

Winnemac Park Advisory Council
Monthly Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 10, 2024 – 6:15pm

Members Present ✓:

✓	Manny Vega	✓	Deb Miretzky
✓	Dave Miretzky		Anne Sylvan
✓	Cathy Vega		Johanna Raimond (WP Tennis)
✓	Amy Wiliamson (Nature Committee)		Dinakar Vinnakota (Treasurer)
	Elvia Heneghan (Amundsen Athletics)		Christian Blume
✓	Margaret O’Conor (TIF Committee)	✓	Russ Klettke, (WP 4 th For All)
✓	Jacob Schuster		David Cady Jr.
	Eleanor Arnold	✓	Mike O’Keefe (Amundsen Athletics)
	Mary O’Connor		
✓	Michael Pavilon		

Chicago Park District Representation ✓:

✓	Lisa Ragucci (CPD Park Supervisor)		
✓	Deirdre O’Connor		

Community ✓:

Manny called the meeting to order at approximately 6:20pm and there were introductions.

Public comment – no one signed up to speak

Announcements:

Park Advisory Council Guidelines - Dave went over the General Guidelines - PAC Rules and Regulations from online course he took from CPD. The document is printed and with the meeting minutes in the Public Binder

Committee Reports:

Park Supervisors Report – Lisa

- Waiting for the TIF improvements to begin in the spring
- The hot chocolate and cookie event that WPAC sponsored was a success

Natural Areas Report – Amy Williamson

- Edward Warden (parks steward) came to the park to walk the nature areas with Amy in September to discuss health of the plants
- Edward is going to come to the March 13th WPAC meeting. We would like to forge a formal working arrangement with Edward and have him let us know what he can do for us.
- Edward also agreed to have 2 volunteer work days in the next year and he will be the advisor (he will supply materials and be there to supervise). The dates are TBD.
- We will have 2 walk and talk events with a naturalist – Edward will be the point person for this. The dates are: Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 6PM and Saturday, August 17, 2024 at 11AM.
- Mike Rizilla – works for the Park District. He’s familiar with Winnemac and he oversees and directs Stantec (the group that cut the pathways, fixes the fences, pulls the excessive amount of golden rod, etc). Mike oversees 20 nature areas in the city.

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- He walked around the nature areas with Amy. They talked about having more natural burns because we haven't had one in years. They also talked about some of the native plants that are taking over and what areas are doing well and which ones need to be worked on.
- They also discussed the possibility of getting seeds for new plants.
- Edward and Mike and two new partners who understand that we care about our nature areas and we will be able to collaborate with them moving forward.
- Seeds of Change is a student organization at Amundsen that is being led by Jim Javenkoski (who is an Openlands TreeKeeper) and Mr. Johnson (Amundsen Biology teacher). They're hosting two Clear the Clutter events on Saturday, November 11, 2023 and Saturday, December 2, 2023 from 9am-12am. They plan to clear invasive plants, plant more perennials, and pick up trash. The club is also getting woodchips donated in the future and plan to spread them around the trees in Winnemac Park near Amundsen school.

New Business:

Date selection for meetings 2024: Agreed to meetings on the following dates:

Old business:

July 4 Committee – Russ

- Winnemac Fourth for All proposal is a three-part event.
- Part 1 (6-8:30PM): Games, food, family picnics, corn hold tournament, food truck/beverages, on-site security, port-a-potties
- Part 2 (Dusk - 8:30-8:45ish): Light show – a drone or laser show to create a spectacular sky event (this would be the most expensive element of the evening).
- Part 3 (post dusk, 8:45-10pm): Movie night in the park, perhaps in 2-3 locations. Themed to family-friendly "patriotic" movies?
- The estimated cost of the above event: \$60,000-\$100,000.
- Would Andre fund any portion of a drone show – Cat doesn't think that Andre would participate in the funding.
- Corporate sponsor may be the way to go to fund an event of this sort. Jewel and Target are both based in IL and may donate.
- Adam brought up that there may be an issue with planes since we are in O'Hare's flight path. We may need a permit or special precautions may need to be taken.
- Dave motioned that we vote to have the WPAC officially be opposed to the fireworks. Michael clarified that we vote that the WPAC is against the event because fireworks are illegal in our state. Clarie seconded the motion. The vote was 8 for the motion, 4 against and 1 no-vote – motion approved.
- Cat says the Alderman's office is opposed to the fireworks because there is no permit for the fireworks but wouldn't be opposed if there was a permit.
- Lisa advised that the park is completely against fireworks in the park and they would never allow permitted fireworks in the park.
- Jacob mentioned that the neighborhood is 50/50 and he is worried that this may divide the neighborhood
- Adam suggested that it may be good to get an updated survey to get a pulse on the community's opinion on the fireworks.
- Cat mentioned that maybe we survey who would be interested in the Winnemac Fourth For All event

Bathrooms Update:

- The Alderman is getting involved and is attempting to get parks and schools in the same room to confirm who is responsible for the bathrooms
- Who is the Alderman's office reaching out to at CPS and CPD? Cat will find out and let us know.

Security Update:

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Safety: For the sake of time the Safety report from the Chicago Police was to be provided with the meeting minutes. Provided is activity in Winnemac Park.

-There were 28 calls for service in the immediate area of Winnemac Park, mostly minor disturbances and municipal violations. There were 3 school premise checks by police and 3 park premise checks by police.

Announcements:

Social media campaign "Thankful for" Winnemac Park edition. Is based on an IG post from a few years back – "A Love Letter to Winnemac Park". The targeted audience for fundraising campaigns.

Next Monthly Meeting: The next WPAC meeting will be Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at 6:15pm in the Amundsen HS Rm 118 meeting room.

Adjourn: Manny Vega moved to adjourn the meeting and Dave seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried. Adjourned at approximated 7:35PM

Summary of Action Items:

1.