

Winnemac Park Advisory Council  
 Monthly Meeting Minutes  
 Wednesday, November 8, 2023 – 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 <sup>th</sup> For All)
✓	Jacob Shuster (new member 10/11/23)	✓	Claire Howard
	Eleanor Arnold	✓	Adam Honaker
	Serena Honaker		David Cady Jr.
✓	Michael Pavilon	✓	Mike O’Keefe (Amundsen Athletics)
✓	Mary O’Connor		

**Chicago Park District Representation ✓:**

✓	Lisa Ragucci (CPD Park Supervisor)		

**Community ✓:**

✓	Craig Newman (Amundsen Athletics)	✓	Cat Sharp (Representative of the 40 <sup>th</sup> Ward Office)

Dave 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 an online course he took from CPD. The document is printed and with the meeting minutes in the public binder and will be posted on the winnemacpac.org site.

**Committee Reports:**

Park Supervisors Report – Lisa

- Waiting for the TIF improvements to begin in the spring
- Harvest Fests at Indian Boundary was a success
- They hosted a small Halloween party for after school
- Discussion of a hot chocolate event on December 20, 2023 – WPAC may be able to fund hot cocoa

Natural Areas Report – Amy

- 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 13<sup>th</sup> 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.

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- 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.
- 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.

Treasurers Report - Dinakar

- \$425 transfer from the fund to our account
- We're anticipating ~ \$350 in donations in Q4
- Will have a total of \$775 in the account going into 2024
- Expenses will be about \$250/year for the website
- Amy asked how much an extra movie in the park would be – Lisa said \$1200 (cannot be a Disney movie). We would need to decide by February if we wanted to sponsor one and we would give money and she gives it to the CPD. Lisa gives the Park District 3 dates and 3 movie choices (swank.com to pick the movie)

**New Business:**

Splash Pad Idea from Alderpersons office – Cat

- Each ward gets \$1.5 million in menu money funding from the city.
- The 40<sup>th</sup> Ward Office puts it out to the public with a Participatory Budget to decide what gets spent on street and sidewalk repairs (usually 60-80% for menu items) and then takes submissions from the community to determine how the remaining amount is spent (usually between \$200-400K left).
- A community member submitted the idea for a splash pad at Winnemac Park
- She reached out to Park District installation would be \$200,000 – trying to get info from the operations team
- They are looking to finalize the participatory budget by next week – this may get rolled over to next year
- Cat said that they are looking to the WPAC to see what project we would be interested in if it's not that
- Manny motioned that we vote to support the splash pad located in the current Winnemac Park play area of the park – Dave seconded and there were no objections

Date selection for meetings 2024 – will come up with the list and discuss at the January meeting

**Old business:**

July 4<sup>th</sup> for All 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).

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- 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 drones and the flight path of planes since we are in O’Hare’s flight path. We may need a permit or special precautions may need to be taken.
- 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

- Dave motioned that 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. The motion that was introduced to the council to support an event that may replace the 4<sup>th</sup> of July tradition of fireworks in the park based on the following premise: “WPAC favors no fireworks in the park because a minimum of 50% of surrounding residents of the park ( per the survey of 531 residents) are opposed to fireworks and that WPAC opposes with them because the fireworks are dangerous, and illegal”

Clarie seconded the motion. The vote was 8 for the motion, 4 against and 1 no-vote – motion approved.

**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:**

**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.

**Fund raising for Winnemac Park :**

-A Chipotle dine-for fundraiser has been set up. The fundraiser will be November 18, 2023 from 4:00pm – 8:00pm. ORDER ONLINE FOR PICKUP USING CODE 92RLAJX or SHOW FLYER when ordering in restaurant. It’s only at the Chipotle located at 5224 N. Broadway Ave., Chicago, IL 60640 and the flyer must be shown. Chipotle will donate 33% of those sales back to WPAC for an operating budget.

**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.

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**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: Dave Miretzky moved to adjourn the meeting and seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried. Adjourned at approximated 7:44pm.

Summary of Action Items:

1. Cat will send us a link to get items onto the calendar and into the newsletter
2. Discussion on proposed committee organization and working together
3. Manny will send Chipotle flyer to Lisa
4. WPAC to reach out to Lisa about the hot cocoa for her event