

In The Boardroom – Not The Backroom

Park Watch is a volunteer citizen watchdog group formed after the Park Board's 5 member majority faction hired a superintendent who had not applied or interviewed for the position in 2003. For the past 21 months, Park Watch has been attending Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board meetings and maintaining a website, mplsparkwatch.org.

Park Watch supports good government. We are advocates for openness, accountability and good stewardship.

It is apparent that a recently announced political action committee was formed to discredit citizen scrutiny, and protect the Park Board's controversial 5 member majority faction and the status quo. Supporters of that PAC are nervous because we are scrutinizing the controlling faction.

The DeLaSalle stadium project is one example of how the majority coalition does business: in the backroom — not the boardroom. Had it not been for Commissioners John Erwin and Annie Young, and a number of astute and concerned citizens, including Park Watch, the DeLaSalle project would have been consummated without any public input. Instead, the majority faction was pressured by Erwin, Young and citizens to follow the Park Board's own procedures and create a Citizens Advisory Committee. So, with Park Watch and other reform-minded citizens around, it's no longer business as usual for the majority coalition.

The non-partisan members of Park Watch support an independent Park Board, but believe we deserve a better Park Board. Because this is an election year, Park Watch has endorsed candidates for the Park Board. Park Watch believes the following candidates can work together to build a better Park Board, one that will conduct its business in the boardroom — not the backroom:

District 1 – LuAnn Wilcox
District 2 – No endorsement
District 3 – Scott Vreeland
District 4 – Tracy Nordstrom
District 5 – Jason Stone
District 6 – Jim Bernstein

Citywide At-Large – Rochelle Berry Graves
Citywide At-Large – Tom Nordyke
Citywide At Large – Annie Young

#####

Contact information (press members only):

Chris Johnson
Co-founder, Park Watch
(612) 926-7920
contact@mplsparkwatch.org
<http://www.MplsParkWatch.org/>