

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
CONSERVANCY COMMISSION
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2018
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER by Chairman Bodkin at 7:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

- Commissioners present:
Diane Bodkin, Deb Bachmeier, Corinne Chrystall, Aga Razvi
Guest: President Paula McCombie, Shazia Khan, Tom Cordell, Nancy Munao

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 2018 MINUTES: Motion made by Commissioner Bachmeier, seconded by Commissioner Razvi. Motion approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

President McCombie announced a request from Tom Herb, owner of the Garlands, stating his Boy Scout troop is eager for some Eagle Scout projects if the Conservancy has some to offer. Bodkin will discuss the possibility with the Mayor.

Chair Bodkin announced a phone call from April Anderson, a free lance writer for *Quintessential Barrington* magazine, about promoting Conservancy projects and needs for volunteers teens and millennials in the upcoming January/February edition. She would like to publish a definite date for a Conservancy project needing and encouraging volunteer workers.

AGENDA :

I. DEBRIEFING FROM THE SCARECROW EVENT

A. Strengths:

1. Extra added attractions this year- the Bubbler and the Face Painting
2. The tradition of café bistro creating time for visitors to sit and chat
3. The Story Time Reader for the children and adults
4. The increasingly high level of imagination, detail and creativity of the exhibits
5. The phenomenon of repeat visitors looking forward to each year's new exhibits
6. Free Family oriented fun, most aimed at elementary school age

B. Weaknesses:

1. No rain plan, necessitating quick action when storms came. Commissioners Chrystall and Bachmeier and Village Staff helped cover many exhibits with plastic bags and took the cardboard exhibit inside the hut
2. Declining participation of businesses and organizations. Lack of ideas for exhibit and insufficient staff and funds to support time off for workers
3. Publicity – surveys showed the large Olympik sign on Bartlett Road helped bring in a large volume of visitors, as well as the smaller subdivision street signs. Some residents read the "Village Weekly Update" and looked on the village website for information.

C. Recommendations:

1. A Rain Plan – Conservancy will put in budget money for 60-gallon plastic bags and have on site if needed
2. Publicity – Melissa will call the local presses and have notice placed early in September. The website for the Conservancy will need revision.
3. GiGi's Playhouse set up exhibit a week later. Entrants will need to set all exhibits up prior to public viewing. Eric Fernandez will send photo of Gigi's exhibit to Chair Bodkin for her to place in the Conservancy historic scrapbook.
4. To increase participation, commissioners will alert schools early in the spring to the theme so that group activity making the scarecrows can be added to the curriculum. Individual grades could be encouraged to create and enter their own scarecrows.
Ask Goebbert's or restaurants to offer tickets for prizes.
5. Follow up with individual families that showed an interest this year and add an invitation to them to enter as a family. Supply them with a list of ideas on "How to Make a Scarecrow"- items to use, how to construct, how to make weatherproof, photos of past exhibits
6. Contact local Girl Scout and Cub Scout troops early in spring for interest.
7. President McCombie reported that the Park District is in agreement with partnering with the Conservancy for a combined Fall event in 2019. She mentioned the events from the Barrington "Hills are Alive" Festival: a climbing wall, petting zoo, the band "7th Heaven" with their own generator. Free tickets were given out for one serving of hot dog and brat

and drink. Drinks were for sale and the money was donated to a local police cause. Many of these ideas appealed to the commissioners. Food trucks were discussed. Commissioners felt this addition would increase attendance on opening day. It was hoped that in order to have this service, the Village could help supplement funds if the percentage of income did not meet the contract. Garbage disposal was also discussed and solved.

Commissioners agreed to discuss this issue further in time to include a line item in the next year's budget.

SHOWCASE GARDEN PROGRESS

Bodkin reported the whole Showcase Garden area north of the picnic grounds has finally been cleared of debris, brush, buckthorn, brambles, old dead sticks and branches. Dustin Wire has herbicided the area once but needs to cover it with herbicide one more time before planting can be done in May.

Bodkin expects the area will need more than 1500 sedges and wildflowers and shrubs to complete the project. She hopes the Garden Club will help with some of the planting, along with local residents and students. She has asked Ron DiMonte of Willow Landscaping to help, for pay, with some of the hardscape digging and appropriate plants for the specific areas. The AmeriCorps partner said he would also be available to help with planting.

