

**Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance
11 June 2008
Lincoln Center, Room 307**

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order and Role Call

Call to Order: 7:07 PM by James Cavallo

Members Present: James Cavallo, Gordon Goodman, Ihor Hlohowskyj, Ken Lerner, William Runyon, Chris Saricks, David Schulz, Mark Thoman, Jane Amorosi, John Schofield, Jerry Yoksoulion

Members Absent: Charley Smart

Guests: Shannon Forsythe, DG Park District

2. Approval of March Meeting Minutes

Draft minutes unanimously accepted. Final minutes to be sent to G. Goodman for website posting.

3. Treasurer's Report

Gordon Goodman, Treasurer, provided a report on the current status of PDHA funds. For the period of 1 Dec 2007 through 10 June 2008, donations to PDHA totaled \$1,145.00, including \$310.00 since the March meeting. Expenditures since 1 December 2007 totaled \$760.72, \$207.90 since the March meeting. These recent expenditures were for the Spring newsletter printing and mailing costs. Approved future expenditures include \$300.00 for the 2008 dues to Chicago Wilderness, and \$800.00 matching funds for the DG Park district Little Sprouts program. Checking balance as of 10 June 2008 was \$868.34. The PDHA CD with the Community Bank of Downers Grove (matures on 30 July 2008) totals \$3,121.22. Total assets as of 10 June 2008 = \$3,989.56.

Because future expenditures exceed the current checking account balance, G. Goodman suggested that some of the CD money will need to be moved to the checking account to cover the anticipated expenditures. D. Schulz made a motion that when the current CD matures, \$2,500 be rolled over into a new CD and the remainder deposited to the checking account. G. Goodman seconded the motion. During the following discussion, J. Yoksoulion reminded the Alliance on the policy to spend down alliance reserves, not increase them. J. Cavallo suggested thinking about an honorarium for a future speaker

for the next annual meeting. G. Goodman reminded the group that DG Community Bank will not charge the Alliance a penalty for early or partial withdrawal of the CD.

The motion to roll over \$2,500 to a new CD and deposit the remaining money into the Alliance checking account was unanimously accepted.

The Treasurer's report was discussed and unanimously accepted.

4. Lyman Woods Update

Shannon Forsythe provided an overview of the upcoming summer programs. Summer camps are scheduled for every week of the summer, morning and afternoon, except for the week of 4 July 2008. School programs have primarily been non-DG schools. Overall, FY08 programming increased by 33% over FY07. Family programming has also been expanded.

5. DG Park District Land Management Update

Shannon Forsythe informed the Alliance that land management of Park district lands has been transferred from K. Shannon, Director of Facilities, to T. Reese, Director of Parks. Responsibilities for restoration activities at Lyman Woods and Belmont Prairie are now shared between Parks and Facilities, which work together to implement land management. G. Goodman expressed concern that S. Forsythe has natural areas training but is no longer in charge of those activities. He asked about how controlled burns will be planned and managed. S. Forsythe stated that she is still on the burn crew, so there is no real change in that activity. Park District forester Mike Stetler has been the primary burn boss and continues in that role, and S. Forsythe is still licensed for herbicide application. The biggest change is that Paul Fyle is the point of contact for the stream bank restoration projects. This year, there was one scheduled burn at Lyman Woods and one at Belmont Prairie conducted by DGPD staff, and one contract burn in Project Area 1 at Lyman Woods.

When asked about doing annual burns to control garlic mustard rather than using herbicide or weed-whipping, S. Forsythe stated that all three are planned for Project Area 3.

J. Cavallo asked about the level of interaction (joint projects, workshops) that occurs between the Park District and other groups. S. Forsythe indicated that while there are no joint projects with other park districts, the DGPD is a member of the Nature center Association, the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association, and Chicago Wilderness.

G. Goodman asked about any plans to have the Interpretive Center open on Mondays and Fridays. S. Forsythe indicated that this would not occur this fiscal year, but possibly next fiscal year, especially in spring and fall when the Center experiences its heaviest level of

use. G. Goodman also asked about whether a port-a-potty could be provided at the Center to aid visitors to Lyman Woods when the Interpretive Center is closed. S. Forsythe asked Facilities about this and was told that a port-a-potty for the woods is not possible at this time.

The Great Garlic Mustard Pull was successful, with more than 500 lbs collected. D. Schulz of the PDHA was the winner of most pulled – 90 lbs.

