

Friends of Rouge Park - Meeting Minutes – June 16, 2020

Attendance (12 attendees):

Sally Petrella-president, Paul Stark-secretary, Paula Trilety-membership chair, Garrett Dempsey-Trustee, Arthur Edge-vice president, Jim Westphal, Donna Hall, Dave Mann, Marlene White, Barb Matney, Bill Berk, Eileen Iannone
Board Absent: Tamara Dyson-Treasurer, Lorraine Harris-corresponding secretary, Roger Corpolongo-trustee, Sam Shopinski-trustee, Peggy Dankert-trustee

Minutes from May were read and accepted. (Paula moved, Garrett seconded).

Treasurer's Report for May 2020 (Tamara Dyson). Beginning Balance: \$14,945.50. Income: \$9.87 (Amazon Smile). Expenses: \$286.24 (Zoom subscription, Voss Signs). Ending Balance: \$14,669.13.

Membership Report for May 2020 (Paula Trilety): 3 new members and 11 renewals, one organization renewal. Total members: 128 and 20 Organizations.

President's Report

- Former board member, Ela Jiga passed away on June 13. She will be greatly missed.
- **Detroit Parks Coalition.** All parks in Detroit have suffered from a lack of maintenance. The Detroit Parks Coalition has written a letter to the city asking for better maintenance and signage.
- **ORV Issues.** The board met with Sgt. Williams last week. He vowed to do an enforcement operation, but he needs assistance from the community: photos, video, descriptions, times/dates, etc. People need to call 911 when ORV are seen in the park. The police will place "No Motorized Vehicles" at street entrances to the park, and FORP volunteers are placing "No Motorized Vehicles" signs at trailheads. Last week, Paul & Sally placed new bollards to block the Stone Bridge entrances from ORVs.
- **Park Upkeep, funding and volunteers.** Chris Romeo (park maintenance supervisor) told Sally that they will complete mowing the park and mow the Prairie Pathway. Paul updated the web page to make it easier to get information on the trails in Rouge Park. Paul & Sally chainsawed and cleared the Stone Bridge trail, and placed new trail blazes along the trail. Sally contacted Spectrum Signs and asked them to repair the deteriorating interpretive signs. Garrett reported on the tremendous improvements to the Scout Hollow trail that David Oakley and Phillip Crookshank have recently completed including new steps and gravel. Peggy Dankert has been working with the city get the Joy Rd. sidewalk maintained properly. Though the governor has allowed outdoor gatherings up to 100 people, we are still hesitant and unprepared to handle the restrictions we would need to enforce to keep the event safe.
- **DWSD Drainage Ditch Project.** Sally spoke with the Detroit Parks and Rec. Dept. and is planning to meet with them to discuss the project. The board agreed to write a letter to DWSD opposing the project in it's current design.

City Update (Juliana Fulton provided a report earlier by phone)

The new small picnic shelter and two benches have been constructed at the Sorensen Rec. Area. The governor has allowed outdoor pools to open, but the city said they did not have the funds to open Brennan Pools. Sally contacted the city and offered to help to request funding from other sources. The full cost of opening the pools from July 4 to Labor Day is \$407,000. A minimum of \$360,000 would be needed for a limited opening. A week later, the City changed their mind and said they'd open them by July 4. The Park and Rec. Dept. has designed a new park rules sign which Sally shared with the group. We requested boulders for the trailheads from the city to keep ORVs off the trails. The Designated Parking plan and bike lanes are going forward on Spinoza Dr. but no progress on Rouge Park Dr. or Outer Dr. yet.

Park programming. Volunteer work days will require mandating masks, social distancing, hand sanitizing and other restrictions we will need to enforce. We need to do extensive planning before that is feasible. We discussed doing virtual trail hikes. Arthur suggested organizing bike rides in the park. Paula suggested that Audubon be invited do sponsor a bird walk. Sally will contact them to suggest the idea.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.