Commissioner Razvi recommended seeking help from the University of Illinois Extension Horticulturalist students. He added this service would be free to our Conservancy. Razvi agreed to contact the Horticulture Department now, in order to have this design project be designated a class focus for this coming spring. He envisions asking the students to submit a design of basic native plants within a woodland area with a completion date in May. Bodkin will supply Razvi with a map/ diagram of the existing tree placements and borders as soon as possible. Razvi urged the commissioners to focus on methods to ensure good consistent watering for these plants once planted till they are well established. Bodkin stated the hydrants could be connected with hoses across the picnic grounds to give the needed water. It is hoped that the native plants, once well established, could survive on their own with minimum water needs.

II. BOXWOOD MAZE-EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

Bodkin stated she hasn't heard from the Eagle Scout candidate Phillip Silbert but still believes he is an ideal scout for this project. The Mayor stated that the Village Engineer Natalie Karney could help with some of the details of determining boundaries of the area. The Mayor also stated the Village could possibly help with about \$1000 -\$1500 of the needed funds for the project. The scout would be expected to raise about \$500. Bodkin will relay this information to the scout. She will advocate for including this \$1500 item in the 2019-2020 budget plans. She will ask the scout to get bids for equipment and supplies to submit to her before January 17 for inclusion in the budget.

III. BUDGET

Bodkin asked commissioners to turn in their expenses for the past quarter. Commissioners voiced no invoices. The Mayor stated that ecologist Dustin Wire would need to submit his own invoices. Bodkin will notify him.

IV. ARBOR DAY-TREE CITY APPLICATION

President McCombie introduced Tom Cordell, the Village's AmeriCorps partner. Cordell, who received his degree in Ecosystems Science and Policy, started working on environmental planning with the village a month ago, identifying affected Ash trees. His specific assignment with the Conservancy will be to organize and expedite the Arbor Day celebration, which is one of the standards or requirements for an application for designation of Tree City USA. Cordell agreed to help with coordinating the program for the day, and with acquiring and planting the chosen tree and location for the Arbor Day celebration. Cordell listed the three other standards for the Tree City USA application: the Village designating a city official or volunteer tree advocate and giving him authority for management of the 'urban forest,' Creating a village ordinance that recognizes this person and the standards the village will abide by, and expending more than \$2 per capita for this urban forestry program. Mayor McCombie will prepare the required proclamation.

Cordell stated one of his major tasks will be documenting the fulfillment of standards and completing the application for the village for Tree City, USA. He also states he is looking forward to completing some grant writing.

Commissioners agreed on the date of April 27 for the Arbor Day celebration, making it a Saturday so that children may also participate and benefit from the message of tree appreciation. A Bur Oak or White Oak would be the chosen tree, selected for wildlife habitat and eventual shade near the Boxwood Maze and the Pollinator Garden. The community event will also include the traditional bistro café for attendees to gather and discuss after the ceremony.

V. OTHER

A. Summer Science Class

Nancy Munao, one of the co-chairs of last year's Summer School Science Class, agreed to contact Dr. Becky Gill, Director of Curricula for Barrington schools, about putting the summer school science class field trip in the summer school schedule. She states this needs to be done in early February.

Razvi agreed to be a co-leader again this summer.

B. Mound Plans

Commissioner Chrystall voiced concerns about the continual battle with weeds on the mound. With Commissioner Razvi's recommendation, Chrystall and Bodkin agreed to wait till the end of April to put down Preen on the affected areas. Both commissioners agreed the plants on top of the mound are doing well at crowding out the weeds in that area. Cordell and commissioners were invited to help with the efforts at weed control.

C. Date for Showcase Workday

Regarding submitting information for the article on teens and millennials volunteering in conservation projects in the January/February issue of *Quintessential Barrington*, the commission agreed on the date of the third Saturday, May 18, 2019. Children could be involved; and the weather would be warmer; and the date would not be too close to the recent Arbor Day celebration.

Bodkin will contact Anderson with this date, emphasizing the goal of creating a productive opportunity for a community beautification effort. Refreshments will be served. Volunteers will be appreciated helping for any amount of time.

D. Partnerships with Higher Education

Building on last year's history of utilization of the Conservancy for elementary science learning, Commissioners agreed the next goal should be advancing to the next level by inviting high schools and colleges to consider using the Conservancy grounds for outdoor science labs. Bodkin will contact the Science Department at Barrington High School or District 220 to invite them to consider a field trip in the Conservancy as part of their curriculum. Commissioner Razvi will contact the Horticulture Department at Harper College to invite the instructors to consider using the Conservancy for a outdoor lab in environmental issues and include the field trip in their curriculum. Cordell was also invited to help with the project.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45. The next meeting will be January 17, 2019. Commissioner Razvi agreed to moderate in Chairman Bodkin's absence.