

Friend of Red House Park
4th September 2006
Annual General Meeting
Meeting Notes

Sarah Carter, Chair, opened the meeting at 7.00p.m.

1. Present

Sarah Carter, Chair William Gunn, Vice-Chair Jenny Hale, Secretary Guy Hale, Treasurer Steve West, SMBC Ray Wheatley Stephanie Page Jason Cross	Glen Williams Dawn Williams Christine Horton Joshua Bannister Cllr Mary Wilson Cllr Tony Ward J Ward Nabil Siddique
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2. Apologies

Tony Lewis
Jean Jones

Sonia Vaughan
Kay Clash

3. Election of Secretary

- S Carter reminded group that J Hale was not standing again for the position of Secretary and that if no one else came forward for the position the Friends would no longer be able to continue and that there was no point in continuing the meeting. She then passed over to Steve West to continue to chair the meeting for the voting process. SW began by thanking the Friends for all their hard work and congratulated them for being so successful.
- SW asked for any nominations. No nominations were made. SW asked for any self nominations – none were made. SC suggested that the meeting should close.
- C Horton asked if the position could be split and broken down into smaller areas of responsibility. JH suggested that there were several areas which could be covered by different individuals, as mentioned at the last meeting. Cllr T Ward reminded the group that although the job could be split, there still had to be one person nominated as Secretary who ultimately had to take responsibility for the overall position and this could not be avoided.
- It was suggested that letters go out to all members asking for volunteers and setting a deadline. Should no one come forward before the next meeting, 16th October, then the Friends of Red House Park would fold.
- SW suggested continuing with the elections of the rest of the Select Committee members pending the result of the Secretary's position.

4. Election of Chair

Sarah Carter was nominated and re-elected as Chair.

5. Election of Vice-Chair

William Gunn was nominated and re-elected as Vice-Chair.

6. Election of Treasurer

Guy Hale was nominated and re-elected as Treasurer.

7. Play Area

- JH had been looking into acquiring more equipment for the 8-14 play area. She had spoken to Tony Deakin, SMBC, who had designed the original play area and had been given some rough estimates for provision and installation. The costs ranged from 15k to 35k, starting with just swings and then adding slide, witches hat and spinning pole. To fit all the equipment in, the area of grass would have to be used.
- SW pointed out that having a grass area was a requirement of the funding body and it was unlikely that such a change to the play area would be agreed. JH to look into further.
- JH had requested an up to date report from D Brown, SMBC, as to the 106 funds available from the recent property developments. Funds from Galton Crt, Hamstead Crt and Sundial Lane should be coming to the Park – this could pay for the new equipment.
- Cllr T W stated that the 106 fund was soon to be revoked. Instead all funds from local developments would go into the general 'pot' and used around the borough. Once this happened Great Barr would be very unlikely to get anything as it was seen as an affluent area. JH to chase up.
- SW wanted to point out that there were other priorities in the park, i.e. finishing the lower lake in line with RoSPA's report. SC and other members made it clear that the Friends are not happy with spending any more money on the lakes. The Friends thought that money had been squandered on the original project and work that should have been done with the original funding was not done. Therefore, the Friends do not see work on the lower lake as a priority.

8. Red House

- SC & JH had been reliably informed that the sale of the Red House for conversion into flats was still a probable outcome. Cllr TW advised that any suggestions of selling the House would come through to his committee and, as yet, he had heard nothing. JC advised that the fire door at upper rear of the House was continually being left open and the alarm being left off, therefore, the opportunity for vandalism and arson was a real threat.
- The House is still the responsibility of BTCV so the Council won't do anything about it but BTCV want to pull out of the contract and SMBC won't let them. Corporate Property Services are supposed to be actively looking for a replacement but, as we all know, they have turned down every other viable proposal so far.
- SC showed the group a leaflet compiled by JH complaining about the Council's lack of effort to sort out the Red House and the high risk of it being sold off for property development. The general feeling was that it was too long/wordy and lacked impact. JB and Cllr TW volunteered to come up with wording. It was put to the group that the leaflets should be posted door to door, with the request that residents write to Cllr Bill Thomas. The group voted to hold back, with many worried that if the sale of the House wasn't imminent, residents would see it as another false alarm.
- The group was advised that they would have a maximum of 2 months in which to act once a decision had been made by the Council. A petition would have very little effect on the outcome. It would be far more effective to have many individual letters from residents opposing the sale. Suggestion that we have a direct link from our web site petition to SMBC via Customer Relations Dept, FAO Bob Badham. JB agreed to write to previous petitioners for help.

9. Any Other Business

- SW confirmed that there had been a rape and an attack in or adjacent to the Park – two separate incidents. Both perpetrators had been caught by police and were awaiting trial.
- Pump House demolition has been completed and signed off.

- Slabs which were dumped in the top lake and classed as a ramp have now been pushed into the lake and lie flat.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 16th October 2006, 7 p.m. at the Training Centre, Hill Lane, Great Barr.