

HPCAC COUNCIL MEETING Minutes
Wednesday 6:30 pm
February 24th, 2010

The regular HPCAC Council Meeting was held at the Howard Park Tennis Club.

Present were:

Robin Sorys	Member-at-large, Chair
Bernard Sanders	Member-at-large
John Cleary	Member-at-large, co-chair K9 committee
Paul Wehrle	Member-at-large
Helen Sousa	Park Supervisor
Arthur Beauregard	City of Toronto
Jerry Hodge	Member-at-large, Chair Building, infrastructure and safety committee
Sharon Lovett	Co-chair, Natural Environment Committee
Karyn Morris	Member-at-large
Mark Ellwood	Walking Tour Coordinator
Jane Schmidt	Volunteer Stewardship Program
Cheryl Hart	Colborne Lodge
Kim Beemer	Member-at-large, Vice-chair
Robin Salt	Children's Garden
Barrie Thomson	Member-at-large, Treasurer

Regrets from:

Diane Buckell	Member-at-Large
Gloria Worth	Park Watch
Tammy Reid	Co-Chair K9 Committee
Wendy Rothwell	Toronto Field Naturalists
Amy Ratelle	Member-at-Large
Cindy Carroll	Member-at-Large
Robert Glover	Member-at-Large

Not Present:

Jane Brown	Member-at-Large
Karen Yukich	Co-Chair, Natural Environment Committee
Bill Saundercook	Councillor, Ward 13, City of Toronto

Robin Sorys took the chair at 6:35 pm

1. Introductions/Adoption of Agenda

We went through a round of introductions of all those present.

2 Declarations of conflict of interest

Robin Sorys and John Cleary declare a conflict with item 5.2, Appointment of HPI directorship

3. Minutes of the previous meeting (January 27th, 2010)

There was a general discussion about the timing and format of the minutes. The feeling was that the minutes should be shorter, documenting the general conversation topics but not specifics, and formally recording all motions. The HPCAC protocol for sending out draft minutes was reaffirmed. The Secretary's rough notes are to be sent to the executive committee within one week of the meeting, then the draft minutes are sent to the participants for comments and corrections. The corrected draft minutes will then be posted on the HPCAC website one week prior to the next meeting where they are approved by HPCAC.

There was a discussion on the last paragraph of section 7.3 of the January 27, 2010 minutes. The issue was around subcommittees could communicate with local media, and would this create confusion about whether the subcommittee represents the entire HPCAC or not. The terms of reference (T.O.R) state that members may not represent HPCAC without council approval. However, some people felt that the T.O.R were vague about exactly when and how subcommittees of the council could communicate on their own behalf.

Motion:

Bernard Saunders/ Barrie Thomson

"To revisit the terms of reference for clarification on when subcommittees need approval from HPCAC for external communications"

Motion carried.

4. Treasurer's Report

Barrie Thomson presented the following treasurer's report.

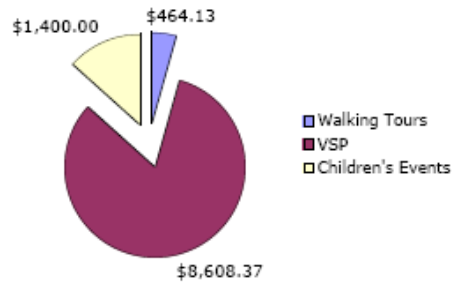
Treasurer's Report

as of Feb 24, 2010

- Financial Update

▲ Walking Tour:	\$ 464.13
▲ VSP:	\$ 8,608.37
▲ Children's Events:	\$ 1,400.00
- Balance:	\$ 10,472.50

Bank Account Summary
(as of Jan 29, 2010)



- Cleared Transactions

- Pending Transactions

- Plant Purchase:	<\$ 2,674.59>
- Mail Box Rental (6 month)	<\$ 47.88>
- Children's Events	<\$ 1,400.00>
- SARS Reconciliation	\$ 36.50

- Status of Disbursements

• VSP - Misc funds:	\$ 360.00	\$ 223.92	\$ 136.08	~ 62%
• VSP - Project Chirp:	\$ 300.00	\$ 180.00	\$ 120.00	
• VSP - (Aug) 2 honorariums:	\$ 300.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 125.00	

Sharon Lovett of the Volunteer Stewardship Program (VSP) presented an itemized request for \$1,100 for program expenses to the end of May.

