

Friends of the Island Parks Board Meeting 17 May 2011, 6.30 pm

Board Members present: Chairperson: Barry Metcalfe
Shane Bittaker, Ray Dabkowski, Cindy Farris, Diane Hood, Bob Meadows, Melanie Metcalfe, Sharon Meyer, Mike Moran, Gabriella Mullins,
In attendance: Bill Gruber, Peter Krulder, Michael Lang, Tim Marshall.
Apologies: Ron Geisheimer, George Skalkeas, Pat Snair.
Absent: Wayne Case, Jacques Marion, Toni Wise.

Welcome: Barry welcomed Michael Lang. Peter introduced Michael, the new Assistant Park Manager; as part of his APM duties Michael will be working with Tim on the NC Operations' Committee and will represent Peter on the Playground project.

Minutes: of last meeting, 19 April 2011 accepted unanimously.
Melanie to send approved minutes to Tim for posting on www.islandparks.org.

President's Report:

Barry reported Nancy has resigned from the FIP Board; letter sent to thank her for serving. FIP Board now has 16 members; quorum is 8.

Treasurer's Report:

- In George's absence, Barry guided us through the April 2011 report, which was accepted unanimously.
- Highlights: \$206,000 assets of which \$112,000 in Investors Capital and \$40,000 in operating account.
- On receipt of final invoices for IED, income and expenditure account will be completed.

Park Manager's Report:

- Peter thanked the Friends for all the gestures of support and well-wishing. He was permitted only a very short visit to IED but that was enough to see it was a tremendous event. Peter congratulated each and every one for their involvement.
- State legislative budget: all FPS parks to stay open. Major reduction in funds available for capital and for facility repairs.
- Beach renourishment: scheduled for 2012-3; permits applied for.
- North parking lot: erosion persists. Parking slots to be reconfigured / re-stripped which will result in a net gain of parking slots even though parking lot will have been eroded by 75 ft.
- Millionth visitor expected this month (again!).
- Karen requested staffing for FIP/parks' booth at CMA event.

Membership Report:

- Ray reported that with 6 new members and renewals arriving, membership is about 325.
- Membership brochure: request for \$265 to print tri-fold cover of brochure in full color – approved unanimously. Ray to send .pdf to Board members for approval before printing.

Programs:

- May : 2 short programs incl. one on Bats; June : Invasive species.
- Terry Fortner has submitted an excellent list of ideas for programs.
- Gabriella suggested that programs might be videoed and posted on U-tube.

Nature Centre Retail:

American-made shirts and hats: high prices impacting sales. Other similar visitor centers do not carry them. Barry requested that Board members think about this issue for a discussion on policy at next meeting.

Nature Centre Operations:

- Updating and repairs to the RCNC: Peter reported he had met with Tim to review items for repair/replacement and suggestions for new exhibits and improvements to meeting space. To be financed from the funds set aside for this purpose. Items might include: pocket doors; glass display case for front counter; floodlights for NC parking area (not in turtle season); goose neck stand for interactive monitor; room lights with less heat; white board for listing 'seen species' (Peter to check with Boca or Cayo, for ideas seen by Sharon).

Barry confirmed that items should be paid directly by FIP check or FIP credit card.

- Tim reported he had made an upscale display for outreach events to promote FIP and the parks. This was taken to Innisbruck recently, meanwhile a booth was also staffed at Pier 60's fishing event. Both events were staffed by a few volunteers but no Board members came along, although they were invited. Such events are most enjoyable: Board members should not miss out on them!

- Writers' workshop held in NC – very successful.

Island EarthDays

- When final invoices received, financial account will be presented by George.

- Immediate picnic celebration postponed (coincided with Easter). Little enthusiasm shown by Board in having a celebration now that so much time has elapsed, although it was agreed that those team leaders who are not Board members should be thanked in some special way. Sharon and George to discuss.

- Sharkbite Challenge: discussion on advantages of a separate event. Agreed it should be separate but collaborative and held on the same days as IED. Request that Sharkbite publicity (in paddling and local magazines) should include description of IED, just as IED's publicity refers to Sharkbite.

- ***Date for 2012: 14 and 15 April: Proposed and Agreed.***

- Barry reminded the Board that the event would only happen if one of them took the lead soon and began to form the 2012 Working Group. Replacements would need to be found for those team leaders who have already said they are unavailable.

Projects:

Barry reminded the Board that there are now 3 main projects which the Friends are working on at the request of the Park Manager; these are the Caladesi Exhibit, the Playground, and the Wildflower Garden. All 3 are included in the PM's annual priority list which is based on the Park's Unit Management Plan; a document which is officially approved by the Florida Park Service.

The priority list is updated each FPS annual budget cycle and a copy provided to the FIP.

1. Caladesi Exhibit:

- Verbal approval has been given by FPS for an interpretive pavilion with elevated viewing platform; signatures expected very soon.
- Design of building is moving ahead – architect is former president of Kiwanis and is donating his personal professional services as part of the proposed architect’s contract; he is enthusiastic and ready to get started.
- Cost of plans and scale model (essential for promotion of project to potential fund sources) is \$21,200. Peter checked with FPS and confirmed this is in line with expected costs.

Barry asked Board to agree payment of \$21,200; proposal seconded by Sharon; Agreed unanimously.

2. Playground:

- Playground design not decided yet but certain items are favored. Need a plan by September, when Love 4 committee begins meeting.
- Harry Gross is applying for grants.
- May be eligible for grant from Dermatology Society if we can demonstrate policy of sun protection awareness over past year. Barry had emailed Karen to ask if she had evidence that volunteers have been advised about sunscreen – no reply yet.

3. Wildflower Garden:

- Official, professionally produced plan now available. Barry pinned it up for all to see incredible amount of detail including plant names; pathways of white shell; a memorial brick path; “donor” trees; benches and an arbor.
 - Barry has marked out “hardscape” on the site according to landscaper’s design and has begun clearing the area.
 - Donation of \$2,000 promised of which \$1,000 already received. Bob reported an additional donation of \$900 for arbor. Potential for (memorial) donations for trees, trellis, benches, bricks (pathways). Garden expected not only to pay for itself, but to be a good source of additional fund raising.
 - Melanie expressed concern that FIP Board members were unable/unwilling to volunteer to do the actual work of clearing the site and, more importantly, that no-one had come forward to lead the project. Unless “physical” volunteers were found, this project would not get anywhere. She asked if other park volunteers (many of whom are looking for physical projects to get involved in) could be invited, through Peter and Karen, to participate, especially when the snowbirds return.
- Other suggestions included: an ad in the press requesting help; contact Garden Fairies; contact HSN.

Fundraising –

Benches:

- Bob reported a swing had been installed.

- Bob confirmed he was keeping a file of applications and was asked to mention the “memorial” opportunities associated with the imminent Wildflower Garden (benches, arbor, trees, brick pathway) in order to keep applicants interested.
- No more beach sites on Honeymoon – written policy to be drafted with Park Biologist.

Wills: no report.

Grants:

Harry is applying for grants for the playground and Caladesi exhibit.

Sponsorship: no report from Pat Snair.

A.O.B.

- DCO breakfast meeting at South Pavilion, Friday 20 May, 7pm(\$8). Peter is guest speaker.
- Dunedin Triathlon, June 12. Request for volunteers and kayakers for this fun event. Contact Peter.
- Ray to chair FIP Board meeting on 21 June. Ron or Diane to record minutes.

Meeting closed at 8.16 pm.