

**Flushing Meadows Corona Park Alliance  
Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Monday, January 31, 2020, 9:00am  
BJK USTA Indoor Training Center**

**Members in attendance:** Julissa Bisono, Gonzalo Casals, Kenneth Cohen, Ali Davis, Jim Haddad, Andrea Hirsch, Andrew Hollweck, Patty Ornst, Jean C. Silva, Mitchell Silver, John Wang, Edwin Wong, Danny Zausner and Janice Melnick.

**Report from Chair**

Danny Zausner welcomed the Board in his first meeting as the new Chair.

Danny asked the committee members to review the minutes from the November 15, 2019 meeting if they had not already done so. A motion was made to approve the minutes. All Directors present voted in favor.

There was a discussion on programming and future funding. Specifically there was a discussion revolving around the fact that if we want to continue offering our public program forever, we would need to raise additional funding. All agreed that it is important to find out what kind of programming the community would want to see offered in the park.

**Executive Director Report**

Janice Melnick gave an update on Capital projects in the park. Mauro Playground was completed ahead of schedule and is a really beautiful playground. Janice invited all to a ribbon-cutting ceremony on February 25<sup>th</sup> (which was subsequently postponed). She also showed design schematic for the Meadow Lake Northwest Project.

Janice also updated all on the wayfinding signage project stating that we received 5 acceptable bids and after a review, we met with 2 of those firms. We were very impressed with one in particular, they were much more forward thinking and had an impressive team that would work with us. The selected firm now had to go through some legal business before the information can be made public. Ali Davis said she can help us expedite this through Law and MOCs and that we should keep her updated.

Janice mentioned that the funds from the Troops for Fitness grant which has funded our free fitness programs in the park will run out in 2020. If we want to continue to offer free fitness programs such as Yoga and Zumba, we will have to raise the funds. It was agreed that this would probably be an attractive thing for funders such as hospitals, insurance companies, etc. It was further asked if we coordinate our events and programming with others in the park and that we should take advantage of the entirety of what is happening in the park, including cross promotion with our cultural institutions. Janice gave a quick update on a recent meeting with all of the cultural institutions discussing that exact thing. Vicky Schneps offered to put listings in her Spanish newspaper. Michelle Villagomez suggested trying to determine what the community might be interested in by using Survey Monkey. We will get and promote information on the Arthur Ashe Kids Day.

## **Report from Community Advisory Board**

Jean Silva, reported on the CAB. She discussed that they have a new Board and are hoping to be even more involved. She discussed their discussion about having more events in the park. She discussed that they have been strategizing on how to attract more people to the CAB. She also mentioned that she, representing the CAB, is participating in our Art in the Park selection panel. Lastly she discussed the planned Open House or “Open Park” for the same Sunday as the Alliance’s Earth Day volunteer event. She hoped that would attract many park-goers to better promote the CAB and determine what the park-users want to see happen in the park.

## **Finance & Development Committee**

Andrew gave a FY20 budget update. In general, we are in good shape so far this year. We have already raised more money than we had budgeted primarily due to the very successful Gala and increased film shoot revenues. We have also spent less money than budgeted but we still have six months to go. Janice assured us that we were on target and while we may go slightly over the line item for staffing, overall we will stay below budget. Andrew also suggested that since we do not need to use the \$25,000 line item for Strategic Planning, thanks to the Central Park Conservancy and Julep< perhaps that money can be used to better promote the Alliance and the park. John Wang recommended coming up with an action committee to determine how to spend the money. All agreed.

Patty gave an update on development. We proposed that we host our first spring fundraiser, a Silent Disco, on the same weekend as our Earth Day volunteer/Open House event. While we don’t expect this to bring in large sums of money, we thought it was great to have more than one fundraising event to keep the Alliance name in people’s minds. This could also help us attract new people and would not take much work as the company handles almost everything. To help increase the funding opportunity, John Wang suggested have a food vendor. All agreed and John said he would look into seeing if any of the Night Market vendors might work with us. For our annual Evening Under the Stars, it was suggested it be called a Soiree as opposed to Gala. It was also suggested that if we had an honoree, it would help us raise more money. All agreed and the committee would look into possible honorees.

## **Governance Committee**

Ali Davis reported that we are working towards getting our 501c3 status. Janice and Jim Haddad have completed the first draft of the filing but in doing so discovered that we first need to obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN). Janice reported that she was able to obtain an EIN. There was a brief discussion regarding breaking away from CPF as our fiscal sponsor once we obtain 501c3 status. There are pros and cons but we tabled further discussion as we still do not have this status.

Ali reported that our annual report for FY20 is available on the Alliance website and Janice provided hard copies for all of the board members.

An annual disclosure form was included in the Board packet – a form that was created when the Alliance was formed – and all were asked to complete the form. Vicky Schneps asked if the Board had Director & Officer insurance. Janice said that we do not. Vicky said it was imperative that we get this to protect our board members. Janice said she would look into it immediately.

## **Committees and appointments**

Janice included a list of all Alliance committees and asked Board members to consider joining a committee, especially if they are not already on one. *(Subsequently, John Wang agreed to join Finance & Development and Andrea Hirsch agreed to join Governance.)*

## **New Business**

Janice gave a brief presentation on the planned activities for our Earth Day volunteer event on Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. This year we will focus on restoring the Meditation Garden. It was suggested we send out a press release about the event.

John Albert asked if we had applied for any State funding. He specified that he thought the Alliance might be eligible for SAM funding. We have 9-10 State officials that might be willing to fund capital projects under \$1 Million. Timing is crucial and we would need to send a letter by the end of the week. All agreed we should apply. Janice will work with John on identifying a project and submitting letters of application.

## **Julep Consulting**

Juliet Page and Rick Little from Julep Consulting gave a presentation and update on their work with the Board. They discussed that they had very successful individual meetings with Board members; 13 out of 18 constituting 72% of the Board. Based on the conversations, they shared priorities and preliminary recommendations. These were broken down into 7 categories: Board Composition, Board and Organizational Leadership, Onboarding and Engagement, Fundraising, Administrative and Fundraising Support, Alliance Visibility, and Community Involvement. While we won't be able to do all of these things, they suggested focusing on the first 4 items at a workshop with all board members (subsequently scheduled for April 22 and then postponed to June 15).

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.