

Flushing Meadows Corona Park Alliance
Meeting of the Board of Directors
Monday, June 1, 2020, 10:00am
Zoom Videoconference

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 thanked everyone for joining the meeting.

Danny began a discussion about the budget but then turned it over to Patty and Andrew.

Finance & Development Committee

Patty briefly mentioned that the climate will make it difficult to do fundraising this year and while we want to keep the fall fundraiser date on our calendar, we really have to think about what kind of event or fundraising activity makes sense – perhaps consider a virtual event. Janice added that a few sponsors have already made it clear they are unlikely able to sponsor any fundraiser.

Andrew gave a FY20 budget update. In general, we are in good shape so far this year. We have already raised \$29,000 more revenue than we had budgeted primarily due to the very successful Gala and increased film shoot revenues. We have also spent over \$293,000 less money than budgeted. This provides us with some surplus to help carry us through the next year.

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 25th (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.

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.

Danny asked the committee members to review the minutes from the January 31, 2010 meeting if they had not already done so. A motion was made to approve the minutes. All Directors present voted in favor.

Central Park Conservancy/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 10:22 a.m.