J. Cavallo asked whether the Park District gets calls about the green roof at the Lyman Woods Interpretive Center. S. Forsythe indicated that they get numerous calls requesting tours of the building and roof. The roof is a good example of a roof using native vegetation rather than the more common non-native roofs.

6. Highway Cleanup

A sign-up list was passed among the Alliance members. J. Cavallo will keep the list until June 20 for anyone else wishing to sign up. During a discussion about rain dates, J. Cavallo agreed to ask the Public Works Department if it would be possible to have an automatic rain date for the Saturday immediately following the scheduled cleanup day.

7. Highway Cleanup Planning

Next cleanup day is scheduled for 21 June 2008.

8. Heavy Equipment Use for Stream Bank Stabilization in Area 3

Several PDHA members conducted a site visit to observe trail damage from stabilization activities in Area 3. Damage included rutted trails, damaged trees, and loss of native vegetation. Mark Thoman provided an email summary of a follow-up meeting held with the Park district to discuss the damage. The Park District indicated that the damage was accidental, resulting from the need to use tracked equipment to remove materials from a previously unknown farm dump. The Park district indicated that it would use signage to try to limit foot access to the disturbed trails following completion of restoration work. D. Schulz indicated that the Park district and Forest staff were concerned about what happened and were apologetic.

G. Goodman raised the concern about what steps, if any, has the Park District put in place so that similar unintended damage does not occur with future Park District activities. He also questioned why there was not better supervision during the restoration activities. D. Schulz indicated that a follow-up email was sent to the Park District asking that the District provide a clear mandate to Park District Staff to forbid heavy equipment in Area 3. Paul Fyle of the Park district replied that this was a possibility. D. Schulz suggested a follow-up email with the Park District requesting written assurance regarding heavy

equipment in Area 3. C. Saricks agreed with the suggestion. M. Thoman suggested a resolution from PDHA requesting the Park District to ensure that the same mistakes are not repeated if later projects occur elsewhere. D. Schulz was asked to draft a resolution to the Park district asking that a written directive be prepared that would prohibit heavy equipment in the south woods except for emergency conditions. K. Lerner suggested that instead of asking for the prohibition of heavy equipment, the PDHA should be asking for a process to ensure that similar mistakes do not happen in the future

9. Tree Clearing at Patriots Park and Question of PDHA Policy on Removing Trees

A discussion was held regarding the preparation of another statement to the Park District about requiring public notification and meetings prior to any tree removal activities. The discussion included what would be the best avenue to follow regarding such a resolution. J. Cavallo felt it would be better to bring the resolution to the Park Board and not Park District management staff. D. Schulz felt the Park District staff would be the best group to deal with. There were mixed opinions among other PDHA members. J. Yoksoulian felt that the Park Board would be appropriate, but that local residents should also be notified of the PDHA statement. None of the PDHA members present knew if the Park District currently has a formal public notification policy or whether such notification is only an occasional practice.

One possible resolution was that the PDHA should ask the Park district to establish a notification policy. G. Goodman felt that this is a very important topic, and that the PDHA could make a good resolution with the time remaining in the meeting. He asked that a special meeting be held in July with Dan Cermak and the Park District.

10. Park District Resolutions

Based on the discussions held regarding Items 8 and 9 above, J. Cavallo identified two different resolutions to be prepared by the PDHA. One resolution regarding heavy equipment use in Lyman Woods and a separate resolution for Patriots Park and increased public notification. D. Schulz felt that PDHA should first meet with D. Cermak and the Park District to discuss PDHA concerns and a possible path forward, and then prepare resolutions. G. Goodman would like to first discuss why there is such poor oversight of Park District projects, and then discuss issues regarding public notification and heavy equipment with D. Cermak.

Both D. Schulz and G. Goodman called for informal discussion with D. Cermak, and then determine whether formal resolutions are necessary: the discussion intended to push for a change at the District and then the resolution to support Park District changes. D. Schulz will try to contact D. Cermak and the Park District to schedule a meeting sometime in late June. PDHA members to continue their discussion via email, and hold a special meeting in July to further discuss these issues.

11. Next Meeting – a special meeting to discuss Park District project oversight, heavy equipment use, and public notification to be held at 7PM, 16 July 2008.

12. Meeting Adjourned – 9:07PM