



Friends of Murray Park

Notes of Meeting held on Wednesday at 7pm, 17th May 2023 at Murrayside Community Centre

Present:

Officers: Tracy Rowe (Chair)
Lesley Fayers (Treasurer)
Sue Bird (Secretary)

Members: Dennis Carpenter, Paul Gilbert, Jill Richardson

Also Present: Nick Wilcox (IBC), Max Thomas (for item 4 only)

Apologies:

1 Excluded Persons

There were no excluded persons.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.

3 Matters Arising

- a) LF has opened an information sharing platform called Murray Park Play Area Revamp, for anyone wishing to share pictures/ideas for the new play area.
- b) The gate to the orchard at the NE corner had still not been fixed. NW promised to chase this up.
- c) PG reported that he had witnessed some boys trying to break the gates and slamming the toilet doors very hard in an effort to damage them. LF had also seen 5 youngsters and a bike in one of the toilets. It was thought that if anyone contacted Park Patrol to report things like this out of working hours, the matter was simply passed on to the Police. NW said that the popularity of the Park was increasing, and that a lot of this was due to the efforts of Murray Park Friends. Also, with daylight hours increasing with the season, this also served to reduce the vandalism.

- d) Of the 70 new trees, even the vandalised ones appeared to be still alive. There had been many positive comments from the public on the new trees.
- e) The Head Teacher of Murrayfield Primary School was keen to get children involved in work regarding the Wildlife Area, but had not been able to attend this meeting.
- f) The Ball Stop Net should be installed very soon.
- g) The wildflower seeds that were scattered in the NE corner were growing rapidly.

4 Ipswich Windrush Society 75th Anniversary Event: 24 June

Max Thomas presented the arrangements for the proposed Windrush Event to be held on 24 June on the Park from 11am until 6pm and later in the evening at Murrayside Community Centre. Max asked for the Group's help to make the event run as smoothly as possible. Several of Max's ideas were still in the planning stage and some of the following items had not yet been confirmed

Many of the elder Windrush Generation were passing away and it was feared that their stories would soon be lost, and needs to be captured through poetry, documentaries etc, and the aim of the event was to celebrate their heritage through music, food, fashion etc, in an effort to connect what was now the fifth generation with their roots.

Funding for the event amounting to £32,000 had been raised from the Arts Council of England.

Many people had come to this country from the Caribbean, thinking that they would be treated as British citizens but in many cases this did not meet up with their expectations, and what had been promised.

A vintage bus from the relevant period had been booked from the Ipswich Transport Museum, which would be parked outside the Park and serve as an information point. The Museum itself may also be open if people wanted to visit and see bygone vehicles.

Max was planning to contact Ipswich Buses to see if they would agree to a discounted rate for attendees coming from the town centre as there was very little local parking.

Max hoped to be able to secure a large trailer for the day, which would be the transport for a steel band as part of the parade. He had also made contact with 6 other artists from Birmingham, as well as local artists, a Gospel/Reggae choir and possibly a comedian. He would like Benjamin Zephaniah to attend, although this was by no means certain.

Children from local schools would be encouraged to draw flags from Caribbean countries, which would then form part of the parade from town.

Max hoped to be able to secure a free ice cream van for the parade.

He was also trying to organise various merchandise, catering stalls, information/history stall, children's rides and additional toilets on the park.

Approximate attendance of 2,000 was expected.

Permission to use the park for this event had been given by Lisa Stannard of Ipswich Borough Council, and the Events Team were on board and had also promised to partially match fund the Arts Council funding by donating the infrastructure, including staging, security and barriers. They would be completing event planning and risk assessment and should also be informing the police of the event. The Parks Department would be helping with cleaning up afterwards. This was part of the match funding agreement with the Arts Council of England.

Max hoped to be able to arrange an Awards Ceremony and there had been an exhibition in Sailmakers shopping mall in the Town Centre, and in the Town Hall.

The Group noted that there was also a large event happening on Holywells Park on the same day.

Murray Park Friends would like to have their own stall, giving information about the Group.

Caribbean food would be provided from the kitchen at Murrayside Community Centre, as well as other food stalls.

Max informed members that a Mrs Flowers would be celebrating her 100th birthday and Max had suggested to the Mayor and David Ellesmere that she should receive a telegram from the King. This had not been confirmed as yet.

5 Retiring Councillors

Cllr Bill Quinton was standing down from his role as Suffolk County Councillor due to failing health. As a long-standing supporter of Murray Park Friends, Bill will be very much missed, and the Group sent all their very best wishes to him for a long retirement. As we had not really had a chance to say goodbye properly, the Friends wanted to meet up with him one evening socially for a drink.

We also expressed a desire to plant a tree on the park in honour of Bill's long service and dedication to the Group. NW said he had a well-established silver birch which had not been allocated anywhere else. If this could be arranged on a week day before 4pm this would enable IBC ground staff to attend the planting without having to pay them overtime.

Cllr Luke Richardson had also stood down as Borough Councillor. We thank him for his contribution and wish him well for the future.

6 Finance

LF reported that there was a balance of £51.58 in our account. She asked whether she could purchase some dog waste bags as she had been (and continued to) pick up dog waste left by other dog owners. TR (Chair offered to provide these.

Dog fouling continues to be a major problem on the park and the Friends discussed various strategies to try to improve matters. NW said he would enquire about waste bag dispensers. It was thought that perhaps the local schoolchildren could make notices about dog waste and litter in general.

With such a small sum in the account, members thought it would be a good idea to try to raise some funds at our stall on 24th June by selling surplus plants. To comply with the law, it would have to be on a “suggested donation” basis rather than a fixed price.

7 Any Other Business

LF offered to send “What 3 Words” information to NW about the dead tree.

There were reports of a person walking backwards and forwards along the Northern end of the park, who appeared to be looking for something. This had been a method used for drug dealing in the past, so this was seen as suspicious.

There had also been two rough sleepers on the park, who were known to be stealing milk from doorsteps in the area.

8 Date of Next Meeting(s)

The next scheduled meeting was to be held on Wednesday 12th July (on the Park if weather permits). However, the AGM scheduled for 15th November now clashed with a full Council meeting, so this has been rescheduled for 8th November. A revised Calendar of Meetings will be issued shortly.