

Rose Kennedy Greenway Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, September 13, 2016 – 5:30 pm
185 Kneeland Street, 2nd Floor, Boston

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present In Person: Jim Kalustian, Chris Betke, Mark Boyle, Kathryn Burton, Janelle Chan, Helen Chin Schlichte, Chris Manfredi, Jane Pappalardo, Thomas O'Brien, John Pregmon, Robyn Reed, Bud Ris

Board Members Absent: James Chan, Beedee Ladd, Martin Lynn, Tim Morningstar, Colleen Richards Powell, Kim Sherman Stamler, Daniel Sieger, Jerome Smith, Daniel Toscano

RFKGC Staff: Jesse Brackenbury, Lucas Cowan, Laura Jasinski, Michael Nichols, Elana Price, Renee Wood

Open Session

Greenway Board Chair Jim Kalustian called the meeting to order in Open Session with a quorum present, in person, at 5:44pm.

1. Greenway Conservancy Public Art Curator Lucas Cowan presented an update on the public art program. Mr. Cowan shared with the Board the selection of the next artist commissioned for a new work on the Greenway Wall at Dewey Square Park – Mehdi Ghadyanloo. Mr. Cowan provided information on how we came to be familiar with the chosen artist, the success of his past works, and the projected installation schedule. Mr. Cowan also provided information to the Board about the Conservancy's curatorial theme for 2016-2017 and awards received by the Conservancy for past public artworks. Mr. Cowan provided information related to the funding sources for the mural, which included no public funds and is comprised of private donations, grants and earned income.

Board members asked questions about whether the artist's copyright for the work would preclude the Conservancy from utilizing the work for fundraising appeals and whether the state has yet provided the needed permits for the project.

2. Chair Kalustian called for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 10, 2016 meeting of the Board of Directors. **On a motion by Chris Manfredi, and seconded by Bud Ris, the minutes were unanimously approved.**

3. Renee Wood, the Conservancy's Director of Finance & Administration, presented updates to the FY16 Budget. Ms. Wood noted that the Board-approved FY16 balanced budget was earlier updated to include roughly \$0.2M in new revenues and expenses, mainly due to strong year-end fundraising. The present update reflected a slight increase in revenue, mainly due to stronger than expected earned income receipts. The present update also reflected that significant capital expenditures expected for the Wharf District were no longer planned for FY16 due to a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council not materializing in this term.

Board members asked questions related to the sources of earned income responsible for such revenue growth.

On a motion by Bud Ris, and seconded by Chris Manfredi, the proposed FY16 Budget as updated was unanimously approved.

4. FARMC Co-Chair Chris Manfredi provided an update on the Board Committee's handling of the anonymous allegations of improper conduct. Ms. Manfredi thanked Board member Bud Ris and financial professional Lisa Schimmel for a thorough [informal inquiry](#) into the subject matter pursuant to the Conservancy's policy on reporting and investigation allegations of suspected improper conduct. Ms. Manfredi updated the Board that the result of the inquiry was a recommendation to the FARMC that "there is no reasonable basis for launching a formal investigation into the complaints set forth in the GU document." Ms. Manfredi offered that the FARMC considered the recommendation at the [July 27, 2016 FARMC meeting](#) and voted that "'no reasonable basis exists to commence a formal investigation' into the anonymous claims investigated by Mr. Ris." Board Member Mark Boyle noted that the FARMC also voted to provide the results of Mr. Ris' inquiry to MassDOT's Internal Audit unit. Mr. Boyle also updated the Board that the MassDOT Internal Audit unit had reviewed the inquiry and concurred with the conclusion reached.

Board members inquired as to whether the informal inquiry had yet been shared publicly posted. Staff responded that the informal inquiry had been publicly posted since the FARMC meeting and would remain publicly posted.

5. Greenway Conservancy Executive Director Jesse Brackenbury and Director of Programs and Planning Laura Jasinski presented to the Board on a proposal for 2017 winter activation. Ms. Jasinski provided a recap on a pending proposal by Upsilon Ventures for a winter holiday market and related amenities as well as updates to the proposal. Ms. Jasinski offered that the Conservancy is in the process of negotiating a non-binding letter of intent with Upsilon based on Board feedback. Ms. Jasinski and Mr. Brackenbury noted that for several operational and logistical considerations, the winter market would be for winter 2017 and not winter 2016. Mr. Brackenbury highlighted several key points for Board discussion related to environmental, financial and contractual considerations of the potential partnership.

