

**Elizabeth Park Conservancy
Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes
May 21, 2019**

Ben Flynn, Chair	X	Marian Kellner	A
Ed Samorajczyk, Vice Chair	X	Sibongile Magubane	X
Laurie Wasserstein, Secretary	A	Melissa Macri	A
Kelly Jarvis, Asst. Secretary	X	Nancy Porter	X
Joe Coray, Treasurer	X	Donna Stout	X
Charlie Ortiz, Past President	A	Rosemarie Tate	X
Francine Christianson	X	Jeff Verney	A
Dave Jepsen	A	Bobbie Woronow	X
Douglas Hyland	X	Christine Doty, Pres. & CEO	X

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Agenda for meeting was approved.

3. Approval of March Minutes

The Minutes of the April meeting were approved without changes.

4. Presentation of the 2019 Financial Statement as of 12/31/18 by Auditors

Brian Kelleher, Partner, and Amber Tucker, Senior Manager, of Fiondella, Milone & La Saracina LLP presented the Audited Financial Statements to the Board. Mr. Kelleher presented the Auditor's Report. He highlighted the Basis of Presentation. Ms. Tucker reviewed for the Board various line items in the Financial Statements. She explained that several are presented in a different manner this year due to new requirements. The purpose of these requirements is to provide greater uniformity among nonprofit organizations in the manner in which they present their financials.

The Auditors advised that if the Conservancy spends \$300,000 or more of the \$500,000 bond funds from the State next year, the Office of Policy and Management would require the Conservancy to have a State of Connecticut Single Compliance Audit in addition to the standard Audit.

Board members commented on the draft and provided minor changes. The Auditors will revise the document accordingly. The Board will vote on whether to accept the 2019 Audited Financial Statement at the June Board meeting.

5. Finance (Joe Coray)

Joe provided an operating statement for the first quarter, including April. Revenue to expenses for the quarter is negative (\$-27,515). Joe explained that this is largely due to a one-time \$25,000 expense made by the Pond House to renovate the Men's rest room. April operating income is also negative due to this expense (-\$24,830). Joe highlighted that the Conservancy's cash position is still very strong.

6. Governance (Francine Christianson)

Francine proposed the new slate of Officers to the Board as follows:

Ben Flynn, Chair
Ed Samorajczyk, Vice Chair
Dave Jepson, Treasurer
Vacant, Assistant Treasurer
Laurie Wasserstein, Secretary
Nancy Porter, Assistant Secretary

The Board will vote on whether to accept the proposed Officers at the next Board meeting.

Ben thanked Joe Coray and Kelly Jarvis for their service as Officers. Francine informed the Board that last month the Governance Committee invited three individuals to become new Ambassadors. She advised that the Governance Committee considers potential new Board members on an ongoing basis.

7. Projects

Ben deferred the discussion of Projects to Christine Doty, and her presentation of the President and CEO Report.

8. Trees and Arboretum Qualification

Christine Doty reported that the majority of trees have been planted and look very good. This is an ongoing project. Christine provides a more detailed update in her President and CEO Report.

9. Wine & Roses (Joe Coray)

Joe reported that the Budget goal of \$70,000 revenue, \$20,000 expenses and \$50,000 new proceeds is on track. So far there are \$23,000 of Auction items. He anticipates that seventy-five percent of that amount will be revenue. Joe encouraged Board members to increase ticket sales. So far 170 tickets have been sold. He would like to reach 250. The Pond House has capacity for 300. Joe is trying to develop a greater electronic /social media presence for the event this year. Board members proposed contacting past Board member Andrea Pape to see if the Hartford Courant could provide advertising for the event.

Joe announced that Stephen Scanniello has arranged for a significant new auction item: a tour for six people of Martha Stewart's garden in Katonah, New York on Tuesday, June 11, 10:00AM - 12:00PM

7. President/CEO Report (Christine Doty)

The License Agreement between the Elizabeth Park Conservancy and the City of Hartford has been renewed for an additional 5-year term, ending on May 30, 2024. Christine stated that the next step will be to review and revise some of the terms in the Agreement. The goal is for the Agreement to more accurately reflect the responsibilities assumed by the Conservancy over the years.

After a recent meeting concerning permitting the new stage and events in the Garden area of the Park, City of Hartford officials agreed that the Conservancy should be given the right to approve (or not) requests for permits for special events in the garden area. The City of Hartford Mayor's Office will need to give final approval of this change in process.

Public notice inviting contractors to bid on the Visitor Center project were published in the Hartford Courant during the week of April 29. Bids are due on May 29. Once received, the Conservancy will have a good idea how much will need to be spent on the building renovation (and what funds remain for the parking lot).

The Ethel Donaghue Trust has committed an additional \$149,000 to the Visitor Center project. The sum includes \$44,000 that the Trust had previously committed to the Wetlands Boardwalk Project in the Western Loop. Due to the estimated cost of Boardwalk Project the Conservancy has decided to postpone the project.

The tree planting project made possible by the gift of Tai Soo Kim is almost complete. The Conservancy applied for and has been granted Level 1 Arboretum status for Elizabeth Park. Christine explained the various requirements of Arboretum status. Christine agreed with a suggestion that a fund be established to maintain the trees.

The final lecture on May 16 was given by Linda Holden and was very well received. She discussed her book about the Bunny Mellon's gardens. Approximately 75 people attended. The lecture series was a success. Christine suggested that perhaps Richard Powers, who wrote a book entitled "The Overstory" may be one of the speakers in the series next year. She also stated that the Conservancy is trying to secure a "Blockbuster Speaker" next year.

Two donors are interested in the Fern Street entrance project. Awaiting work from the landscape architect before proceeding.

Three new Ambassadors attended the May 1 meeting of the Ambassadors.

8. Old Business – None

9. New Business – None

Meeting Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 pm

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, June 18 at 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Porter