

Westgrove Pack General Meeting Minutes 10/10/2020

Meeting Started at: 4:00PM

AGENDA

1. Chair's Greeting

2. Treasurer's Report

Jeff, our treasurer, presented the financials as of the third quarter. We brought in \$10,050.48 and spent \$8,201. We are in the plus for the third quarter. We are under budget in all categories. Cash on hand right now is \$8,520.46. It sounds like a lot, but we have a lot of expenses starting in the spring. We are under budget.

Johnathan asked how long the money would last and Jeff answered that it would last until March or April. It isn't a disaster because we have sustaining caretakers, but we still need to raise more money.

3. Drainage -

Melissa has contacted Phil from the county a couple of times. She is waiting to hear back. In our last face to face meeting with the county, they had agreed to fix it. If she hears back and they have changed their minds about fixing it we will probably have to do it ourselves. Her most recent answer from them is that they were out of the office until the 13th. We will keep trying—it takes a little while because we aren't a priority. We are communicating though!!

When we hear back we will let the park users know. Even if they fix the drainage we will still have to set up a work day to dig a french drain and place the river rocks around the water fixture like we did in the south end. A park users asked about the price of the rocks. For the south end they cost about \$500, but we have some left over.

The county has been promising to replace the fixture for a few years. And it hasn't happened. Eventually we will buy a water fixture with a drinking fountain.

If the county fixes it we don't have to pay money.

4. Completed Projects -

a. We are proud! We completed the south end water fixture. That took a few years to raise the money, but it is finally done! Melissa thanks the working group that came and built the trench for the french drain and placed the river rocks around it.

b. Numbered Signs -

We also attached number and letter signs on the fence posts to help locate poop. They have made it easier for users to find their dogs poop. They are also helpful to point out where someone's dog has pooped if they didn't see it happen. We think they have helped.

We talk more about poop pick-up because it is a perennial problem. Melissa urges park users to pick up their dogs poop or at least one poop that they see. If they didn't see their dog poop, please pick up another dog's poop.

d. Agility equipment -

With private and raised funds we were able to purchase the castle and the jump. We hope that the dogs are enjoying it as much as we had fun planning it. We appreciate everyone's time and donations for the project!

4. Ongoing Projects -

a. Invasive Species Control -

It is our plan to clean up the invasive species along the east end fence. We haven't gotten very far because Covid came and prevented our project managers from completing their training and organizing group clean-up days. Once the county gives us the go ahead to get trained and organized we will send out a letter to the park users. It is a free project, but we will need volunteers.

b. Tree Replacement -

We have had two trees at the park die. One is the river birch outside the north end fence and the other is one of the trees inside the round bench in the south end. We have to dig them up and have new trees planted. We don't have an anticipated start date yet, but we will send an email when we do. We have an eagle scout that needs a project so it is something he might work on.

Any questions? No questions were asked.

5. Proposed Projects - We will need some input on this.

Entry Improvements -

We would like to hard surface our other middle and north end entrances like we did our south end entrance. We now have a project manager for that. We will be getting information about the cost. We are hoping to raise the money by offering park users the option to buy memorial bricks.

a. Cement Pond Project -

In the north end, we would like to build a concrete wading area for the dogs. It would be able to drain and if some forgot to drain it, it would slowly drain by itself. The sun will bleach it clean. We wanted this as an alternative to the kiddie, plastic wading pools because they were leaving a mess and causing very dirty water that would make the dogs sick. We also have a project manager for this and we are looking into the cost.

b. North end shade structure -

We would like to put in a shade structure in the north end. The county would prefer that it be wooden and easy to remove if for some reason we couldn't maintain it or the board ceased to exist.

c. Irrigation system in park -

It would be lovely to keep the grass happy and healthy. This is a project that is farther down the line.

Melissa asks if there are any other projects that the users would like to see done. No one suggests anything but Nancy asks about the cost of the irrigation system. We have no estimates on any of the upcoming projects yet.

We know that an irrigation system would be between \$15,000-\$20,000. There are a couple of parks in Alexandria that have them and our Vice-Chair, Anne knows the company that does them. They are willing to give us a ballpark estimate.

Melissa reminds the users that if there are any suggestions or questions they can always write to us at westgrovepack@gmail.com

6. Other Business -

Fall Fundraising Drive

This is how we are raising money this year because we can't have our annual Fall Festival. It is usually very easy to raise money by having a Fall Festival because we have vendors, raffles and a chili cook-off. Covid makes that impossible this year. We have info on our website about the Fall Fundraiser we have a big sign with a thermometer in the park educating users on it. The thermometer shows our fundraising progress. We need \$12,000 to grass and other maintenance next year. We chose to try to raise \$15,000 so we could have a little bit of a cushion. The county does not pay for us to keep the park green or for any of the maintenance. We accept check, Venmo, PayPal and cash. We will honestly take the money in any form we can get it.

You can go to the website or use the QR codes on our banners to donate.

Shelly a park user asked if we have thought about making t-shirts. Melissa explains that we have, but the big issue is having the right inventory. We would probably have to do a pre-order. The last time we sold t-shirts there wasn't much money in it. If the user pays \$20 for a t-shirt the park only gets \$2 of it. It is not worth it. We've thought about online auction and all kinds of things. In the end, the easiest way to raise money is just to ask for it. In the future, we can get back to the Fall Festival!

Mike asked if there is anything that prevents the pack from seeking any sponsorship from landscaping places because of our FCPS relationship.

They are ok with advertising, but they have to approve it. Burke and Herbert wants to put a banner in our park. It is very slow process.

We have talked about it and planned it. We even have a banner designed. However, we need a project manager that won't mind the slow process. County approval is the biggest hurdle.

They don't have any problem with donations in kind—i.e seed from Campbell in Ferrara. etc.

We get a little over \$100 a year in Amazon smiles donations.

7. Recognition of Outgoing members -

Our only outgoing member is Melissa who will not run for chair.

8. Acknowledgement of Board Members without expiring terms -

Anne Street is our Vice Chair, Megan and Liz are at-large members. Melissa is not running for Chair again.

Announcement of Candidates -

- a. Chair - Jonathan Amaya
- b. Secretary - Emma McAlary
- c. Treasurer - Jeff Pandin
- d. Operations - Hanna Beard
- e. At-Large - Mike Bober

Melissa asks if we have any additional candidates, but no one steps forward. However, Mike Bober asks if it would be better/easier for him to do step into the Membership and Fundraising roles and we all say "yes!" We now need one more at-large member. They don't have specific responsibilities, but help make decisions and support other members duties.

Since the board is not contested we ratify the new current board unanimously.

Melissa says goodbye and that it was a pleasure to work for and with all of us. She will be around to support the current board.

Many good words from the crowd were said about her Chairmanship.

She passes the gavel to the new chair, Jonathan. Claps all around.

New chair remarks-

He thanks everyone for the opportunity and privilege. He is looking forward to it and will take help and tips from all of us !

Claps all around.

Adjournment at 4:29pm