

Press Release: July 9, 2012

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9/11 Family group calls on the Port Authority and NY & NJ Governors to open direct negotiations with the National Park Service to assume overall management of the 9/11 Memorial in 2013

FF group calls for immediate end to negotiations with the 9/11 Memorial foundation

9/11 Parents & Families of Firefighters and WTC Victims calls on the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey as well as Governors Cuomo and Christie to cease all negotiations with the 9/11 Memorial foundation and City Hall concerning the creation of an oversight board at the 9/11 Memorial.

The Port Authority & the Governors must immediately begin negotiating directly with the National Park Service (NPS) in order to transfer control to the NPS in 2013, at the expiration of the existing 9/11 foundation's license to operate the site.

It is obvious that the current, private 9/11 foundation does not want any restraints or oversight concerning their out of control spending and gross mismanagement of the memorial and museum, now pegged at a reported incredible \$1.3 billion.

The National Park Service will bring professionalism, transparency, and patriotism to the memorial, things sorely lacking at Ground Zero right now. The sacred site has been desecrated by an ever-increasing wave of inappropriate behavior including trash in the pools, graffiti, football tossing, laughing, and running about.

The memorial foundation's inability to control this activity is exacerbated by its obvious desire to make Ground Zero into a public park instead of a national shrine. The site has been scrubbed of all direct references to the attacks of 9/11. The site should be populated with hundreds of American flags. Instead, the single solitary American flag has been relegated to the edge of the site, on top of a mechanical equipment building. The Koenig Sphere, the single surviving aboveground artifact of the attacks, has been banned from the site. Joe Daniels, 9/11 foundation president, has reportedly said the sphere would "compromise the integrity" of the memorial. Ground Zero must be treated as the site of the worst attack in American history - not a recreational park for play and fun. The National Park Service will provide the utmost respect to the site - the NPS is aware of what Ground Zero really represents.

As stated in our June 18, 2012 press release, the NPS should operate the entire memorial site and the current 9/11 Foundation should be transformed into a " *Friends Of the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum*" partnership- whose sole purpose is to raise money for the memorial & museum. "Friends Of " groups, such as the Gettysburg Foundation and the African Burial Ground Monument Foundation conduct external fundraising for their national parks.

We need only to look at the The Flight 93 National Memorial and its "*Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial*" for an actual model of collaboration and professionalism. There are over 150 "Friends Of" groups connected to national parks and memorials throughout the USA. All of these national parks and monuments are run by the NPS. The primary role of "friends groups" is support in the form of fundraising - and we don't see why the current 9/11 foundation should not be assigned this very same role. In this way, the NPS can operate the 9/11 Memorial & Museum and the 9/11 memorial foundation can perform the crucial role of raising the needed funds to sustain the memorial and museum. This is what is needed at GZ.

Chief Jim Riches, FDNY(ret.)

Father of FF Jimmy Riches, WTC/911

Chairman, 9/11 Parents and Families of Firefighters and WTC Victims

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Board Members:

Al and Sally Regenhard, Parents of FF Christian Regenhard, WTC/911

Jim McCaffrey, Brother in law of Chief Orio Palmer, WTC/911

Russell & Joyce Mercer, Parents of FF Scott Kopytko WTC/911

Rosemary Cain, Mother of FF George Cain WTC/911

Rosaleen Tallon, Sister of FF Sean Tallon WTC/911

Eileen Walsh , Mother of FF Michael Brennan, WTC/911

Maureen and Al Santora, Parents of FF Christopher Santora WTC/911

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