

Friends of Matthias Baldwin Park Virtual Meeting Minutes: 1/7/2021 (7 – 7:35 PM) – Zoom Session.

Note: Because of the coronavirus, the board decided to hold a virtual meeting via a Zoom session.

Attendees (13): Joe Walsh, Bob Strunk, Jim Fennell, Sandra Owens, Stan Ordo, Grace Hanrahan, Joan Markoe, Ed Boehner, Suzanne Cross, Eddie Schechter, Jim Ruddick, Peg Szczurek, and Marion Parkinson. Jim Fennell moderated the meeting. Minutes of the 12/3/2020 meeting were approved.

Treasurer’s Report: Joan Markoe reported as of 12/31/2020:

Ending balance: \$23,272.58
Deposits: \$ 156.65 (Dues from two new members.)
Deductions: \$ 470.83

Deduction Items: \$ 205.69 Bench repairs due to vandalism
\$ 47.36 Holiday lights for a tree in the park
\$ 217.78 Dog waste bags

Membership Report: Joan Markoe reported:

Two new members joined in December for a total of 124 members for this membership year with a total of \$6,980 in dues this year. We had an increase in both members and dues of more than 80% compared to the previous membership year. Although Parks-on-Tap was canceled, the pandemic had a positive effect on our income. The increase in park attendance resulted in increased membership. Also, we received donations from some trainers who used the park for exercise classes.

Our Year-End Financial and Membership Report was recently circulated to all members. Besides listing all the relevant numbers, there is a short narrative applicable to Financial and Membership which explains some aspects of how the Friends fared over the past year and how the Friends weathered the pandemic.

Calendar of Future Planned Events:

Watermark Baldwin Lecture	Monday 1/11/2021	3 PM	Joe Walsh’s lecture via Zoom
January Park Clean-up	Saturday 1/16/2021	10 AM	With social distancing and masks
February Meeting	Thursday 2/4/2021	7 PM	Via Zoom
February Clean-up	Saturday 2/13/2021	10 AM	With social distancing and masks

Note: Joe Walsh proposed that we schedule park clean-ups for the second Saturday of the month.

Tree Identification Tags: Joe Walsh expects to receive the initial order of seven tree tags by early January. Also, he has received the map of the trees in Aviator Park which is joining with Baldwin Park on the tree identification project.

Dogs Off Leash: To educate the public on the requirement to keep dogs on leash, we are looking into getting signs posted at the park’s entrances. In addition, Suzanne Cross volunteered to design laminated posters for the trash cans.

Parkway Center City Signs: Sandy Owens volunteered to investigate the cost to have Baldwin Park added to the Center City Signs posted along the Ben Franklin Parkway.

Other Neighborhood News: The developer, Orens Brothers, is proceeding with plans to construct a 6-story rental apartment building located at 1823 – 1837 Callowhill Street. As the beer distributor is moving across the street, their lot was consolidated into one parcel lot.

Storywalk: Sandy Owens read an article on Park Friends' Network that Harrowgate Park had done a Storywalk and thought it might be a good park activity for preschoolers. Peg Szczurek and Marion Parkinson worked on the implementation. It can be done simply and inexpensively by purchasing two copies of a beginning reader's picture book, usually 16 pages. The next step is to tear out and laminate the pages and place them in wire lawn frames like those used by realtors and election campaigns. These frames would be placed along the park's path so that children would be able to follow the story as they walk through the park. This should appeal to parents with young children and the nursery schools and daycare groups using the park. Jim Fennell authorized an initial budget of \$100 to try out the idea.

Website News: Joe Walsh reported that the number of people visiting the Baldwin Park website increased by 60% in 2020. Some of this increase was because of the defacing of Matthias Baldwin's statue during Black Lives Matter demonstrations in June which generated many hits for Sandy Owens' article on Baldwin. Even when June is excluded, there was increased growth compared to prior years.

Website Statistics:

Year to 12/22: 15,000 users, 18,000 sessions.

June only: 8,100 users and 8,600 sessions.

Year to 12/22 excluding June: 6,900 users, 9,400 sessions.

All of 2019: 4,600 users, 6,500 sessions.

All of 2018: < 1,000.

Check out the latest history article on "IBEW/The Radium Institute" located at 1725 Spring Garden Street. This address has a very varied, interesting, and unusual history.

<https://www.baldwinparkphilly.org/history>

PA Sales Tax Exemption: Joe Walsh submitted the application for the PA Sales Tax exemption on January 1. The processing may take six months.

Membership Tracking: Joan Markoe thanked Peg Szczurek and Marion Parkinson for volunteering their technical assistance in tracking the memberships.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM. Minutes submitted by Grace Hanrahan.