Board members asked questions related to the timeline for a potential winter activation, the ability to utilize local utilities, revenue expectations, corporate sponsorship opportunities, and potential competitors in the local landscape.

A Board discussion ensued regarding competitive benefits enjoyed by The Greenway in consideration of such an activation compared to other sites now considering similar offerings, environmental considerations, and an understanding of the benefits and risks. **On a motion by Tom O'Brien, and seconded by John Pregmon, the Board voted unanimously that "staff will continue working with a Board working group and is authorized to sign a non-binding Letter of Intent."**

6. Greenway Conservancy Chief of Staff Michael Nichols presented an update on the Conservancy's public process surrounding whether or not to extend the PlayCubes playground in Chinatown Park beyond its initial six-month installation.

Mr. Nichols outlined that the PlayCubes were the product of a partnership with the Design Museum of Boston and consist of four sets of children's play equipment that have been in the park since the spring. Since initial installation, many have reached out to staff at the Conservancy asking that the PlayCubes remain in the park. Conservancy staff had earlier written into the contract with PlayCubes producer Playworld that the Conservancy could keep and own any or all of the four PlayCubes components at the end of the temporary Design Museum installation. Mr. Nichols offered the Conservancy engaged in a wide-ranging public process in the fall to obtain feedback from the community and local stakeholders on whether the PlayCubes should remain, while the Conservancy also engaged in

an internal process to understand the operational and maintenance considerations of extended, multi-season use of the equipment.

Mr. Nichols offered that the Conservancy's public process included bilingual surveys and community outreach that extended to neighborhood stakeholders, government officials, community group meetings, local newspapers, and in-park outreach. The Conservancy's public process led to over 150 completed surveys with 93% favoring to keep the PlayCubes. The Conservancy's analysis of operational considerations related that a new configuration and consolidation in one part of Chinatown Plaza would provide an appropriate balance between the public's interest in keeping the equipment and the operational considerations of programming and maintaining Chinatown Park. Mr. Nichols relayed a staff recommendation to the Board to keep half of the four PlayCubes configurations and to consolidate their location into one side of the plaza.

Board members asked questions related to the budget for keeping more and less than the recommended number of PlayCubes, whether another configuration was possible to keep more playspace than proposed, and whether the manufacturer might share in some of the cost of the reconfiguration.

The Board consensus was that the staff explore with the manufacturer whatever configuration would maintain the most playspace in a consolidated area that allows Conservancy staff and other programs sufficient space for snow removal, large-scale festivals, and other regular park uses.

7. Greenway Conservancy Manager of Membership and Annual Fund Elana Price provided an update on the Conservancy's forthcoming improvements to the Membership program. Ms. Price provided historical data on membership totals and retention, and an analysis of current members by level of support. Ms. Price discussed new approaches to drive membership, including the development of additional benefits of interest to Greenway audience members. Ms. Price also discussed additional approaches to identify and convert likely members, including additional outreach through Greenway owned media channels.

Board members provided feedback about developing clear metrics from tracking the success of the new program and needed improvements in marketing efforts aimed at retaining members.

8. Mr. Brackenbury shared updates about recent successful events on The Greenway, including a weekend that saw a successful dog carnival, revenue-generating beer festival, lantern festival in Chinatown Park, and volunteer service day in remembrance of September 11th that included Governor Baker and Mayor Walsh. Mr. Brackenbury also provided an update on an earlier Board item related to procurements by offering that a previously discussed masonry procurement would not move forward due to the Conservancy not receiving funds this term from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Mr. Brackenbury also thanked Janelle Chan for her record of services to the Greenway Conservancy Board of Directors in honor of her final meeting on the Board.
9. Chair Kalustian announced that the next public meeting of the Board would be held on Tuesday, December 13, 2016.
10. No members of the public present sought to be heard.

The Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy Board Meeting was adjourned, upon a motion made by Robyn Reed and seconded by Jane Pappalardo, and a unanimous vote in favor was held at 7:46pm.