

Friends of the James River Park  
Board Meeting  
Tuesday, April 3, 2012, 6 p.m.  
Visitors Center – Park Headquarters

Present: Betsy, PJ, Adrian (guest and Park user), Elaine, Stacy, Ralph, Phil R., Myrna, Warren, Maureen, Vicky, John, Gay, Mary Helen, Jamie (guest and Attorney for FoJRP), Larry, Phi D. Stacy (guest and RPD officer)

- I. Jamie Canup, Attorney (Kaufman & Canoles) - Discussed obligations of Board Members – three main duties include loyalty, care, and obedience (this goes for non-profit as well as for-profit entities). Duty of care means that Members discharge duties in a manner they believe to be in the best interests of the entity. Standards are to the best judgment of a prudent person vis-à-vis a reckless person; that Board Members come to meetings, and prepare to actively participate; that they make themselves familiar with what's going to be discussed, ask for information if needed, etc. FoJRP speaks through its Board. Boards can delegate duties as appropriate, but the group must act in concert, keep minutes and records, have a budget, follow by-laws and articles (by-laws are a roadmap for how things work), and protect property (e.g., funds) for the good of the organization. There is a duty to investigate if there are concerns. Next is loyalty which means Board Members serve their organization, and don't take advantage of items (e.g., information, etc.) for personal gain. FoJRP has a formal a COI (conflict of interest) document. If there is a COI, a Member must inform the Board before proceeding and, if need be, Members recuse themselves from discussions. FoJRP has 501c 3 status, and people who make gifts to FoJRP also get a charitable tax deduction; so the duty of loyalty matters. Finally, obedience means Board Members maintain a sense of the purpose of the entity – a meaning and a vision – and remain true to that purpose. Members keep the FoJRP compliant with state and federal laws. Specific to 501c3's – Board Members can't use this entity as a means to funnel monies to private individuals. That is, an individual cannot be identified to receive benefit from the Board. Actions are taken to benefit the Park. Liability for Board Members implies a doctrine of charitable immunity (strong in VA), so Board Members are protected statutorily from claims. FoJRP Board Members also have the overlay of a private insurance policy. As a public charity, there are additional limitations.
- II. Minutes of previous meeting – accepted from last meeting.
- III. Treasurer's Report – Betsy collected \$29.97 in coins for the Park; Additionally, \$71 was received at the Banff film festival; the liability policy came through and was paid. There is \$51,172 in the general account. We allocated \$150 for Constant Contact, (CC) but the bill is \$252, as we now have more than 500 members. Motion was made to increase budget for CC (unanimously approved). Additional items discussed were disbursement for a plaque on a sign at PP, and donations coming in for the memory of Louise Burke.
- IV. Committee Reports 5 minutes each
  - A. Communication/Publicity – Maureen spoke about the Conservation Easement link (from EnRichmond) on the FoJRP website, engineered by Gay and others. It was noted that WebBones (Stephanie and Susan) gives us 2 hours free per month and is very generous with their time. Maureen and Molly are meeting on April 25<sup>th</sup> with Dr. Merrifield regarding the need for a new hire (with Ralph's upcoming retirement). John Zeugner and Charles Price also will be present. Board believes two people (and administrator and a naturalist) will be needed to take on Ralph's responsibilities. The Memorial service for Louise Burke is April 28<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM, and further information will be put on FB and disseminated via CC. For upcoming events, we are out of t-shirts; Board approved motion to order 100 more FoJRP t-shirts.

B. Events - Richmond's Earth Day Festival is Saturday, April 21, 2012 from 12-7pm. For Earth Day we will need 2 Board Members for each of 3 shifts to set out and staff the FoJRP table, put out pamphlets, talk with people until about 4 or 5 PM. A sign-up sheet was circulated. There will be a ceremony for dedication of Retention Basin Park attended by the Mayor's office. Location info will be confirmed. We will discuss particulars of Dominion Riverrock, May 18-20, Brown's Island next meeting.

C. Finance/Fundraising – Regarding FoJRP License Plates, our DMV contact said the metal sheets have been ordered, but no delivery date for actual plates is available at this time.

D. Park Improvements/Projects – Larry noted that the Manchester Graffiti clean-up went well, and volunteers also spread mulch on Ancarrow's Landing trail. Regarding the Spring Riverside Drive clean up, this should occur in May (probably the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend, but possibly 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend), and not conflict with other Park-related events. FoJRP picnic date is June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Big JRAC cleanup is June 9<sup>th</sup>. Regarding Membership, Ben has the list, and a limited number of renewal letters (about 11) are pending.

