

Friends of Christopher Columbus Park
Monthly Meeting Minutes – 8/14/12
Mariners House, Boston, MA

Meeting chaired by Joanne Hayes-Rines called to order at 6:36 pm. 17 people in attendance.

Introductions: New and existing members introduced themselves.

I. Committee Reports

Horticulture Report by Mary Ann Esparo

The committee is working hard and as a result, the rose garden is looking spectacular. The group will now focus on the crescent area. Due to the issues with the homeless people in the rose garden, this area is now locked on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. There has been a problem getting the area unlocked on Monday morning. Mary Ann is working on resolving this issue. We learned all maintenance people have keys and there is a key in the shed for us to unlock the gate if necessary.

The large leaf plants commonly known as “elephant ears” and seen along the walkway from the statue to Richmond Street look great and have received many accolades. Thanks to the City of Boston Parks Department for taking the chance on this tropical plant called Taro. There was concern these plants would not do well in Park but, as we can all see, they are thriving!

The horticulture group meets on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 pm and Sunday mornings at 9:30 am for one hour.

Membership Report by Beverly Knight

2012 Membership numbers were reported:

\$8515.00	Donations from memberships
204:	Paid members
69:	New members
61:	Members who paid via Pay Pal
557:	Number of contacts who receive our newsletter
192:	“Friends” on Face Book

There will be a membership table at the Picnic in the Park. All ideas to gain new members are welcome and encouraged. A suggestion was made to contact a dog owners group called “Ruff”. Beverly to follow up.

Website and Internet Communications Report by Christina Sperry

The August newsletter was sent to 557 people. 28.4% opened the email and there were 3.8% bounce backs. These are all average numbers.

There were weekly reminders sent out about the Sunday night movies. Opened and bounce back percentages were similar to the monthly newsletter.

The FOCCP Website continues to be a work-in-progress; a redesign is in process. Thanks to Meghan Denenberg for all of her assistance!

If anybody has questions or comments about the website, the newsletter, social media or any other Internet issue, please let Christina know. Suggestions and new pictures are always welcome and can be sent to info@foccp.org.

Meghan let the group know The Golden Goose recently gave her \$500.00 which represents revenue from the cards sold at the counter.

Treasurer's Report by Joanne Hayes-Rines

As of 7/31/12, YTD account balances were reported.

Expenses		Revenue	
Blossom Fund	\$ 92.70	Donations	\$ 220.00
CC Day 2011	\$ 284.05	Note Cards	\$ 103.00
Comm of Mass	\$ 70.00	Auction	\$ 230.00
Horticulture	\$ 4,150.21	Membership	\$ 10,846.00
June 30th	\$ 2,480.45	Memb Online	\$ 1,690.00
Membership	\$ 1,673.02	Cruise	\$ 3,645.00
Sculpture Project	\$ 2,650.00	Raffle	\$ 316.00
Tax Prep	\$ 2,437.00		
Tot Lot	\$ 926.84		
Trellis	\$ 5,427.50		
General	\$ 596.97		
Constant Contact	\$ 259.39		
Sunset Cruise	\$ 2,120.00		
Movie Night	\$ 30.79		
Insurance	\$ 691.00		
Casino Night	\$ 1,000.00		
Savings Account	\$ <u>350.00</u>		
TOTAL	\$25,239.92	TOTAL	\$ 17,050.00

Bank Balances as of 7/31/12

Checking	\$ 37,619.91
Savings	\$ 51,927.14
CD	\$ 36,993.35
Money Market	<u>\$102,932.65</u>
TOTAL	\$229,473.05

We are transitioning from having a majority of our funds raised at the annual Gala to obtaining revenue generated from a combination of events such as Casino Night and through sponsorships. Sponsors will be recognized at multiple events throughout the year. The new sponsorship program is in the final stages of development and will be rolled out next month. One person will be assigned to each potential sponsor. If you have suggestions on who should be contacted to be a sponsor, let Joanne know.