There was a discussion about the level of detail that each committee should be asked to provide about the allocation of their funding. Some committees feel they should have the flexibility to allocate a lump sum into different categories as the situation changes. Some council members felt that more scrutiny should be applied to the expenses, and specific outcomes of that funding should be demonstrated. Specifically, a project CHIRP update was requested when the funding was approved but has not been provided.

Arthur acknowledges that the city has a role in helping to clarify what level of detailed reporting committees are required to produce.

Barrie Thomson left the meeting.

Robin Sorys suggests that until the issue is resolved by the city, funding for committees should be requested and approved on a monthly basis.

Motion:

Kim Beemer / Paul Wehrle

“Funding for committees will be requested and approved for not more than one month”

Motion carried

Motion:

Kim Beemer / Paul Wehrle

“Allocate \$300 funding for the VSP to the end of March, Details of funds must be itemized and submitted to the Treasurer.”

Motion carried

5. Business arising from the minutes

5.1. Annual General Meeting information - Arthur Beauregard

The city commits to having the AGM in April.

There was a question about 3rd party liability for activities performed by High Park volunteers. Arthur confirmed that the city insurance provides coverage for 1) approved work, 2) where there is adequate supervision and 3) volunteers are not paid. There is still some uncertainty about what “adequate supervision” means and how we can document that for all the volunteer activities. Arthur agrees that there is some confusion about that point, and the city is working on a clarification. The goal is to make sure that volunteers feel safe and are encouraged to participate in the park activities without fear of being sued for 3rd party injuries.

There was a question on the timeline of the mediation process that Arthur has been conducting. Almost all of the one-on-one meetings had taken place. Arthur reports that the meetings were generally going well, and that members had shown a lot of creativity in their suggestions. Arthur will work with Robin on a timeline for completing the process.

5.2. Appointment of HPI directorship -- Kim Beemer

Kim expressed concerns over the process of the recent appointment of the HPI director. There was no communication about the criteria for the position until the evening of the meeting. The terms of reference stipulate that people can express interest in standing for election in writing, but people were not offered that opportunity in the HPI director case.

Kim recognizes that the matter can be determined by the Chair but asks is that we be consistent in our practices either by following the Terms of Reference, or by indicating to HPCAC what the rules are.

Kim states that she did not at any time take the position that she was in conflict with the HPI Director if the focus was Nature Center based. She feels that comments made to that effect by those in attendance at the January meeting were inappropriate and inaccurate.

Arthur agrees that the process of the appointment was confusing and flawed. However, there was a request from HPI for a director, and the appointment is only an interim position for 2 months.

There was a discussion on which terms of reference currently apply for HPCAC given that the city is revising the terms. The HPCAC has passed a revised T.O.R and these are the ones that are currently in effect. If a part of those terms are disputed and if asked to rule on a particular issue, Arthur will use the City T.O.R dated 2004.

6. New Business

6.1. Children's garden Straw Bale Building - Robin Salt.

- The children's teaching kitchen project is underway
- The building will be complete in 2011 and an RFP for design/build had just gone out.

(ask for a soft copy update from Robin)

7. Reports/Updates

7.1. High Park Supervisor Helen Sousa

- 32 trees have been removed due to construction on Parkside Dr. Details will be put on the website. The replacement ratio is 3 trees planted to every 1 removed.
- Maps: New maps are being prepared. Helen sent out drafts to the committees and is compiling the comments/feedback received.
- Trail Names: Jerry and Helen are meeting to discuss a plan for coming up with trail names. If anyone is interested in participating in this initiative, contact Jerry.
- Sign Replacement: Many signs have been replaced already. If anyone knows of an item that should be signed, please contact Helen
- Coyote Signs: Metal signs warning of coyotes have been ordered. Brochures are ready and will be printed soon.
- Infrastructure money Signs: Recognition signs for recent infrastructure funding have been posted. Much of the funding went for repair of lighting. Jerry requests that the lighting repair design be provided to the council for consideration.
- Special Events: 2 upcoming walking events using spring road. Groups must post 4 signs 1 week in advance of their event.
- Howard Gates: 2013 will be the 100th anniversary of these gates, so now would be a good time to consider possible refurbishment. Other parks, e.g., Trinity Bellwood have refurbished their gates and that could provide some ideas. Currently, the gates are not a designated heritage site, but HPCAC could request that they be made so.
- Trail Improvement: The project has been improved and HPCAC concerns have been noted. Plans are available from Helen.

