



BUCKINGHAM POND CONSERVANCY BOARD MEETING

April 25, 2022

Virtual Meeting 7:00

Meeting Attendees: Gabi Sarhos, Anne Savage, Nancy Costello, Grace Bennett, Marsha Penrose, Laura Shaddak, Jeanette Carioto, Kate Carleo, Jenny O'Neil, Mark Schlessman, Ceiligh and Felton McLaughlin

Absentees: Jeanette Carioto, Kate Carleo, and Ted Kolankowski

1) **VOTE**: The Board meeting minutes from February 28 and March 28 were accepted.

2) The Treasurer's report was presented by Jenny who stated that funds are in the black now. She highlighted the \$4,700 in new memberships as being more than halfway to last year's total of \$8,000. There was a question about whether or not the \$25 fee could be used for dual membership, and Grace replied that it cannot. Total membership was determined to be in agreement with Jenny's figures. It was said that the item for **Jack's bench could be made inactive**. **VOTE**: The Treasurer's report was accepted.

3) Board Officer elections were conducted at the March board meeting.

4) Park Updates:

- a. Felton had shared an email from Jessica Morgan regarding work on a fallen tree, but he reported that there are now tree limbs protruding from the water. It's unknown whether or not the City plans to do something more and what equipment would have to be involved in their removal. Felton said that trees in the water are good for turtles but that there are plenty at the other end of the pond. Gabi said that **BPC should keep an eye on the situation**.

The path near the drinking fountain has been a problem. Intended as a short-term fix for the paths, a stone-dust remedy has become a long-term reality.

Also, it was reported that the missing ropes have not been replaced.

Gabi spoke about Marsha's concern regarding future pond dredging saying the matter has not been forgotten but that the stabilization project should take precedence. She also brought up an email complaint about the park and playground falling into disrepair. She referred the sender to the City and said that **BPC should try to find out if there's a plan for**

maintenance. Felton said that Jessica is responsive when she's emailed about problems that need attention. He wondered if a conservancy volunteer could take on the job of park advocate officially. Gabbi spoke about how difficult that would be to manage unless done by someone who walks around the pond daily. Mark remembered seeing someone at the pond regularly in the past, but Felton said that program has been discontinued. Last summer Gabi heard from a City employee who said he would be working at the pond, but that person was reassigned.

Gabi thought **a volunteer might be found to act much as Al Lawrence will be doing for the playground.** She said **this idea should be communicated to Jessica, and then a decision can be made about sending a notice to the membership.** Jenny mentioned that there are job openings for gardeners, etc. and that crews seem to be going from park to park. It was agreed that **communication would be more efficient if we could know their schedule.** Felton said that he will have a conversation with Jessica.

- b. Laura spoke about **the need for something to stabilize when the plantings go in.** She has not yet heard from Ted about a detail sheet, and Gabi asked her to follow up on this. Gabi thought **Felton might also move the process along, giving a heads up that we're getting ready to send details for comments on suitability.**
- c. **Elisabeth will need the following link for ARPA grant applications:**
<https://www.albanynygov/2004/American-Rescue-Plan-Funding>
It was thought that she probably has a copy of the Lake Management Plan.
- d. Gabi remarked that the play structure guard rail has not been repaired.
- e. **Grace will be working out the CSLAP summer schedule.** Gabi noted that she will be out June 30.
- f. **Gabi can print notices of the Sunday, May 15 Spring Cleanup, and they will need to be posted around the pond.** **Zone maps will be available at the main table, and Mark noted that the area designated for native planting should be eliminated** because this project will not be done. **He will act as a leader for garlic mustard removal, and Laura will be in charge of bittersweet.** She said a start would be made at zone 5 and work could move from there.

Grace has a list of the tools needed and she will keep on the request to Molly McGuire. Gabi emphasized the fact that **it must be determined whether the City's tools will be dropped off or will need picking up.** Volunteers can bring their own tools as well. Gabi said that **the call for volunteers should include the need for men to work from the shore on logs and debris removal.**

Mark said that plastic will not be needed for the removal of the invasive species since they won't be seeding. He said flower stalks are easy to see, and they should be pulled up or they'll just grow another flowering stalk.

- g. Felton said that he will attend a meeting next Wednesday of the newly reformed pesticide committee.

5. Membership - Grace said that some Board members have not paid for their membership yet.

6. Social Media - Ceiligh reported that she had sent some tree tag posts to Mark, and he said that he hasn't been able to look check them yet. Gabi said that Google search can be used to ensure that all included photos are in the public realm. Ceiligh suggested that pictures from around the pond be included, and Mark has some that he'll send to Gabi by drop-off. Ceiligh mentioned Instagram carousel swipes, and Gabi asked her to send a sample and write some content.

7. Website – Jenny said the check for the website down payment has been written and she will get it to Felton's mailbox.

Gabi and Nancy need to meet to finalize the "About Our Work" section of the website. Also, a Privacy Policy needs to be determined. Gabi questioned whether or not this should be checked by an attorney, and Felton said Kathleen Baynes had been helpful in the past.

8. Tree removal and path widening were described as an uphill battle, but Gabi said she will make contact about these matters. Last summer's missing fountain at the east end of the lake was discussed. Felton thought the approximately \$6,000 expense was not in the budget, but he will add it to the things he will be asking about. The possibility of BPC paying for this was seen as setting a precedent and Felton said it really should be a City project. Mark suggested that it could be a collaboration. The fountains were installed to push scum to the perimeter and aerate the pond, contributing to the health of the water.

Washington Park has fountains and it would help to know if those were ever broken and when. Elisabeth Draper's mom is part of that conservancy, and Gabi said she will write to Elisabeth about this.

9) Some kind of policy is needed on the subject of bench donations, but this is not being actively considered at this time. Grace brought up the fact that the lack of suitable places for new benches has been discussed at previous meetings.

10) Gabi closed the meeting by saying that Spring Cleanup will be on the website and that the next meetings will be on 5/23, 6/27, and 7/25.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20