## V. Old Business

A. River Hero – Maureen reported for Ben that voting for River Heroes has begun. Myrna, Vicky and Ben are FoJRP judges along with several previous winners. Winner will be announced in time for Earth Day.

B. Inspection of Conservation Easement was conducted and no issues emerged. Report was sent to Ben and Gay today. Chief issues included some cargo containers that need to be screened from view. There also is a request for a temporary skateboard Park with ramps, jumps, pipes, etc. at the 22nd St. parking lot. The Easement was noted to support muscle-power activities. Questions were raised as to whether the bicycle training skills project fits with the parameters of the easement (i.e., urban bicycle skills – why teach these in a Natural park setting?). Does the bike park stretch the covenants of the easement? Also, the proviso for added parking – supported by FoJRP in a letter sent to the Mayor's Office and by Ralph – and as a condition for the Bike Skills project, was not met. A discussion regarding parking problems ensued. The Dominion lot at the base of the ramp was noted not to be heavily used and is closed on weekends (could this be managed by a concessionaire?). Regarding the 22<sup>nd</sup> street lot, if the police will close the lot, then Ralph will open the lot. It was noted that the Bike Skills Park has been funded and is being constructed, with Altria paying for much of it. FoJRP Board Members will discuss this issue with Dr. Merrifield.

## VI. New Business

A. Maureen will talk with the Capital Region Land Conservancy. She will be making a speech this Thursday at Luck Stone, thanking both the CRLC and Luck Stone for their support.

B. Maureen had suggested recording Ralph's Slave Trail presentation this past Saturday March 31<sup>st</sup>, and this suggestion was brought to fruition. Donations also were accepted from Park Volunteers and Kirk Richardson's group (who had done signage). Footage from this event eventually will appear on the FoJRP website.

C. Elaine noted that as the demand for Park-related memorials increases, perhaps inscribed bricks or stones could be offered to the public as a means to memorialize loved ones -- as we have Park benches, and trash cans, etc. Other ideas for memorials... having options for public giving to FoJRP... as in planting native trees, etc. were discussed.

D. Regarding the Picture memorial carved into the sycamore tree and Graffiti at Pony Pasture and the Chalk issue on Belle Isle... Stacy can't talk specifically about incident, but spoke in general regarding the (limited) value of issuing repeated warnings, and his belief that notion users should leave the Park as they found the Park. He reiterated concerns regarding graffiti, litter in the form of bottles and cans, and broken glass.

VII. Report – Ralph is concerned that graffiti, which is the worst he's seen in 30 years, prevents park users from enjoying the Park's natural environment and that natural environment's ability to transport users to a place away from the City. Ralph noted that his Park management paradigm focuses on behavior. Ralph acknowledged receipt of a Lifetime Achievement award; and, also, a reprimand for his use of

money to repair a trailer without administrative ok. Big issue on the horizon is compost toilet for Pump house. Board confirmed that \$10K is in budget from FoJRP for this item. Once BAM architects approve plans, the City can ok for a certificate of occupancy. Altria comes on the 25<sup>th</sup> – with a massive painting and cleanup effort, maybe 200+ people. Other issues: Ralph requests a backhoe. It is difficult to maintain trails, clear trees, move rocks, and a used backhoe runs about \$60K. Members suggested this be brought up with City administration, but Ralph noted that it is not easy to borrow equipment from other Units in the City. Williams Island and the Retention Basin Park will be dedicated as new FoJRP areas. Next addition is narrow strip from Ancarrow's to Goode's Creek, to be dealt with in the Fall. We received \$1200 for 3 signs at Pony Pasture from fishing club. Ralph asks that we create the VEPCO levee as a walkway, and the upgrading of missing link trail. Walkway is  $\frac{3}{4}$  complete. Ralph reiterated the importance of recruiting for next Park manager now. He can't put in for retirement until 3 months prior to intended date, so no formal ads can be placed. National Park Service staff seem to know about Ralph's upcoming retirement, and the position opening in Richmond. Third, Ralph wants us to push for a trail from Shiplock to 14<sup>th</sup> St. takeout, along Chapel Island. Getting the use pattern is important. Ralph requests \$300 to finish painting high stuff at Pumphouse (the Board noted that this expense was covered). Biggest problem this year is graffiti on Belle Isle hydro plant, at PP overlook, Manchester bridge, etc..

Meeting was adjourned around 8:30 PM. Phew.

Respectfully submitted, Vicky S.