7.2. Colborne Lodge Cheryl Hart

- Colborne Lodge had quite a good year, and attendance is up.
- New programs include a story telling workshop and a children's art club.
- Current efforts are focused on March break programming, and a spring equinox moonlight tour.

7.3. High Park Initiatives - Jerry Hodge

Report from Interim HPCAC rep. on Feb 17, 2010 HPI meeting

Attendance:

Robin Sorys – President and HR Director
John Cleary - Secretary
Angie Begitsch – Treasurer
Judy Malone - Director – Marketing and Communications
Andrew Young – Director - Programs
Jerry Hodge - interim liaison with HPCAC

1. Report from the HPI fund-raising committee indicated a meeting was held to explore other fund-raising opportunities than the usual contributors for increased programming and extra staff. Additional programming was discussed and a number of options are being considered.
2. A request to the federal summer work program for four summer staff has been sent. The funding provides the funding of the summer programs at the Nature Centre.
3. A discussion ensued about the establishment of new programs for the Welcome Centre this summer. Jerry volunteered to explore the possibilities and report back to the committee at the next meeting. Other items discussed were tours - self-guided or guided, signage to Welcome Centre from other areas of the Park, and brochures including maps. This item assumes a go-ahead from HPCAC (pending).
4. The HPI website needs updating. Judy will explore funding possibilities.
5. Judy will be exploring professional fund-raisers over the next month to see if any of them fit the needs of HPI for funding initiatives. 6 companies have been suggested and Judy is making contacts with them to explore their suitability.
6. The HPI is moving forward with a policies and practices committee as suggested at their AGM. Currently it is looking for a candidate with a strong legal background before convening that committee.
7. The Strategic Plan is the initiative developed at the HPI Annual Meeting for the next 2 to 5 years of development. A group of suggestions to educate the public and to raise some funds were discussed.
8. Expansion of the Nature Centre is a priority as over 6000 students are using the existing facility per year. A larger facility would allow the expansion of programs. An exploratory committee to investigate possibilities is pending following a go-ahead from the City.

Respectfully submitted
J. Hodge (Interim liaison representative to HPI)

7.4. Built Environment & Safety Jerry Hodge

Attached are the motions put forward on the Welcome Center to be discussed at the next HPCAC meeting:

Welcome Centre Motions

1. to dissolve the Ad Hoc Committee on the Welcome Centre

The Committee was originally established to look at the feasibility of a Welcome Centre and if positive to put in place ways and means to establish it. That task has been done. Further maintenance can be handled through the BIS Committee as part of its mandate. The committee has fulfilled its mandate.

2. to establish a new committee after the AGM if needed for future development

Establishment of a permanent Welcome Centre seems premature. Another year in the same location with perhaps expanded hours and a clarified mandate might give sufficient information to develop the project further. A new committee could plan and monitor the work this summer and make recommendations in the fall.

3. to clarify relationships between the HPCAC and HPI regarding the Welcome Centre

Responsibility, program, funding and staffing all require clarification:

- Last year the project was developed by the Ad Hoc Committee
- The material costs were covered by HPI
- Signage was provided by the Helen Sousa from a Park budget.
- Pamphlets and maps were developed and provided by HPI through the good offices of Diana Teal at the Nature Centre.
- Printing was provided through the HPCAC paper budget
- Oak Savannah Booklets were provided by the VSP
- Staffing was provided by a federal grant to HPI for summer staffing
- The beginnings of an education program was developed by summer staff.

4. to develop park educational materials for distribution at the Welcome Centre

New materials to further the HPI mandate of education about the Park's natural environment should take a place alongside direction-giving and other user requests. Respect and appreciation of the resource should be highlighted. Liaison with Colburne Lodge staff can develop a take-away history of the Park for distribution along with an improved map.

