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Friends of Christopher Columbus Park
Monthly meeting
January 12, 2010
The Mariner House - North Square - Boston, MA

The meeting was convened at 6:35 by Joanne Hayes-Rines, President and attended by 20 members. Two staff representative from Segway on Commercial St. also attended.

Agenda
Past meeting minutes
President's remarks
Treasurer report
Horticulture report
Membership report
Gala follow-up report
Maintenance report

October 13, 2009 minutes
Minutes were read by the Clerk and accepted by the attendees

President's remarks
Joanne summarized the activities of the past year – including the gala, October 12 event, membership drive, trellis lighting and garden care. Thanked members and said that our growing membership allows us to continue to sponsor many activities to support the park. She is seeking input on 2010 goals from committee chairs, as well as the general membership.

She reports that the first bulletin board to arrive for the kiosk had to be returned as it was not meant to be free standing; replacement board should be arriving shortly. She outlined the next tasks:

- develop rules/guidelines for information allowed
- develop a standard format
- ensure that information is handicap accessible for viewing

Anyone interesting in helping Joanne with these tasks, please contact her.

In reviewing the 2010 calendar, she expects a Tot Lot clean-up in May; a mothers/children planting activity in June; an, as yet to be planned summer activity; a Columbus Day event; a gala and trellis lighting in November.

She announced that next week, she and some board members will be attending a signage meeting to be held by Toni Pollak at City Hall along with representatives of the Harbor Alliance and the BRA

Treasurer's report.

Virginia Kimball reported no year end report as yet since she is still awaiting all of the income and expenses related to the 2009 gala. Expects a full report at the February meeting. She remarked that the 2009 auction income was close to the numbers for years past and ticket sales were less due to the smaller venue.

Horticulture report.

Maryann Esparro reported a successful 2009 season. There were 9 volunteers working in the gardens which represents a 50% increase from the prior year. The volunteers work twice a week and she is hoping for a couple more volunteers this season. The work is ongoing for 6 months of the year. She anticipates needing more new plants for the crescent garden and is exploring using organic fertilizer this year. At the suggestion of Meghan Denenberg, she is exploring the possibility of a mothers/children planting day/activity. More to come on this later.

MaryAnn's wish list for 2010:

- plantings for the kiosk,
- replacing sand with blocks in the Rose garden and/or
- more sand for the Rose garden walkway.

She also had a wish list "plus":

○ a partial canopy in the playground as mothers report it is very hot during the midday; and

○ a children's planting workshop (potentially seeking resources from the Children's Museum and advice from FOCCP member, Joan Murphy)

MaryAnn also remarked that she is noticing more push back from park personnel; seeking FOCCP to pick up more costs as the city resources decrease.

She said that work will begin on limited basis in April; Wednesday evenings at 6 and Sunday mornings at 9:30.

Membership report

Meghan Denenberg outlined her goals for 2010:

- increase her committee by 3 to 5 members
- hold the membership drive in April/May
- update the email contact list
- create a Membership "How to" manual
- have a table at Park events
- purchase a tablecloth/banner with FOCCP logo
- teach the team about software programs (website – Homestead; and email – constant contact – newsletters)
- grow the mothers/family membership
- identify other sub-groups

Gala report (Ann Devlin-Tagliaferro unavailable tonight)

Joanne reported in Ann's absence. Return to the Marriott was initially difficult after our successful event at the intercontinental Hotel last year. But, the logistics of using both the Palm Room and the Ballroom worked out much better than expected. The flow of the event worked well; the cellist at registration was appreciated; appetizers/hors d'oeuvres in the Palm could have been more accessible; more bar stations and experienced bar tenders to avoid long lines for cocktails; as in years past, there were complaints that the band was too loud making conversation difficult; need more thinking about the band for the next gala – size, volume and music selection and timing of breaks; although the food was good, it lacked variety; desserts were expensive and inadequate.

Suggestions: welcome attendees and announce the agenda/order (auction closing time and procedures etc.) of the evening when attendees arrive in the ballroom; changing the date of the event of the spring—March/April; integrating the date with the celebration of Earth Day; holding the event outside with a tent.

Maintenance report (Cole Landers unavailable tonight)

As Cole was unable to be here tonight, he sent his goals by email:

- reform the Maintenance committee with 2 to 3 volunteer members
- assess existing and projected Maintenance areas
- with Parks Dept. staff, determine the priority and ownership of remediation
- submit recommendations to the Board for self funded projects beyond Park's capabilities

Meeting adjourned at 8pm

Minutes prepared by Liz Greene, Clerk