

## **Westgrove P.A.C.K Board Meeting – Weds., 10/23/ 2024 7pm.**

Meeting called to order at 7:06pm

In attendance: Shawn Bloom, Steve Zielenski, Liz Yap, Jennifer French, Jeff Pandin, Rich Abelson

### **Semi-Annual (Fall) Public Board Meeting Recap– Steve Zielenski**

A quick recap the annual pack meeting:

- The meeting with the county update- was informative and well-attended by Members and users of the park
- Lots of new projects in the works, many that require focused fundraising and application to the County for a Mastenbrook grant (50/50 sharing of capital improvement costs)
- Interested/active constituents that share the P.A.C.K's vision and goals

### **Financials and Membership Software** - Jeff Pandin

The Board discussed the pack's financial situation. Currently, the pack has a total of \$24,306.19 in bank accounts.

Discussed the need for member approval for expenditures above 10% of their annual revenue (in light of several capital projects contemplated for 2025).

Discussed the water abatement project in the north end of the park, with Jeff expressing a desire to get a solid quote before proceeding from both the County and independent contractor(s). The Board also discussed capabilities of membership software. Through September 30, Jeff reported that we have 46 sustaining caretakers (have donated \$120+ so far this year or are on an automated donation plan that will reach \$120 by the end of the year) and 39 regular caretakers (have paid dues for 2024).

Lastly, discussed the need for a set key performance indicator for membership, fundraising and events.

### **County Meeting Outcomes**

The Board discussed the outcomes of a recent county meeting, where attendees were supportive of the current strategy. They agreed to seek community feedback once a final solution is presented. In summary:

- A draft MOU was provided by the county that is more in line with P.A.C.K expectations based on the conference call with the County.
- County seems to want to take on the water abatement project using P.A.C.K funds.
- Some redlining for clarification is required, particularly around turf mix allowances (knotweed) and sources of funding as a prerequisite for the ADA engineered wood fiber project.

- Draft redline was developed by Zielenski/Bloom/Pandin for Board review and approval to send back to County for finalization. A completed proposal needs to be sent to the county for review and the pack needs to get the final MOU from the county.

### **Sponsorship, Fundraising, and Project Planning**

The Board discussed sponsorship and fundraising strategies for the upcoming year, with Liz Yap planning to discuss renewal with Karen (Pampered Pet) and send a survey about the Hot Dog Friday event (feedback, improvement ideas, and future interest).

The Board considered having a sponsor banner and the idea of committees to manage different aspects of the organization.

New Bench for River Birch Surround. Agreed to coordinate the purchase and installation of a bench and discussed the possibility of acquiring trees from the county's tree removal project.

Discussed applying for the Mastenbrook grant and proposed a seasonal fundraising campaign, with a focus on face-to-face interactions to build awareness of the park's operating model and to encourage membership. Agreed to continue working on these ideas and emphasized the need to spend their treasury on projects.

### **Operations:** Shawn

Shawn and Jeff discussed potential strategies for managing water runoff at the north end of the park. Possible solutions include a deep trench or a large, shallow drain. They weighed the costs and challenges of each option, with the shallow drain being a more feasible and less costly solution.

An agreement was made to progress with the water project and to present a plan to the county (or use the county-provided "draft verbal plan" for review and approval within 30 days. The board also decided to work with FCPA leadership to help expedite the process and planned to meet with the County to discuss the project's details and get an estimated bid.

Pool noodles at the entrance gates need to be replaced. Looking into more long-term solutions. Replaced in early November with PVC "fillers".

### **Park Promotion & Board Transition**

The Board discussed the framing of December communications around an "annual season of giving" and the need for a new brochure or pamphlet to promote the park.

A discussion on having a seasonal calendar of events was brought up. An idea of making an "End of the year and Where are we going in 2025" email/social media outreach to help park goers understand what Westgrove Pack does for the park, 2024 accomplishments and a preview of 2025 projects was also discussed.

They also considered Bill Mould joining the board, with Liz Yap expressing her support. The Board agreed to handle the transition of Yvonne's seat to Bill through an email process and discussed the need for updated photos and bios for the board members on the website.

### **North End and Other Improvements:**

Along with the water abatement project the board discussed the county's proposal on improvements to the north end of the park. The county wants to make the north end ADA-compliant with the addition of pavers and other hard surfaces. One such material would be engineered wood fiber as a material in lieu of gravel at other Fairfax County dog parks. There was also a discussion on the purchase of a new park bench.

The funding for the new park bench would potentially come from P.A.C.K funds on deposit with the park foundation paperwork that needs to be processed – Jeff to reach out in Mid-November to FCPA.

Liz inquired about email notifications for new mailing list members, and Jeff explained the current process.

### **Meeting Recap**

The Board discussed the outcomes of a recent county meeting, their financial situation, and potential strategies for managing water runoff at a site. They also considered sponsorship and fundraising strategies, the need for a more comprehensive and detailed approach to their project, and the possibility of a virtual general meeting. Lastly, they discussed the county's proposal for the engineered wood fiber project, the need for a new brochure or pamphlet, and the transition of Yvonne's seat to Bill Mould.

### **Next Steps:**

- Steve to send an e-mail to the county regarding the MO U status and the next steps
- Shawn to obtain a firm bid for the water abatement project and share it with the board
- Jeff to initiate the process for ordering the bench through the Park foundation
- Liz to contact Yvonne and Bill regarding Yvonne's resignation and bills joining of the board
- Steve to draft an end-of-the-year communication for review, highlighting accomplishments and future plans for the park.
- Jennifer and Rich to send their BIOS and photographs to Liz for the website
- Liz to send out a hot dog Friday survey to gather feedback from previous sponsors.
- Jeff to provide Steve with current membership statistics on members sustaining caretakers

Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm

Next BOARD Meeting (Wednesday) 11/20/2025