

**Hudson River Park Advisory Council
Minutes from February 9, 2021 Zoom Meeting**

Jeffrey LeFrancois began the meeting at 6:02pm with a motion to approve the December 2020 meeting minutes. The minutes were approved.

Jeffrey continued and provided a review of Madelyn Wils's last board meeting in January. It is amazing the accomplishments attained during her tenure.

Noreen Doyle is now the acting interim President and CEO. Noreen provided the Trust Report to AC.

Carrie Roble provided a report on Wetlab. Learning Lab, a trailer of 30' x 8', is a sanitized space for pathogen and environmental DNA research. New signage, classrooms, tanks and native fishes are all part of the emerging program. NYC Water Trail is providing promo bono water quality information including measuring the effect of CSOs in the river. Water trail has members throughout the AC - Lilac, Boathouses, River Project.

3 contracts are out to bid to construct work on Gansevoort Peninsula. HRPK is waiting for soil delivery to account for 10 feet of soil that is needed to be added to the playing field area.

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The shade structures at Pier 97 were discussed. Design and construction is very busy. This is an ongoing conversation at CB4.

BPC north resiliency project is in planning process. Effort by CB1 to push for more comprehensive discussion rather than hearing a presentation without the input of HRPT is the objective moving forward. Request to get everyone together to work out the project plan. Area includes eastern side of bikeway from Harrison to North Moore, and across highway. Discussion needs more input from community before implementation.

Susanna interrupts to ask Noreen about her taking charge. Noreen explains the residing leadership has a deep understanding of all the projects the Trust is undergoing so the process should continue smoothly, even as busy as they are currently. Must follow the paths of NYS guidelines for procurement. Board is very involved. Less money because of COVID, but same amount of projects.

Snow removal inquiries answered by Deb Kustka, "challenged but doing the best they can." Snow removal increase due to more frequent snow events. Snow plan is reviewed at the beginning of the season. Park is in constant development. So removing snow plan is always being modified. It is a zone management situation. Onsite supervisor assists crews where snow removal is needed most such as Pier 40 frontage, bikeway, areas of park service equipment.

Removal is tough once snow becomes ice; and becomes impossible without damaging fields.

Some equipment issues arose but HRPK has plenty of equipment.

Field space is not cleared. Nor is it a priority with the limited resources and staff available.

Isaac Daniel Astrachan requested the amount of funds needed to clear field before snow turns to ice. DUSC could potentially pay for snow removal.

Trust is open to private funding for snow removal. Can Friends help? Snow removal isn't very sexy but its necessary. Tony indicated there are many items on the bucket list Friends assists with.

Tami Melzer seconded request for costs associated with field snow removal on Pier 40.

Tom Fox, thinking out of the box, commented that snow could help promote HRPK. Like creating a cross country ski trail in Pier 40. Or a small snow hill.

Speaking of outdoor sporting in the park, Albert Taylor lamented that the fence closes activity by the only slope in the park (north of Chelsea Piers?). The response, the bowl is a difficult spot to maintain and is therefore fenced off by a low wire fence.

Noreen continued, dirt is exposed during sledding so it destroys the lawn.

Other members such as Sally Curtis revel in the show and have had wonderful sessions with her grandchildren in the untouched snow.

It appeared from the robust discussion that the AC was highly in favor of supporting winter recreational activities, specifically with use snow with areas allocated to build snowmen, sled, and contribute to a Winter Carnival feel.

HRPF report was presented by Tony Simone who kicked off his report with a shout out to Madelyn Wils. HRPF supports an extensive search to find a new CEO for HRPT.

Volunteer program is mostly virtual, some in person. Corporate partnerships and community partners are still active participants.

Much of HRPK's essential work is being handled by Doe Fund. For many years HRPK was the biggest client for Doe Fund. The service provides exterior and interior support. The Doe Fund program is a Fed Cap fund administered through NYS for people who need extra support, whether they are coming from disrupted lives or have been recently released from incarceration. Some Doe Fund members have gone on to become full time staff at HRPT. So almost half dozen have secured full time employment. These Doe Fund participants are learning new skills, having worked with sustainability and with park

inspired composting. People write to HRPT when they see a Doe Fund. The response is very positive and reassuring with the added presence of security.

Richard Corman inquired whether the AC should write to the Trust Board regarding the process regarding the replacement of Madelyn. Tenor of the letter should show appreciation for past park management and how well its been done over the years.

The next topic involved bike safety and training. Recommendation to consult with Bike NY, to promote cyclist education. Should be an initiative acted upon immediately. Tom Fox volunteered to work on bike safety initiative and how to investigate ways on how we can educate bikers.

Dennis McCarthy offered that he can connect Bike NY with Mary Habstritt and Tom Fox.

The next item on the agenda was a presentation by Wendi Pastor of the AC's newly revised By Laws. The By Laws committee has been meeting for the past 9 months and focused on many issues that needed updating. Important changes include 2 year terms, new election protocols, cap on tenant members, and redefining rolls of Executive Committee, Election Committee, and duties of officers. The By Laws were approved unanimously with the understanding that the membership clause regarding HRPK tenants will be more tightly defined, whereby no more than 20% of AC members can be tenants of the park.

HRPT then provided a presentation "Being a Welcoming Park for All" led by Carrie Roble and Kira Levy. In summary, the presentation communicated concepts to make the park actively welcoming with equitable representation though providing internships recruiting locally, and reinforcing that network with internal and external feedback. One successful program included High School students mentored by City College students. National Science Foundation provides the funding. 25 students to date. 6 week research intensive.

The idea is to lower the barrier for application to make it most equitable. HRPK is working with council members who reach out to teachers to spread the word. If AC members know of a school or organization to reach out, they would love to connect.

One of the forums for education our youth should celebrate NY's Maritime history of the park and the waterfront. Aside from the ships that crew the harbor, there is a rich oyster history that is part of the program. Native stories are included. More historic offerings will be presented this coming year. Tom Fox offered to volunteer to lend some insight on the history of maritime activity of the Hudson.

Michael Wiggins began the discussion on bringing equity to HRPK. The belief that education is the nexus of everything. Draft strong statement on environmental justice.

24% of NYC is black and the park is theirs. Ongoing space for learning led by River Project team.

The depth of the programming is led by River Project. Sustainability, composting, and other environmental justice programs.

Many members of the Advisory Council spoke passionately about creating opportunities to make the park an example for other equity minded organizations to follow. The robust conversation touched on many topics, and agreed that the AC is currently lopsided in its ethnic representation. Suggestions to fill vacant seats occupied by elected officials with young representatives of color was suggested by Traci Jackson. Michael requested that each and every AC member invite a person of color to join them as their guest for the next meeting.

Meeting ended 8:59 pm.

Minutes prepared by Daniel Miller, 1st Vice Chair, HRP AC.