the most responses on Tuesday from her learning experience.

Melissa motions to approve the questions and to have the survey sent out by next Tuesday. We will give the membership two weeks to respond. Anne seconds.

The survey will be open July 9th-23rd.

**Marissa and Jeff will coordinate on this item.**

## **6. Incident Report Log**

We have a small discussion about the legality and liabilities of the form. Jeff says the MOU says we are supposed to do this kind of thing. We discuss how keeping track with an online form would be easier.

Liz asks if the County can provide us with a form. We think they don't have one.

**Melissa will reach out Chrissy about the document because she was working on it before she resigned from the board.**

We table the discussion until the next meeting.

## **7. West Po's ideas on poop and water**

Students from West Potomac High School want to get volunteer hours by helping out at the park. One of their assignments was to come up with solutions for two things —poop pick up and dirty water bowls.

Melissa explained some of the highlights.

Regarding the poop issue they came up with three solutions:

1. Put poop bag dispensers at each of the gates at eye level
2. Start a volunteer poop patrol
3. Put up an alert devices (like a bell). If someone's dog is pooping another park user can ring the bell to alert other users. The bell will make people look up from their conversations or phone and see which dog is pooping. Hopefully, if it is their dog they will then feel like they HAVE to go pick it up.

Melissa thinks we should try the poop alert bell.

Marissa motions that we investigate purchase options for the poop alert bell. Melissa seconds the motion. We all agree.

We also decided to add more poop bag dispensers at the gate. **Jeff will look into this.**

Regarding dirty dog bowls they also came up with three solutions:

-Announcements on Facebook and Kiosk. The announcements will alert users to the dangers of dirty dog bowls and encourage them to empty them when they see them and refresh the water. (We already did something like this and didn't see much change).

- Encourage people to bring their own bowls.
- Elevate the water bowls so that the dogs can't put their dirty paws into them.

Marissa motions to elevate the water bowls and Emma seconds.

**Jeff has offered to build some stands for the bowls and we decided we need three sets.**

## **New Business**

### **8. Hot Dog Friday Night**

There has been some questions and discussion raised about HDFN. What is it and what it is not?

Jeff says the goal is not to change what the policy is, it is to define what the policy has been.

He reads the proposed policy:

“Hot Dog Friday is a weekly summer picnic intended to build fellowship among park users. The Board has endorsed this event but has determined that is not appropriate to use money donated to maintain and improve the park to feed park users. Also, because this event involved perishable consumables which the PACK has no facilities to store and which are difficult to account for in detail, the Board has authorized the organizers to accept in-kind donations for food and other consumables. and to dispose of leftovers after the event as they see fit. The organizers may use PACK equipment (grill, tables, etc.) for the event and the PACK may promote the event.

Hot Dog Friday is not primarily intended as a fundraiser, but the Board recognizes that many people are uncomfortable eating food without making a cash donation, so the board has authorized the organizers to accept cash donations at the event with the understanding that all cash donations are deposited in the PACK account and all cash donations are completely voluntary.”

Melissa moves that we post it on the website. Anne seconds.



**Liz suggests we also put it in the kiosk. Emma will do this and Jeff will put it on the website.**

## **9. General Meeting date.**

We discuss if we need one before the summer is over or if we should wait until October.

Marissa thinks we need to have one in August because we have so much to discuss (Survey, ADA, Fall Festival, etc)

We decided to move this topic to the end of the meeting and see if there is actually enough that needs to be discussed with our membership before Oct.

We return to this after everything else has been discussed.

Jeff says if we have a general meeting before Oct. all interim officers will be up for ratification and they will still have election for open positions in Oct.

The Board says that would be ok.

Bylaws say we don't have to have a general meeting until Oct.

Melissa says she thinks we should have one at the end of summer. We discuss the ratification of the interim members and what needs to happen.

We vote on General meeting to be Tuesday August 6th. 7pm-9p. at Sherwood Meeting room.

The following vernal meeting will be Oct 16th 7-9 at Martha Washington

## **10. Project list for Phil**

He wants a general project list. We don't have to list priorities.

Melissa shows us what she came up with.

- Drainage improvements
- Canine drinking fountain in the south end (larger side)
- Irrigation system through entire park
- Hardscape entry ways
- Five (5) additional trees through the park; inside and outside.
- Portable restroom throughout the entire year
- Wading pool
- Rain garden outside the north end (smaller side)
- Decorative plantings around the three entry gates
- Dog playground/equipment
- Seating around the trees on the southeast side

-Hardscape around the double benches on the southwest side.

We go over the list to approve and we add shade in the north end to the project list. Melissa explains that a park user builds these and he wants to do it for us. Melissa will contact him for price and ideas. She will also first contact Phil to get approved structure list so that we can discuss ideas with park users at the general meeting.

We discuss that we will have to put a path to a new shade structure for ADA compliance. The County explained that we could not have a new entrance closer to where the proposed site of the new shade structure is because they are unable to grade that area for new ADA parking spaces.

Liz asked if we can time this path project together with the drainage project. Melissa explains that it takes a long time for the structure to be approved and Jeff explains we probably will not have the money by the time the work on the drainage.

We can discuss this more. We decide we need more info. We still have to wait to see if the drainage solution works before we make any changes to the north end (smaller side)

Liz asks about the proposed pool on the parkitect drawing. Melissa describes it as a cement pool/beach. The structure has a drain and a plug. It is also a slow drain. If you forget to pull the plug it will slowly drain.

The Board approves the list.