5. to continue the development of the original Welcome Centre vision

By establishing a new committee to build on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee seems a natural step towards a permanent facility. Properly staffed and filled with useful materials and displays, the Welcome Centre could provide a value-added experience for public users of High Park in a variety of ways, but there is still a long way to go.

Respectfully submitted for consideration,

J. Hodge (Chair, Ad Hoc Welcome Centre Committee)

7.5. Natural Environment update - Sharon Lovett

1. Had a meeting on 2-Feb to discuss the ongoing writing project
2. Below is a flyer for the volunteer stewardship program:

Symposium: Conserving Nature in Urban Areas.

The successes and challenges of preserving, protecting and restoring nature in cities will be explored. Conservation plans for the future, role of advocacy and the power of volunteerism will also be discussed. The major Toronto natural areas are represented: the rivers Don, Humber and Rouge and Leslie Spit as well as references to High Park.

Date: Sunday, February 28, 2010

Time: 10:30 am to 2:00 pm (schedule on reverse)

Location: Howard Park Tennis Club, 430 Parkside Drive, two blocks south of Bloor

Schedule:

10:30 – 12:15: Speakers' Presentations

12:15 – 12:45 Lunch – Refreshments will be provided but please bring your own lunch.

12:45 – 1:35 Panel Discussion

1:35 – 2:00 Q and A

Speakers:

- **Janice Palmer**, member of the *Task Force to bring back the Don* (and Volunteer Team Coordinator in Sherwood Park)
- **Colin O'Neill**, Restoration Technician for the *Friends of the Rouge Watershed*
- **Garth Riley**, Co-chair of *Friends of the Spit*, Toronto's urban wilderness
- **Gary Wilkins**, Humber Watershed Specialist, Watershed Management Division for the *Toronto Region Conservation Authority* (TRCA)

Directions:

By Car: Two blocks south of Bloor on Parkside Drive (North of Bloor it is called Keele St.). The first street is Ridout; turn left (east) at the second street **Indian Valley Crescent** to park. The tennis Club is the brown building further back, behind the tennis courts. (The other building is the Nature Centre.)

By Public Transportation: **Keele Subway Station** – south of Bloor, the name changes to Parkside Drive. Walk two blocks south of Bloor on Parkside Drive. Cross the street at **Indian Valley Crescent** and follow the pathway to the brown building behind the tennis courts.

vsp@highpark.org or www.highpark.org

7.6. K9 Committee - John Cleary

K9 Committee Update to the HCPAC

1. Distemper outbreak
Recent media reports have highlighted the epidemic of a lethal strain of distemper, that has killed hundreds of raccoons and skunks in the GTA since 2009. This particular strain has been around for several years but Animal Services has reported a spike in cases since Spring 2009. Distemper is not transferable to humans but unvaccinated cats and dogs are at a high risk, with transmission occurring by food, water, body fluids and fecal matter. Dog-owners and other park users are advised to avoid sick or injured wildlife in the park and immediately report them to Toronto Animal Services (416 338-7297)

2. Pills found near off-leash areas and parks in Toronto
There has been a reported rash of suspicious activity around off-leash area in Toronto. News reports have indicated pills have been found scattered throughout a downtown off-leash area (Allan Gardens), crushed pills were found in Etobicoke backyards and a beef tongue with nails driven through it was found in Cedarvale ravine. There have been no reported incidents in High Park, although dog-owners and other park users are advised to keep an eye out for suspicious behaviour and to report any incidents to Parks Bylaw.
3. Planning for Spring cleanup and stewardship work.
The K9 committee would like to thank Helen for the improvements to the Dog Hill bulletin board and is looking forward to both the section 37 and off-leash review process moving forwards. The committee is currently planning for its annual Spring Cleanup and the resumption of stewardship work in the Spring. Interested individuals are asked to contact the K9 committee at k9@highpark.org

8. Other Business

No other business.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Next Meeting - The next meeting will be held on March 24, 2010 at the Howard Park Tennis Club at 6:30 pm.