



# THE PACT:

## THE PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL TRIBUTE NEWSLETTER

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## GLADSTONE PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL: WORKING RELATIONSHIPS



**Article submitted by Bob Simpson, President of Gladstone Park Advisory Council. Gladstone Park, 5421 N. Menard Ave.**

Gladstone Park is nestled in the northwest side of Chicago. To be honest, I have lived in this area for many years and until I bought a house, had no idea that Gladstone Park was an actual park. My daughter was accepted with open arms, thanks to the incredible Ms. Sammy, the park supervisor.

We started the Park Advisory Council (PAC) just a few months ago. I had joined the 45th Ward Participatory Budget Committee. I immediately went to Ms. Sammy and asked, "What do you want?" She said a PAC. Within a few weeks we were formed.

*Relationships matter.* The first thing that sticks out is, "NO POLITICS." That means from the park and from a fiscal sponsorship stand point. However, they cannot be avoided, not entirely. Now I don't advocate politics at the park. What I do advocate for is working relationships.

Working relationships extends not only with businesses, which I highly encourage. Working relationships also extends to schools, neighborhood associations, local chambers of

commerce, local newspapers and local representatives.

Politics can be messy, and no one wants to get involved, but I would highly recommend that whatever your feelings are about current representatives, do your best to connect. Make your presence known. Make sure whomever you talk to, they know, "THE PARK COMES FIRST."

It's an interesting concept to think: "THE PARK COMES FIRST." But with that mentality, walls come down and things start to happen. If you can put your politics and beliefs beside yourself you can work with anyone and everyone.

In just a few months, Gladstone has been able to have our crosswalks repainted, gain a mid-block ADA crosswalk, recently awarded a \$15,000 community garden start up via the 45th Ward Participatory Budget, and have open and free flowing conversations with many groups. IN A MATTER OF A FEW MONTHS!!!! I am blown away. All because dialogue is open.

We are also connecting with local



businesses through the Chamber of Commerce. Businesses that I have frequented for years are helping us out. I cannot tell you the power of shopping local. *Shop local and shop often*, because the more the

businesses see you and hear you the more power it will have.

"Working Relationships" are a wonderful thing, and they can be frustrating for sure. But if you can walk in the door, and put "The Park First" amazing and wonderful thing truly happen.

To learn more about our PAC, visit our FB page at [www.facebook.com/GLADSTONEPAC](http://www.facebook.com/GLADSTONEPAC)

## PAC/PPO RESOURCES: A WHOLE NEW YEAR FOR FUNDRAISER AUCTION ITEMS

In past PACT Newsletters, some chain stores were highlighted that have their own store-by-store discretionary donation funds, like Staples and Whole Foods. As mentioned in those old articles, every chain store has its own policy on how it makes donations, from goods to funds, to community groups. It's the beginning of a whole new fiscal year for businesses, so this is a great time to check in with the manager of your community's big box stores or chain stores (or mom and pop stores too!) to gain a better understanding of how your community group can apply to receive a donation from them (especially because some stores process requests six-months in advance). But also know that many companies make donations specifically for auctions — like car rentals, movie passes, attraction passes, hotel rooms, etc. For ideas on which businesses historically donated auction items, do an internet search for companies that give donations for raffles or actions — and some great lists will appear! If you have a fiscal sponsor, check in with them before using their EIN on applications.

...take steps to organizational planning in the new year. One approach you can use is called “future perfect planning.” This advice was replicated from Forbes' “A Planning Hack to Help With Your New Year's Resolution,” by Bill Gardner.<sup>1</sup> This means that you start off with very simple visioning statement or statements: “By the end of 2019, our group will have accomplished...” or “we will have...” Bill proposes these steps (which I've added a park flair to) to flesh out your “future-perfect” thinking and realize your New Year's goals:

1. **“Pick a category for your resolution.”** From events to membership to fundraising to communications, there are so many categories of your organizations' work you choose from.
2. **“Apply future perfect thinking.”** Before you think about the perfect end of 2019, think about what you know will be true and real this year (at least, what you expect), e.g. the amount of funds you'll have available, the expected support of decision-makers, the number of leaders who have the capacity to realize the work, etc. Now think about your PAC or group's New Year's party in 2020. What positive feedback do you hope to hear from your members and neighbors? Maybe these examples sound like the future you're thinking of: “Wow, our membership has really grown,” or “Congrats on putting together so many amazing events!” Then imagine your neighbor says, “Tell me your story of how the group got here?” Write this story down in the past tense, as though the year has already gone by.
3. **“Craft your success story.”** Bill says, “Go beyond end results and think ‘back’ over the year. Did you have slips? How did you recover? What tools turned out to be most helpful? Was your success smooth or did you hit some bumpy spots? Who supported you? How did you build the support you needed?”
4. **“Make your future SMART.”** Use the SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused and timebound) method to flesh out your goals and set your plans.
  - ⇒ Specific: What do you want to accomplish? (Ex. Build membership.)
  - ⇒ Measurable: How many? (Ex. 50 new members at large.)
  - ⇒ Achievable: How can I accomplish this goal? (Ex. Bring sign-up sheets and membership forms to all our events or partner's events.)
  - ⇒ Results-focused: Is this a worthwhile goal? (Ex. Yes, we can build our base of volunteers, event participants, and leaders through regular communications to our membership.)
  - ⇒ Timebound: What are mile-markers we can set throughout the year? (Ex. 6 weeks from now we will... 3 months from now we will... 6 months from now we will....)
5. **“Reflect along the way.”** Reflect often on how things are going, including thinking about the bumps that were encountered. Bill says there are four “powerful” questions to reflect upon:
  - What happened?
  - What did I think and/or how did I feel when it happened?
  - What did I learn?
  - What should I start, stop and keep doing to reach my future perfect?
5. **“Conduct regular progress checks.”** Do regular check-ins with your team and even utilize project management tools to keep the group on track and motivated. You can use Excel to create simple goal and task trackers, or if there is someone creative in the bunch, they can help the team create fun and engaging tracking and reflecting tools to help the team. And, as you reflect, as Bill says, “Chart progress against your milestones.”

THE  
FOTP  
TREE  
SAYS...



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2018/01/08/a-planning-hack-to-help-with-your-new-years-resolution/#9aa114a2071a> — January 8, 2018