Infrastructure Report

Cole Landers was not present but two of his committee members, Jim Salini and Pam Giroud, reported the following information. The annual review of Park took place at the end of July. The walk-through with the committee identified some safety issues, the need for barrel and bench replacements, un-even walkways and noted that some patching has worn out. Cole is documenting a full report.

II. Update on Old Business

Sunset Harbor Cruise

Joanne reported on behalf of Virginia. Although the funds raised from this event were smaller than last year, it was still a fantastic evening. The skies cleared just as the boat departed and it was a beautiful evening. The food, catered by Rock Island, was enjoyed by all. Anne and Joanne both received emails from people telling them how much they enjoyed this event. It was agreed this is a wonderful tradition we need to continue.

Thanks again to Boston Best Cruises for donating the boat! Details on revenue and expenses from this event are as follows:

Tickets Sales:	\$3645.00
Expenses:	\$1800.00 (food)
	\$ 320.00 (tips)
Revenue	\$1545.00

The projected revenue for this event was \$4,000 because last year's revenue was \$3,000. So, we have a budget shortfall of \$2475. We hope to make this revenue up in sponsorships, membership and the Casino Night fundraiser.

Blossom Fund

Joanne is continuing to work hard to obtain this grant money. She is currently waiting to obtain information from the Parks Department before responding to the most recent request for additional information due on September 10th. Joanne reported she is getting great support from the city.

The sculpture, discussed for this location, is on hold for now.

Homeless in Park:

Joan reported 2 people in the tot-lot recently but there are many less people since the floodlights were installed. It's also been helpful to have kids playing in the park until 8:30 pm. Police are now walking and biking through the park. There was also a write up in the North End Regional Review about the homeless situation. Continue to call 911 if you see a homeless person in the park sleeping, drinking or doing something inappropriate.

Joanne is working on getting floodlights fixed the rose garden area.

III. Update on Upcoming Events

Old Fashioned Picnic in the Park: Sunday, August 19th, Noon to 4:00pm – no rain date

Jess Williams and Michele Brogan will chair the event. Joanne let us know the Aquarium will be donating a small pool. There will also be a caricaturist and NEMPAC will provide Arts and Crafts. Lemonade and cookies will be available. Additional volunteers are needed for this event. Contact Michele if you are available to assist.

Movie Night

Two movies were cancelled because of bad weather so Joe agreed to extend them until September 9th.

The movies left are:

Sunday, August 19 – The King's Speech

Sunday, August 26 – Galaxy Quest

Joanne is looking for someone to introduce the 19th and 26th movies. Mardie Hinkley and Ann Babbitt will introduce the August 19th movie.

Casino Night: Friday, November 16th

Joanne provided an update at this meeting. Kim Caverly is Chair of this event and Pamela Herring is the Silent Auction Chair. Volunteers are needed to get involved in the planning. A sign-up sheet was passed around at the meeting. You can also send an email to info@foccp.org if you are interested in helping out. Baskets will be put together for auction items along with a small number of "high profile" items which in the past have generated a good amount of revenue. Two nights stay in Los Vegas will be donated as an auction item by the owner of Casino Productions.

Event to be held at the Marriott Long Wharf; they will provide the room and food. The estimated ticket price is \$100.00 – final pricing to be determined in the near future. Heavy appetizers, desserts, an Emcee/DJ and a cash bar will be provided. The goal is to have approximately 200 people attend this event.

Columbus Day Event

Ann Babbitt will co-chair this event with Joanne Hayes-Rines

IV Other Updates

Urban Parks Conference

Joanne recently attended this “greater and greener” conference in NYC. It was the largest urban park conference ever. Many people attended including international representatives from Brussels, Australia, Mexico, Hong Kong and more. Joanne did a tour of playgrounds in NYC and concluded they really like sandboxes. NYC does lock up their tot-lots at night. Because many of the NYC parks are larger, they can offer a variety of activities such as golf. The imagination playground was also a highlight. Another focus was on making parks healthy by offering tai chi, yoga and exercise stations. Kathy Ray to look into the exercise stations as a possibility for the Christopher Columbus Park.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm