



Alliance for Flushing Meadows Corona Park Meeting of the Board of Directors

Billie Jean King National Tennis Center
Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens

April 26, 2019

9:00 am

Board Members in Attendance: Carol Conslato, James Gennaro, Jim Haddad, Andrea Hirsch, Andrew Hollweck, Patty Ornst, Terri Richardson, Jean C. Silva, Mitchell J. Silver, Edwin Wong, and Danny Zausner.

Also in Attendance: Janice Melnick, Jacqueline Colson, Anisia Ayon, and Mike Dockett.

Report from Chair

The meeting was called to order at 9:05am. Chair Silver asked all present to review the minutes from February 1, 2019 Board meeting if they had not already done so. A motion was made to approve the minutes. All Directors present voted in favor.

Chair Silver extended a warm welcome to our new Queens Borough Commissioner Mike Dockett. He introduced him and asked BC Dockett to say a few words. BC Dockett thanked the Board for having him at our meeting. He explained that he has lived in Queens his whole life and was looking forward to leading the borough and working with the Board.

Chair Silver explained that he was no longer available for the original Gala date and that he would really like to attend. He also discussed how important the Gala is as the Alliance's signature fundraising event. He hoped that we can expand and improve it and pointed to the Prospect Park Alliance's signature event that attracts 5,000 people. Chair Silver said that he would join the Gala Committee, perhaps as an Honorary Chair. He proposed one of the following dates: Tuesday, September 24, Wednesday, September 25, Tuesday, October 1 or Wednesday, October 2. He said that Janice will send these dates to the Board and asks that each Board member look at their calendar so we can quickly discover which date works best. Janice mentioned that John Wang, while not committing to assist, did say that he would only be available to help on the September dates.

Report from the Executive Director

Janice Melnick reminded all present that we would be hosting our Earth Day volunteer clean-up event on Saturday, April 27th from 9am-1pm near the Unisphere. Projects would include painting the floor of the Unisphere fountain and creating new gardens along the America-Israel Friendship Grove.

Janice also asked everyone to take a look at the Alliance's first Annual Report included in the packets. She said this is required by the NYS Attorney General's Office but would also be helpful in funding efforts as it is the first time we have a document detailing the Alliance's activities that can be shared with potential funders. The Annual Report will be available on the Alliance's website.

Janice also asked all to share the 2019 calendar of special events. It is available in English, Spanish and Chinese and will be available on our website.

Lastly, she explained that the Conflict of Interest Board has made a determination as to whether the Alliance is subject to donor disclosure requirements of Local Law No. 181 of 2016. The COIB opinion is that in fact the Alliance is subject to Chapter 9 as a not-for-profit organization controlled by the Mayor.

Report from Community Advisory Board

Chair Silver reported that the CAB recently elected a new Chair. He expressed gratitude to John Wang for serving as the CAB Chair for the last 2 years. He then welcomed Jean Silva back to this role on the CAB and Alliance Board.

Jean Silva expressed how happy she was to be back on the Board as the CAB Chair. She reported on the CAB's election and introduced Jacqueline Colson (in attendance) as the secretary and identified Gregory Spock as the newly elected Vice Chair. She discussed some of her plans for the CAB moving forward. She hoped that the Board would continue to support the CAB by providing funds in the FY20 budget for an Open House and translation services at CAB meetings. She discussed the Design School which had been held many years ago and the hope to continue some of that work. She also mentioned that many CAB members don't fully know what the CAB is and what their role is. She wants to work on adding exposure for the CAB. One suggestion is to get rid of the CAB website, which is confusing to some people, and instead list CAB meetings and events on the Alliance website. She also stated that the CAB needs a brochure to be able to give out.

Finance & Development Committee

The main topic is the proposed FY20 budget. Chair Silver opened the discussion regarding the proposed FY20 budget by explaining that the Board must seriously consider whether we want to use surplus funds in our budget in order to have a balanced budget. He further emphasized that the Board must work diligently to raise additional funds to cover costs or we will run out of funds in 2 to 3 years. Patty Ornst confirmed that it is essential that the Board look to raise at a minimum an additional \$150,000 per year if we want to continue funding improvements, amenities, seasonal staffing and programming at the rate we have been without using up all of our surplus funds.

Janice Melnick then went over the updated FY19 budget including estimates for the remainder of the fiscal year. Janice then provided the Executive Committee with a proposed budget for FY20. While she explained that she cut back on several expenses, including cutting equipment and improvements funding in half, we would still need to use approximately \$155,000 in restricted funds and \$2,800 in unrestricted funds to present a proposed balanced budget.

Danny Zausner expressed his concern that the USTA gave us “start-up funds” in the amount of \$350,000 for the first three years to help the Alliance get a heads start in their fundraising efforts with the idea that the Board would have a fundraising plan in place to raise significant funds once the allocation dropped to \$200,000. He reiterated that it is the purpose of the Board to raise those funds.

There was a question regarding revenue sharing for events and concessions in the park. Chair Silver explained that we don’t have that language written into our agreement with the City but we could look into this for the future. It was agreed by all that there is an urgency to come up with new strategies to raise additional money. This could include creating new events, such as a spring fundraiser, or getting people and companies with money involved in a President’s Council or some other activity. Chair Silver suggested have a professionally made video about the park and all that goes on here including the history, people, activities – all those things that are inspirational.

After further discussion, a motion was made that we approve the proposed budget for FY20 knowing that surplus funds might be needed, detailing the need for the Board to come up with a plan to raise a minimum of an additional \$150,000. All Directors present voted in favor.

Governance Committee

Jim Haddad gave the report for the Governance Committee. He stated that while we had still not received any official work from the Conflict of Interest Board, the committee feels it makes sense to have Board members complete COIB annual reports. He further stated that he would be working with Janice to complete the application form for the needed IRS tax filing for 501c3 status. Lastly, he mentioned to all that they should start thinking about officer elections for next year. The Governance Committee also acts as the nominating committee and we will be looking for nominations at our next meeting – elections to follow in December.

New Business

Andrew Hollweck gave an update on conducting a Strategic Plan for the Alliance Board. He reported that the committee met and came up with a list of goals for a strategic plan. Janice is working on a Request for Bids.

As there was no new business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:12 am.