**Melissa will forward this list to Phil with some pictures.**

## **11. Founder's Tree**

We discuss that the dogwood Founder's Tree is dead again on the westside of park. Jeff says we can now establish that dogwood trees do not do well at the park. We agree. We discuss that the cherry trees seem to be doing nicely. We discuss if we want to replace the dead dogwood tree and how it needs to be on the native plant list. We also talk about how the catalpa tree is doing nicely, but that the caterpillars that have a symbiotic relationship might cause more poop and that the leaves will look ugly for part of the year. We discuss this more and Melissa moves that we buy a new Founder's Tree and that the type of tree that we buy can be discussed at the general meeting. Liz seconds.

Anne says Hybla Valley Nursery has given us good prices on trees in the past because we are a nonprofit. She suggests we consult them when shopping for trees.

We also discuss that one of the two trees inside the park looks very sick (the left one). Jeff said he took a sample of the tree to Hollywood and Vines. The person working there wanted to know if we had applied any chemicals to the tree and Jeff said no. Jeff asked if the damage

could be the result of dog pee and the employee said it could very well be because of the dog pee.

We talk about how the proposed benches around the trees will help with the issue because it will block the dogs from peeing on the trees.

In the meantime, the employee suggested dumping five pounds of lime around the trees to alleviate the acidity. We discuss how lime can burn dogs' noses. Marissa asks if we can put a bag around the tree as it matures.

Liz says that we can consult with an arborist for free. They could give us suggestions on how to keep the trees healthy. Anne says that the Park Authority probably has an arborist. Marissa says that a county arborists would know the rules better too.

More discussion ensues on the topic of trees.

Melissa recommends we put a bag around it for now, but Jeff says mold will grow.

**Melissa will ask Erin (the invasion species expert) if she is also an arborist or if she can suggest one.**

## **12. Index number on the fences**

A park user suggests that we put index numbers on the fence posts so that it would be easier to locate dog poop. Melissa motions that we do this. Anne and Megan second. We all agree.

**Melissa will ask Phil to make the signs.**

## **13. Westgrove Jars**

Anne proposed Westgrove Jars as a fundraising idea. She says we can put a logo sticker on the jar and give them to PACK members at events (Caretaker Saturdays, Fall Fest, etc). Any member of the Pack that decides to take one can put it in a convenient area of their home and collect spare change. When the jar is full they can return it to a board member and the board can deposit it into the PACK's account.

Anne says she will donate jars to the PACK to hand out. She will also number them so we can keep track of them.

**Anne will buy jars. Liz will come up with a sticker and a band for the outside of the jar. The pack will help hand them out.**

## **14. Fall Fest Date and Organization/Caretaker Saturdays**

We discuss previous dates of the Fall Festival. Last year was the third week of Sept. The year before that was Oct and the year before that it was in Nov.

We discuss why November was chosen one year and it was because it was cooler and more people could attend. Because the grass was no longer green, we bumped the next year to Oct.

Last year we chose September because in previous years vendors were already committed to other October Halloween/Fall events. We thought holding it in September would make more vendors available, but we noticed that it didn't make much of a difference.

We decided not to hold the Fall Festival on Oct 12th since it is a holiday weekend. We ultimately decided on Oct 5th.

We discuss how signing successful signing-up volunteers was in previous years. We did it online and sent it out two weeks before the event.

Marissa suggests it would be best to start talking about it at Caretaker Saturdays when we are already discussing the upcoming elections with curious park users. She says we don't need to sign up anybody on the spot, but it would be good to get the word out asap for different positions that we need filled for the Fest. During this time we can take names and numbers for potential volunteers. She suggests that we also put something in the kiosk.

We decided we will promote the Fall Fest Date (Oct 5th) asap. Marissa suggests that she would start getting the vendor letters together now and she would like to send them out by late August.

**Melissa said she will tweak the existing letter and send it out now to vendors. She will also get together a list of what we need volunteers for. Marissa will help.**

Caretaker Saturday has been a success. Marissa would like to stick with the third of each month until the weather is too cold.

Upcoming Caretaker Saturday Dates:

-July 20th (Marissa will not be here)

-August 24th.

-Sept 21st. (Emma won't be there.)

-Oct - We will play this by ear. If we think it is still necessary after Oct 5th Fall Festival we can do it.

Melissa suggest that we can also conceptually link this to a fall clean-up. Marissa says we should do a Fall Clean-up Sept 21st in prep for the Fall Fest. We agree.

Marissa asks if we have a fiscal goal for the Fall Fest. We decided we don't have an answer right now. Is that something we should keep in mind? Yes, but at this point we won't worry about it, but Jeff will think this through.

Marissa suggests that we continue to talk about the projects in conjunction with Fall Fest promotion at Caretaker Saturdays. She says we can talk about the price of future projects and how much money we have left to raise. People want to know what their money is going too and they loved seeing the Park's future plans at Caretaker Saturday.

**Jeff will laminate and mount it to a piece of poster board.**

### **15. Summer Time Pool**

We decided that when we see pools we will dump and remove them as they appear. We need to put up a sign to inform park users as to why we are removing the pools. We can also post this on facebook, the website and the kiosk. Signage is really all we can do.

**Jeff will draft language and sign for this.**

### **16. Misc.**

FYI—Last Hot Dog Friday that Jeff and Melissa are hosting will be Aug 23rd.

Liz asks if we can get a car counter to show how busy the park is at different times. Also, she asks about a speed limit sign too. They didn't put the speed limit signs back up after they painted.

Anne suggests asking about doing edge painting to show where the ditches are.

**Melissa will ask about the above.**

### **Next Board meeting:**

Next board meeting is Aug 7th at 6pm

Melissa motions to adjourn. Marissa seconds.

Meeting Ended at 8:10.