

DOCUMENTS

OF THE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

CENTRAL PARK,

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING APRIL 30, 1863.

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Document No. 1.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS,
CENTRAL PARK.

DECEMBER 23, 1862.

Mr. GREEN submitted a draft of a communication to the Honorable the Common Council of the City of New York, having reference to the prosecution of the work on the Park, and requesting the appropriation of the sum of three hundred thousand dollars therefor.

On motion of Mr. RUSSELL,

Resolved, That said communication be printed as a document of the Board, and that it be published in the City papers.

GEO. M. VAN NORT,
Clerk.

TO THE HONORABLE THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
NEW YORK :

The Commissioners of the Central Park respectfully represent to your Honorable Body, that from the period of their organization, more than five years since, they have devoted themselves to the prosecution of the work committed to their charge, endeavoring so to carry it on, that, as far as practicable, the Park should be available to the public while the work was in progress, a course attended with some inconveniencies, yet calculated to gratify the public demand for the facilities it has afforded.

For more than three of these five years, the public use and enjoyment of the Park has been continuous.

The results that have already been attained in the Park are before the public.

Above One hundred and second street, the work cannot be proceeded with economically, until the question is settled, whether the land between One hundred and sixth street and One hundred and tenth street is to be added to the Park.

For well-known reasons the proceedings for acquiring this land were discontinued nearly two years since.

Nearly three years ago the Legislature of the State placed at the disposal of the Commissioners of the Park a fund for its construction, which they have endeavored to use with careful economy, and in the strict line of their duty, avoiding studiously any interference with other departments, and in affairs for which they are not responsible; of this fund there remains unissued and unexpended a balance of eight hundred and thirty-three thousand dollars.

By the terms of the law, the Commissioners of the Park were entitled to receive this sum of eight hundred and thirty-three

thousand dollars during this present year, 1862, now just expiring. They have not yet received of this balance one dollar.

The Commissioners of the Park believe, that if they are not obstructed in the conduct of their work, by reason of delays in receiving the moneys appropriated for the Park, the balance will be sufficient for its completion.

They expect to ask for no more money than that which was three years ago set apart for this purpose.

Up to this day the total sum expended in the construction of the Park is \$3,595,330 75

To avoid any misapprehension, it will perhaps not be amiss to state that the total cost of the land for the Park (in the taking of which the Commissioners of the Park had no voice) was \$3,788,751 37

Adding to which the above-mentioned sum of expenditures 3,595,330 75

Shows the total cost of land and improvements
to be \$7,384,082 12

The Honorable the Board of Councilmen, on the 17th day of October last, passed a resolution authorizing an issue of three hundred thousand dollars, being part of the balance of the fund above alluded to; that resolution went to the Honorable the Board of Aldermen, where it still remains unadopted and in the hands of the Finance Committee.

It is unnecessary for the Commissioners of the Park to state to the Honorable the Common Council that it is impossible for them to conduct their operations with system and with economy, when the provision of the means for the payment of men employed is uncertain and irregular.

The demoralizing effect upon persons employed, whether under contract, or otherwise, of doubts as to their payment for their labor, is apparent.

Parties having contracts with the Park, who are employing men during the winter on work essential to finish in the spring, structures partially complete, will be compelled to discontinue their work, and discharge their men; if they cannot get money to pay them.

The obligations of the Commissioners of the Park now outstanding, amount to about the sum of one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars. To meet these, to pay the wages of mechanics and laboring men, to make the necessary preparations for prosecuting the work in the spring, the Board of Commissioners of the Central Park require the issue by your Honorable Body of the remainder of the fund authorized by the act of the Legislature, and they respectfully request the Honorable the Common Council to pass the resolution of the Board of Councilmen above alluded to, in order that they may not be compelled to discharge during the inclement months of winter the mechanics and laborers now advantageously employed.

Your Honorable Body is aware, that if the resolution above referred to is passed without delay, the time required for advertising the loan and awarding the bids is such, that the money could not be realized much before next February, during which time the persons alluded to are liable to be subjected to great inconvenience for want of money.

It can but be gratifying to every citizen of New York to observe the unanimity of favor that has greeted the results thus far worked out in this popular pleasure ground.

The musical entertainments, without expense to the public, have been very widely appreciated.

Through the Board of Education, opportunities for exercise and the sports on the lawns, have been tendered to the children of the public schools and other school organizations of the city. The winter sports are as popular as are those of the summer. Order and system have prevailed in every department.

A daily account of the visitors to the Park shows, that more than four millions of people have in eleven months of this year found their way through its gates. Its troops of admirers are not confined to this city nor to this continent.

The Commissioners of the Central Park trust that no obstacles will arise to delay the completion of this work, which seems thus far to have won the favorable regards of the entire popula-

tion of the city, and in the completion and preservation of which every citizen is so deeply interested.

Dated New York, December 23d, 1862.

AND. H. GREEN,
Comptroller of the Park.

THOS. C. FIELDS,
Secretary.

HENRY G. STEBBINS,
President.

M. H. GRINNELL,
WALDO HUTCHINS.
J. F. BUTTERWORTH,
CHARLES H. RUSSELL.

Document No. 2.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS,
CENTRAL PARK.

JANUARY 26, 1863.

On motion of Mr. RUSSELL,

Resolved, That the report of the Committee on Statuary, Fountains, and Architectural Structures, on the subject of an enclosure around the Park, be printed as a document of the Board.

GEO. M. VAN NORT,
Clerk.

To the Board of Commissioners of the Central Park :

The Committee on Statuary, Fountains, and Architectural Structures, to whom was referred the subject of an enclosure around the Park, and to examine estimates and plans, and report thereon to the Board, with their opinion, respectfully report :

That they have given the subject referred to them the attention that its importance demands, and, after weighing carefully the reasons presented to the Committee for various styles of enclosure, they have concluded to recommend to the Board a wall, the portion of which that is above the grade of the sidewalk, on 59th street, to be faced or wholly constructed of Dorchester stone—the gate-ways also to be constructed of the same stone. The gate-ways and walls to be constructed on the plan and elevation herewith submitted.

The walls on the avenues where the Park is below the grade of the street to be on the same plan, and where above, in the plan of a retaining wall. From considerations of economy, in an expenditure which must necessarily be a large one, the Committee recommend that on the 5th and 8th avenues, walls be built of stone, native to the vicinity, or some stone similar thereto, if it can be purchased at cheaper rates.

The Committee recommend that the wall and gates on 59th street, from 5th to 8th avenues, be at once proceeded with.

Dated New York, December 20th, 1862.

CHARLES H. RUSSELL,	}	Committee on Statuary, Fountains, and Archi- tectural Structures.
J. F. BUTTERWORTH,		
ANDREW H. GREEN,		