

Alliance for Flushing Meadows Corona Park
Meeting of the Board of Directors
USTA National Tennis Center
Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens
Friday, October 13, 2017 at 10 am

Board Members in attendance: Mitchell J. Silver, Chair, Julissa Bisono, Ken Cohen, Carol Conslato, Julissa Ferreras-Copeland (by video conference call), Tom Finkelppearl, Raul Garcia, Jim Haddad, Andrea Hirsch, Vicky Morales, Patti Ornst, Carl Rodrigues, John Wang, Edwin Wong, Daniel Zausner, and Executive Director Janice Melnick.

Also in Attendance: Vickie Karp, NYC Parks, Jean Silva, Flushing Meadows Corona Park Conservancy, Anisia Aylon, Flushing Meadows Corona Park Conservancy, John Albert, USTA/NTC, David Aronov, representing Council Member Karen Koslowitz.

Welcome

Chair Silver welcomed the Board and individually welcomed Vicky Morales, who will now serve as Borough President Katz's designee on the Board, and Julissa Bisono, who is replacing Javier Valdes as CM Ferreras-Copeland appointment to the Board.

Chair Silver asked for a motion to adopt the minutes of the July 28, 2017 Board meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes. There were 10 yeas votes and 3 abstentions (not present at time of the vote: Jim Haddad, Julissa Bosano). The minutes were approved by the Board.

Chair Silver thanked the Board for the great success of its first fundraising gala, "Evening Under the Sphere." He thanked gala co-chairs Patti Ornst and Carol Conslato, John Wang and Edwin Wong, as well as our many sponsors.

Executive Director Report

Janice Melnick thanked everyone for their hard work and support in making the Alliance's first fundraising event such a success. She presented a summary and showed pictures of "Evening Under the Sphere. Over 150 attended the gala. The concept of a \$50 ticket for an outdoor cocktail party was widely praised. Tom Finkelppearl noted that the excellent local cuisine represented Queens well. Janice thanked major sponsors Con Ed and Delta Airlines, as well as the Queens Museum and Queens Night Market for their generous in-kind donations.

Janice also cited two Fall 2017 public events in the park. Ai Wei Wei's "Circle Fence" around the Unisphere. This is part of his "Good Fences Make Good Neighbors" exhibit, a 300-piece citywide Ai Wei Wei arts project sponsored by the Public Art Fund. We are very happy to have Flushing Meadows Corona Park hosting this important exhibit and she encouraged all of the Board members to take a look. Tom Finkelppearl said he had just gone to see it before the meeting and it is very special.

She also discussed our annual Halloween festival, Shocktoberfest, scheduled to take place on October 29th in the Playground for All Children. This great event offers children and families free pumpkins and holiday treats, inflatable rides, face painting, games and crafts, and, for the first time, a "BioBus" with engaging hands-on exhibits.

Governance

Carl Rodrigues stated that the City was the subject of litigation challenging the makeup of the Flushing Meadows Corona Park Alliance Board of Directors brought by Councilmember Rory I. Lancman. The City has determined that it is in its best interest to resolve the case amicably, and without any admission of fault by any party. Under the terms of the agreement, the Governance Committee is proposing the following amendment to the Bylaws: We move that the Board to the Alliance for Flushing Meadows Corona Park approve an amendment to the Bylaws that would add appointees of each City Council Member representing every District that abuts Flushing Meadows Corona Park (the 19th, 20th, 24th, and 29th Districts in Queens in addition to the representative from the 21st District that already sits on the Board) and two additional Mayoral appointees. If approved, this change to the Bylaws would increase the Board of Directors from a body comprised of fifteen Directors to one that has twenty-one Directors. A motion was made and seconded to approve the amendment. All Directors present voted in favor. The Bylaws of the Alliance will be amended.

Finance & Development Committee Report

Edwin Wong also thanked everyone for the hard work in making our Gala a success, especially Carol and Patty. He noted that while all of the monies from the Gala have not yet come in, we made just over \$45,000 and only spent \$2,231.57. This is an excellent percentage of cost vs monies raised. Edwin also highlighted a few items on the budget report. On the Revenue side, he reported that we received \$59,000 from Council Member Ferreras-Copeland even though it was not originally included in our initial proposed budget. He also mentioned that while we only budgeted \$5,000 in the Other (unrestricted) category, we have actually already received \$28,833.33 thanks to a \$25,000 donation by the New York Mets, thanks to Danny Zausner's efforts. On the Expense side, he pointed out that while we budgeted \$205,000 for equipment, we have actually spent \$211,888.19 to date. This is due to the equipment coming in at a slightly higher fee than the original estimates we had. We will be able to make up this short-fall with additional monies received and still be ahead in our net budget.

Community Advisory Board

John Wang reported on the CAB's last meeting and said they had developed a Beta website and logo which you can visit at FMCPCommunity.org. He said the CAB was awarded a \$3,000 Healthy Initiatives Grant from the City Parks Foundation to help them build awareness within the community. They have also applied for a \$5,000 Capacity Fund grant to raise awareness of the CAB through marketing materials and outreach. He went on to discuss how attendance has been dropping off and they are looking for ways to bring more community members to their meetings. They plan to combine their December CAB meeting with an Open House to attract more people. He asked the Alliance to provide \$1,000 for the endeavor. Board members asked for additional information including how this ask fits into a broader concept – is this a one-time request or would this be an on-going need. Chair Silver discussed the role of the CAB in relation to the Alliance and referred to a document presented to all at one of our earliest meetings; Janice will resend to Board members. He suggested pushing back the Open House so that the Board has more time to consider the request. Julissa Ferreras-Copeland said the CAB has a very important role to bring the voice of the community but it would make sense to lay out what the CAB really needs and perhaps ask Elected Officials for funds. It was decided that we would defer this until our next meeting. It was also suggested that we need more events where the CAB and Alliance can interact such as our Earth Day event last year.

New Business

The 2018 meeting schedule was discussed. Dates were proposed for the following: Friday, February 2, Friday, April 27, Friday, August 3, and Friday, October 26. All meetings would be held at 9am; locations to be determined. A motion was made and seconded. All Directors present voted in favor.

Before the meeting ended, Council Member Ferreras-Copeland gave a heartfelt statement. She said, in part, that she was humbled and honored that we helped her create a vision for her district. That it has been an honor and that she is leaving it in good hands. She further went on to say that a lot of people said it was impossible, but that we have done amazing work and that it will only get better with new appointees from additional elected officials. She ended by saying that “this girl from Corona” is so grateful. Chair Silver thanked her for her dedication to the Alliance.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00am.