

## **Minutes - Friends of James River Park Board Meeting Tuesday, May 11, 2020, 6:30- 8:00PM**

Attendees: Dean Brunson, Scott Dickens, Byron Chafin, Kevin Tobin, Scott Silvester, Greg Velzy, Jake Savage, Justin Doyle, Katherine Mitchell, Mary Kay Martin, David Broocke, Madge Bemiss

Absent: Mike Doerr, Brooks Whitten, Brittany Zamborsky, Cat Anthony

- 1) Mary Kay Martin, President, called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM, a quorum was present.
- 2) Minutes for the March 2021 meeting were moved by Kevin Tobin, seconded by Scott Dickens, and approved unanimously as submitted
- 3) Guests' introduction and presentation - Parker Agelasto - ED of the CRLC - discussion of the acquisition of the Dock Street parcel, ~ 5 acres
  - A. A request that the Friends' Group donate \$25,000 for the purchase option of the said property was made by Mr. Agelasto. Discussion ensued. The CRLC originally had a contract to purchase the property for \$6.0 million which was lowered to \$5.1 million after an appraisal was performed. Accordingly, they are looking to raise \$5.1 million to affect the purchase of the property which will then be given to the City of Richmond and ultimately to the JRPS hence our interest. They have raised \$3.65 million so far without reaching out to the major corporations in RVA. The deposit totals \$275,000 and they have \$200,000 and are looking for \$75,000. Our \$25,000 would be part of this deposit money. The question arose if the deal goes sideways, will our money be repaid? We are going to ask about this to make sure that is the case. Greg Velzy motioned and Scott Dickens seconded the motion as follows: The Friends' Group donate \$25,000 from the P&P Fund to CRLC to purchase the 5 acre Dock Street parcel with the contingency that if the purchase is not affected, that we get our money back or, if we are not able to get this, then we go forward anyway. This was passed unanimously with one abstention.
  - B. A discussion about putting the P&P Fund back on the website for fund raising purposes ensued and it was decided to make that part of the press release.
- 4) Presidents Report -
  - A. Discussion about the Treehouse Airbnb property at the Boulevard Bridge and whether we should issue a letter of support of the property owners with

respect to a neighborhood dispute was asked. It was decided to issue a letter saying how supportive the owners have been of the JRPS and the FoJRP.

- 5) Park/Volunteer Report - Bryce Wilk -
  - A. The new Superintendent position has been approved by the City of Richmond and the search will begin post haste.
  - B. Jim Coleman has been hired as the full time Operations Maintenance Technician for the JRPS and has started.
  - C. The NOAA/BWET grant application will focus on environmental literacy and has been resubmitted. Unfortunately, the RPSS will not have field trips the rest of this school year.
  - D. The JRPS will host children this summer at the pace of 2 pods per day (8 children/pod) who will come out of the Richmond local community centers.
  - E. River Rock is this weekend, and we will be asking for volunteers
  - F. The signs for 1) License Plates, 2) Text to Donate, and 3) the James River Park Book are up on the kiosks entering the park at various entrances.
  - G. The City budget process is in process and a number of projects are being discussed: 1) Northbank/Texas Beach tower renovation due to safety issues; 2) ADA access path for the Pumphouse; 3) Huguenot Flatwater access groundbreaking is close but needs an exemption from the Virginia Marine Recourses; and 4) Pony Pasture parking lot needs approval from the Army Corps. of Engineers.
  - H. The South of the James Farmers Market will be held on Thursdays at Forest Hill Park.
  
- 6) Treasurer's Report - Dean Brunson - Budget for 2021/2022 needs to be worked on by the Committees. Please get specific budget information to the Finance Committee as soon as possible.
  
- 7) Finance Committee - Jake Savage - No report
  
- 8) Membership Committee - Katherine Mitchell
  - A. Membership engagement strategy for the JRPS's 2.0 million users is underway.
  - B. Draper book is in its second printing and a marketing plan is being developed.
  
- 9) Leadership Development Committee - No Report

- 10) Communications Committee - Scott Dickens - tables and signage for the River Rock event have been developed and are ready for the event. Working on a map handout of the park with QR codes for users to use.
- 11) Communications Committee - Byron Chafin - River Rock event is being planned and staffing was discussed. Thanks to those who volunteered.
- 12) AC & MP - Mary Kay Martin - Information has been shared with City Council members about the nefarious things that go on in the park so they will know about this and be advocates for helping finance solutions.
- 13) Invasive Plant Task Force - Madge Bemiss
  - A. Goats will be in the park over the next few months since the owner of the goats needs a place for them to reside, which is a great thing for the Park!
  - B. 7 companies have volunteered in the park and used heavy equipment to eradicate invasive species. We are most thankful for their contributions to this important task.
- 14) New Business:
  - A. River Rock is expected to be a go on May 14-16 - see 4 & 11 above.
  - B. Diversity Park parking has been increased by 17 spaces to a total of 21 spaces
  - C. JROC - a grant of \$20,000 was made to put up safety signs throughout the park
- 14) Old business - None
- 15) - Executive Director search update - Jake Savage gave an update on the Executive Director search. There were 11 applications, and the Task Force is in the process of ranking them and interviewing them.
- 16) Cary Wing sent an email of resignation from the board on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

The next meeting will be on June 1, 2021 at 6:30PM.