



**Board Minutes  
Of the Friends of Lafayette Park  
May 17, 2016**

**Attendees:** President Jeff Stoiber, Kimberly Cestatri, Tad Stewart, Dennis Smyth, Judy Goodman and Paul Rosenbaum.

Also attending Jane Kratovil

**Minutes:** Minutes for the March 22, 2016, meeting were approved without revision.

**Introduction:** Jane Kratovil was introduced to the board. She is the newly designated bookkeeper for FOLP, hired on an hourly basis to assist the interim treasurer, Dennis Smyth.

**Treasurer's Report:** The interim treasurer submitted his report. Dennis Smyth said the transition from the former treasurer, who stepped off the board after many years of service, was complete. He, Jane Kratovil and Jeff Stoiber met with former treasurer Tim McDonough to arrange the transfer of FOLP documents, information and files. The documents were later scanned and have been stored electronically. He noted that the annual tax returns were filed in April. The FOLP bank balance as of April 30, 2016, was \$8,340.46. This is after recent expenditures including: payment of \$4,117.03 to complete the purchase of two iron green park benches (making up the cost difference from bench donations), and \$1,150 for the installation and concrete pad for the David Povich bench. (The Smolka bench will be installed after the school construction is complete.)

**"Friends" Group Application Status:** The board agreed to continue the work necessary to complete the application process to renew its designation as an official "Friends of the park" group with the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation. The friends group application form and essay questions are essentially complete, and Jane Kratovil is in the process of compiling and finalizing the required supporting documents. The process also requires meeting with the ANC and obtaining a letter of endorsement.

**School and Park Renovation Projects:** Regarding the school renovation, it was noted that the construction crews and heavy trucks have killed one of the large trees behind the school, an unfortunate loss. Also large amounts of mud and silt have been running down the neighborhood streets as workers hose down their trucks. Board members who live near the school, as well as neighbors' comments, said the impact of the project on the neighborhood has been huge.

One of the major concerns of the new renovation project is how the project will contain storm water runoff. (Erosion and water runoff has been a major problem at the park.)

Board member David Madland has been working with school project officials and the city to find a plan acceptable to the neighborhood to contain the storm water runoff. However, various proposals had not been finalized by mid-May. The proposals are now focusing more on the top of the hill in the park, which has been a source of storm water runoff in addition to the school site. The ball fields will be used to capture some of the water runoff. It was noted that a new storm water runoff plan would not likely be in place by August when school is scheduled to open.

**DGS:** The board discussed the city's early, preliminary plans to possibly build a new, larger rec center at Lafayette Park. The board did not take any formal action regarding a potential new rec center, since any planning is in the early stages. However, views noted that a planned 7,500 sq ft center (if that's what the city is in fact planning) may be too large for the park; and that another major construction project following soon after the school reconstruction project may have too much impact on the park itself and the neighborhood.

Separately, FOLP plans to continue to monitor the impact of the school renovation project on the park and later approach DGS to address repairing any damage. There are also some outstanding issues from the park renovation itself from early 2015.

**Gardens:** Judy Goodman, who heads the garden committee, said FOLP very much needs additional volunteers to work in the gardens that border and are inside the park, especially during the peak growing season. The amount of work needed is far more than the small group of volunteers can handle, and the city is not maintaining the park's gardens. The worker who had been hired by FOLP to do hourly work in the gardens no longer can work in the park's gardens due to commitments with clients, and landscaping crews are too expensive to hire. What the FOLP needs, she said, is a non-profit group with volunteers who know plants. Board members said they would try to find more garden volunteers.

She said the Yankee Clipper organization may hold a workshop in the park in the fall for the community to teach gardening skills. The date may be the same as the FOLP's Fall Park Clean-Up Day (date to be determined).

**Tennis:** Paul Rosenbaum, of the tennis committee, said cracks in the new surfaces of the tennis courts are getting larger and the city has not responded to get the surfaces repaired before the cracks get even worse. He has been in touch with Councilman Brandon Todd's office to see if the city can address this issue, and so far no firm response.

Separate from FOLP, Paul said he plans to operate a summer tennis camp for 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

**New Business:** It was suggested the FOLP look into using PayPal on its website to facilitate community donations.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting was scheduled for July 28, 2016.