

Friends of Christopher Columbus Park
Monthly minutes
August 11, 2015
The Mariner House
North Sq.
Boston, MA

The meeting was convened by Joanne Hayes-Rines at 6:30pm and attended by 20 members new members introduced themselves

Minutes of the July 2015 meeting were distributed for review by attendees.

Membership committee

Meredith Piscitelli reported there were 227 renewing members and 49 new members, 13 businesses applied for membership as well as the North End Girl Scout Daisy Troop have joined.

Treasurer report

Audrey Tortolani reported the July expenses were, among other things, insurance, tax preparation and payments for the Park Ranger. July revenues included \$12,546 in membership dues and overall bank balance at \$317,000

The Annual Harbor Cruise had a great turnout with approximately 90 attendees. The 50/50 raffle netted \$500, with an overall event net of \$1750. She commented that many attendees who had not previously attended FOCCP events and that the cruise may have had broad appeal.

Horticulture committee

Robyn Reed reported that the rose bushes are doing very well and the irrigation has been working effectively. Volunteers have been working in the Crescent garden and the perennials are being trimmed regularly.

They have also been trimming the wisteria. She said that there have been new volunteers in response to her request/ appeal. Again she mentioned that all volunteers are welcome and, of course, dress is casual. Closed toe shoes are required.

She and other Horticulture volunteers are planning an August 19 trip to a rose vendor in Acushnet to purchase new rose plants, including one that will be planted in memory of Mary Ann Esparo. She said that extra help for planting that evening would be appreciated.

Fund raising report

Patricia Sabbey reports that the revenues from the Annual Harbor Cruise will be used for the expenses for the Columbus Day event on 10/12/2015. That event will run from noon to 4pm.

Ann Babbitt is chairing that event and looking for volunteers to staff the event. A sign up sheet was distributed for volunteers.

Joanne Hayes-Rines encouraged attendees volunteers to sign up for the event which is always a great celebration for families, children and the membership.

Patricia further reported that FOCCP is hoping to resurrect the Urban Oasis Project (improvements to the circular garden and trees on the Marriott side of park promenade). She is planning a Fall meetings with the Parks Dept. She will mention the sink holes on promenade as well as the children's fountain which is not working at present.

Internet Communication report

Christina Sperry reports 3 July emails to membership - 2 for the Annual Harbor Cruise and the FOCCP monthly news letter. Emails were opened at the normal rate. The FOCCP website had the highest visits at 2,908 July 2015. She reports continuing increases over the months.

Most website visits are original visits and some from City of Boston link.

Infrastructure committee

Ford Cavallari reports that a Committee meeting will be held in September. Stay tuned for notice.

The Committee continues to work persistently on the Trellis Light Project. They are also working diligently to engage the appropriate folks at City Hall on other outstanding park maintenance projects.

Wisteria trimming on the top of the trellis is being done in preparation for the next phase of the Light Project in October. One of the goals of the Trellis Light Project is to get one trellis section, with white lights and colored lights with dimmers, controllers etc., completed. Work is slow moving due to electrician vacations and other demands. There are some questions about the dimmers.

They may need more adjustment, or possibly be replaced. Fortunately, Ford reports they are not too expensive. Another goal is to have standard illumination totally ready for our annual Trellis Lighting Event in November

As a future consideration, he also commented that FOCCP will likely need to develop a new wisteria pruning strategy to coordinate with the permanent trellis lights.

Finally, he reported that Chris Cook, Parks Commissioner, may want discuss the possibility of security cameras on the trellis, at some point in the future.

President's report

Joanne Hayes-Rines mentioned that the Annual "Ahts in the Park " will not be held in Christopher Columbus Park. It will be held in City Hall instead.

Annual Harbor Cruise --- Joanne congratulated the Event chairs - Camille Hogan and Stephanie Walker for their efforts in planning a very successful event! The 50/50 raffle earned \$500 and the winner gave back his winnings as another donation to FOCCP!! Many attendees commented on the event, the boat itself, the camaraderie and a good time despite the stormy skies

Meredith Piscitelli suggested that next year, additional funds be allocated for the food service.

Audrey Tortolani suggested that more stationary locations vs passed hors d'oeuvres could be considered because two decks were challenging for passed hors d'oeuvres.

Joanne reminded attendees that the last Sunday Movie in the Park will be on August 16, unless Joe Bono decides on an additional date to show "Toy Story" which had been earlier rained out.

The FOCCP payment for the Park Ranger totaled \$20,000 and continues thru September 2015. Problems in the Rose Garden have diminished since the Ranger has been daily locking the Garden.

The Park Ranger is now directing dog owners to the new dog park in the "gassy flights", where a Ranger is also locking that park at night. That effort is already reducing vandalism. RUFF is also hoping to get improved lighting and water

Chris Cook, Park Commissioner has accepted an invitation to next month's/ September meeting.

2015 FOCCP events reminder

Columbus Day Event on 10/12.

Annual FOCCP Gala 11/6 at the Boston Harbor Hotel

Annual Trellis Lighting 11/23

Other Park Events

NEWRA Annual Summer Party 8/19

Boston Harbor Labor Day Fireworks - the "dueling barges" 9/5

NEMPAC -- Swing Dancing in the Park 8/25

Other

Meredith Piscitelli suggests FOCCP may want to explore a portable, simple sound system for FOCCP events in the Park. Joanne will explore possibilities.

Joanne Hayes-Rines made a motion to accept the July 2015 meeting minutes with correction of "typos". Susanne Lavoie Lagace seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Adjourned at 7:30

Liz Greene, Clerk, Pro Tem