

I. **Minutes From Last Meeting**

The minutes from the April meeting were approved.
An abbreviated business meeting was held to allow time for a conversation with Councilman Mark Squilla.

II. **Treasurer's Report**

To date, the balance of Advisory Council funds is \$15,345.69. Included are deposits for next year's pre-school program, summer camp and the flea market. Expenses include yoga and pre-school instructors. As always, a full review of the budget is available at the office.

III. **Committee Reports**

Programming:

The programming year is winding down.

- The Pre-school program will end May 25th, the Friday before Memorial Day.
- Yoga class has temporarily moved back to Tuesdays for the last three weeks in June. After that, classes will be suspended for the summer and will resume in September. There will be no yoga class on June 5th
- Ideas for new Fall programming are most welcome.

SPADO:

Lars reported that for the 'Love Your Park' event, SPADO volunteers fixed the mesh on the fence, moved lots of gravel from the sidewalk and generally cleaned up. They are now planning responsibilities associated with new projects, e.g., shade for the dog run area.

IV. **New Business**

Councilman Mark Squilla was a guest at the meeting to hear about park issues. While making no promises, the councilman made a commitment to work with the advisory council, department of parks and recreation and the community in our efforts to develop ongoing and future plans for Columbus Square Park.

Several issue areas were raised by those in attendance including the following:

Q: What can be done to assure better field maintenance? It has been very difficult to maintain the field because of the over permitting. There is not enough down time to seed, water and rest the field.

A: Unfortunately there are not enough fields in the city to meet the demand, so all fields are over used. A request is being made for a rolling permit period. This must be done district wide. The rest time for the fields is December through mid-March.

Q: It seems that the fields are not for local residents but for leagues and others to use the field. It never seems to be available to local residents.

A: A suggested option is to support a Columbus Square sports organization and permit the field for use by a Columbus league.

Q: Is it possible for this to be a “no cleat” field?

A: Suggest exploring this with the groups that are now using the field.

Q: The flowers that have been planted around the park are very beautiful. However, some sections are over grown and feel unsafe, especially near the very high bushes.

A: The esthetics of the plantings are best worked out among the residents and council members, with compromise being the best approach.

Q: There is concern that the Christopher Columbus Charter School is moving and will be replaced by a drug rehab clinic.

A: While the school is looking for a new location to expand, nothing is definite yet and no sale has been made. If a move does occur, the use of the building will be subject to zoning requirements and process, including community input.

Other suggestions/comments from those attending the meeting included the following:

- Suggest increased police patrols around the park to help address safety concerns.
- Passive park use is still park use, suggest permitting the field for passive use also.
- Suggest permitting Sunday for community use.
- A concern was raised about flower pots positioned at the corners near stop signs, which is contrary to city ordinances regarding placement of items near stop signs.
- The city is looking at potential new field spaces to alleviate the high demand. The Sunoco plant is one such possibility.

In closing, Councilman Squilla reinforced the importance of all working together toward the goals of a clean, safe park for all to enjoy. He also indicated that with the merging of Parks and Recreation, attempts are being made to maintain the Recreation facilities in the same way that Parks maintained theirs. This is a long-term goal which will take some time to accomplish and which requires the efforts of everyone.

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The Passyunk Square Civic Association will be dedicating its next meeting to safety issues including town watch and police. The date is June 6th at 6:30 PM at South Philadelphia Older Adult Center (SPOAC).

V. **Next Advisory Council Meeting: Thursday, June 20 at 7:00 PM. This will be the last meeting until September.**