



September 2010 Retreat Minutes

Sunday, 19 September 2010, 4:00 pm

Molly Dellinger-Wray's home, 1834 Monument Avenue

Attendees: Richard Taranto, Betsy Slade, Molly Dellinger-Wray, Warren Foster, Maureen Egan, Myrna Hartley, Marguerite Daniels, George Wickham, Ralph White, Mary Helen Sullivan, Ann Wright, Phil Dawson.

Guests: Michael White, Kerry Riley, Phil Riggan (James River News Hub blog), Larry Socha, Inderdeep Huja; Susan Martin and Stephanie Saccone of webbones.

A. VOTES

- 1. Formal Thank Yous:** Motion passed to send a formal thank you letter and a nicely framed photo to Jamie Canup and Charles for their crucial help in successfully securing a 501(c)(3) designation for the Friends of James River Park. Was subsequently amended to be \$100 gift certificates to Boathouse.
- 2. Board Meetings:** Motion passed to have the board meet monthly, the first Tuesday, 6pm. Because Reedy Creek headquarters is still under renovation, location will be determined each month.
- 3. Davenport Account:** Motion passed to keep the Davenport account and CD in place for now as the FOJRP's accounting procedures transition to meet 501(c)(3) compliance.
- 4. New Officers:** The board approved the following: Maureen Egan, President; Molly Dellinger-Wray, Vice President; Myrna Hartley, Treasurer, Mary Helen Sullivan, Corresponding Secretary. Recording Secretary duties will rotate among board members using a meeting notes template until further notice.

B. UPCOMING EVENTS

- 1. South of the James Farmer's Market Booth,** October 2, 9, 30 8AM – noon
- 2. Hands On Richmond Volunteer Day,** October 16, 10:30 – 2:30 Pumphouse.
- 3. Elaine coordinating VCU** volunteering Oct. 30th

C. THE HOT LIST

- 1. 501(c)(3) Transition:** Mary Helen will chair a new committee and see about hiring an experienced accountant specializing in not-for-profits and report on other progress in October. Maureen will send a note to the membership announcing the change of status. Membership forms and fundraising appeals will be altered to ask that checks be written to FOJRP.
- 2. Website:** The goal is for Phase I to go live October 1, amended to Oct. 7. Phase I includes Park Section, Today in the Park, Contact Us, News and Events, Friends: Who We Are, Friends: What We Do. A website beta test was revealed at the meeting. Attendees were to send comments to Gay Leahy by Wednesday, 9/22.

D. DISCUSSIONS & FOLLOW-UPS

1. Treasurer's Report: Mary Helen a . Preservation and Protection Fund

I don't think we've received a July or August 2010 statement from Davenport—a matter about which I've written Bucci Zeugner—but my calculations put the balance (with a \$25 deposit Noel McKenzie will make soon) at \$4279.58, plus any dividends.

- The \$35,000 CD continues to accrue 1.5 % interest at First Capital. I am in touch with Beth O'Donnell there about changing the ownership status from Enrichmond Foundation to FOJRP.

b . License Plates escrow account

The Union First Market account has \$5148.75. Of this amount, \$3,660 is license plate fees and untouchable; \$1030 is donations (\$1000 from Riverside Outfitters and \$30 from a friend of Molly's in memory of Zorro, the river dog); \$400 is our money I got from Enrichmond as a placeholder; \$80 is from the Partnership for Nonprofit Excellence for us to buy gloves for the 10/16/10 workday, and we spent \$21.25 on checks, if you're calculating.

c . Regular operating account, Wachovia Bank, under Enrichmond Foundation umbrella

Our current balance is approx. \$23,271.04. Since my 7/17 report, we have added \$900 in memberships, including one lifetime membership; \$885 for the benches; and \$105 in donations. Expenses since 5/17 total \$3,603.60. Of this total, \$2,518.25 is expenses Ralph submitted after the beginning of our fiscal year (7/1/10). Therefore, for the fiscal year ending 6/30/11 he has \$1,481.75 remaining of his annual allowance, as it were.

2. Fundraising Committee: Molly, Winnie, Gay, Warren

- **License Plates:** A fall push is needed to meet the 350 application deadline to the General Assembly by January 15. So far, 150 applications have been collected. Warren will simplify materials and will distribute applications to other river groups and neighborhood associations. FOJRP will get a table at the Oct 2 Farmer's Market at Forest Hill Park.
- **Boathouse Restaurant at Rocket's Landing:** Has donated \$1,000, thanks to a successful appetizer fundraiser. A second check will be forthcoming this month. We certainly appreciate their generous support!

3. Events Committee: Richard, Marguerite, Mary Helen

- Hands on Richmond, October 16, provides a stipend for volunteers to work at the Pumphouse, 10:30 to 2:30, and cover costs for gloves. Ralph applied for 35-75 volunteers.

6. Website Committee: Gay, Warren, Maureen, George, Phil

See Hot List, above. Susan and Stephanie of webbones revealed the beta test to the attendees. Ralph had some suggestions to enhance the park section and to make the Friends volunteer section more compelling. Michael White, who has had experience developing Office Depot's web site, suggested having a search box in shallow nav; a beta suggestions button on each page. The Friends copy, concepts, and logistics (donations & membership, volunteers) still need work, particularly to incorporate the status change. Overall, comments were positive.

- BREAK FOR DINNER -

7. Goals for the Year: Maureen and Molly

We listed what FOJRP has done in past couple of years and what are mission is. It was messy, but Michael noted that everything on our list fit into one of these three areas that Phil had articulated, so our efforts and money go to: (overlap intentional)

Maintaining: Adopting Riverside Dr. quarterly clean-up, JRAC annual clean-up, license plate campaign underway for consistent source of funding, managed Pony Pasture parking, annual Easement/Park inspection, coordinated several volunteer efforts—school groups and individuals., funded general needs, signage, dump trailer, pamphlets, fish-stocking, Keith/Schaefer plaque, holiday presents for staff, Pumphouse art project, professional development for park staff, two bus tours for city council and community, partially funded 14th St. take-out and bridge,

Educating/enhancing : by funding, editing, and promoting Ralph's pamphlets, educating city gov't about Conservation Easement, promoting park at Earth Day, Dominion RiverRock, etc., Pony Pasture parking lot and Belle Isle comfort stations, Oral history with VCU project, web site improvements, Pony Pasture parking included outreach to Hispanic community, two bus tours for city council and community VIPs, revamping kiosks, solstice event, license plate will eventually educate, newsletter, emails to membership about upcoming events and opportunities, surveyed park usage.

Preserving: becoming independent 501c3, worked for Conservation Easement!, annual Easement/Park inspection, launched Protection & Preservation Fund (\$40,000), , , wrote letters on behalf of Vepco Levee, conservation, water quality and viewshed issues.

In further discussion there was interest in land acquisition—Ralph mentioned several city properties bordering JRPS that might make sense. George expressed wife Mary's interest in private land acquisition. New committee formed—Phil Dawson chairs.

Various ideas floated about partnering with master naturalists, for instance, or Riverside Outfitters to give our membership and the public better info and experiences. Molly mentioned having quarterly tours like the one Lorne does in the summer.

Maureen hoped we focus P & P Fund on corporate donations and grants now that we are 501c3. Maureen whined about park not being visitor-friendly—for residents and tourists. Signage and trail info needed.

Web site will be key to our success on all fronts. Will be added to as we go—not left moldering. Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m. with everyone exhausted, some exhilarated, and some exasperated.

Respectfully submitted, Gay Leahy, Secretary emeritus, with snarky additions from Maureen Egan, October 4, 2010