

Cromwell Valley Park Council, Inc.
Minutes – January 13, 2020

CVPC Board Meeting

Board members in attendance: John Canoles, Rick Childs, Bill Curtis, Kenneth Keady, Kate Joyce (Talmar, Inc.), Sya Kedzior, Kristin McFaul, Pat Novak, Kim Shapiro, Mia Walsh and Abe Yoffe.

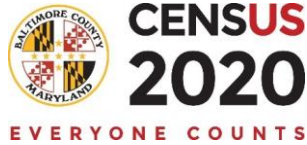
Council members: Joe Rector

Park staff: Kirk Dreier

BCDR&P: Kris Mervine, Regional Coordinator in charge of Nature, Agricultural and Environmental Centers

1. PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS

- a. Mia called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m. All members of the board were present. Mia introduced the agenda which had been distributed by email, and confirmed a quorum present. Mia welcomed guests Kris Mervine and Joe Rector to the meeting. We, in turn, introduced ourselves and our roles for the park to familiarize Joe and Kris with the organization. The schedule of upcoming meetings may be found on the CVPC website at <https://cromwellvalleypark.org/about-cvpc/park-council/>.
- b. Joe Rector introduced himself to the group – He works in property management of commercial real estate through his leadership responsibility at Pelican Management, Inc. located in Towson. He is involved in management of capital projects of commercial properties and has been involved in historic preservation, stream restoration and storm water management projects. He has three children and spends his free time hiking and enjoying boating on the Chesapeake. - Joe is interested in a role on the board and would bring to it valuable expertise. (See Joe's resume portion of the Nominating Committee Report.)
- c. Volunteer & Donor Recognition:
 - (1) Thanks to all the volunteers for all of their work at the park in the last few months.
 - (2) Mia provided a review of fundraising income in the board packet. It shows very strong donations in 2019 compared to 2018; over \$45,770 in 2019 compared to \$16,512 in 2018. The difference is due primarily to some substantial donations from organizations (Halten Garden Club, State of Maryland, and Colonial Dames), although thousands of dollars have come in through regular donors. It has been a very successful year of fundraising, especially with some targeted campaigns for the Accessible Trail and for the purchase of a Gator for our Trails Committee.
 - (3) Some of the donated dollars will not show up as revenue in the 2019 financial reports as donations made through Paypal and Facebook will be transferred to out accounts early in 2020.
 - (4) Future fundraising efforts will include grant applications particularly, as plans for work on the Merrick Barn come together and potentially for the State to address the ingress, egress and parking issues at CVP.
 - (5) Mia reviewed donations that apply to the future purchase of another Gator for use in maintenance trails and other grounds projects at the Park. Efforts to raise money for this purpose have been very effective, resulting in over \$8,000 in revenue. Much of the money came through online appeals, Mia's B-day FB fundraiser and Giving Tuesday, as well as some targeted donations from organizations that use our park for their own fundraisers, Blue Steel Stampede and Baltimore Road Runners. (See details in Mia's report attached to the Motion to designate funds for the Gator purchase.)
- d. Meeting with Baltimore County Re: Accessible Trail and Pavilion. Mia met with Kirk, Pat McDougal and Kris Mervine to discuss use of money that is available for CVP through Project Open Space. As Project Open Space money is not guaranteed, it is desirable to use it while it is included in the County budget. At CVP, there are a number of important projects that should be considered, including the need for more reliable parking areas, major repairs needed for the barn, the proposed small pavilion and accessible trails to serve these facilities. Mia raised the immediate issue of parking, as the weekend brought more visitors to Willow Grove than the access road and parking availability could handle. She shared photos with the County of the



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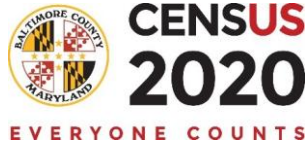
chaos on the Willow Grove drive. Priorities need to be determined.

- e. Summer Camp registration begins Wednesday, January 15. Set-up was easy within the CampBrain system. Mia will be available Wednesday to deal with any system issues that may arise.

2. GOVERNANCE

- a. Mia for Corey Johns – The new Background Check system for County Park volunteers is not yet ready to roll, so we will still be operating with the current online system. As the system does not “push” expiration data, we must monitor our own data in that system.
- b. Meeting minutes acceptance from December meeting. Minutes from December were corrected immediately after the first draft to show the right number of anticipate visitors for an upcoming hosted event. These minutes were approved and posted to the website.
- c. Year End 2019 Financial Documents (See attached Treasurer’s spreadsheet for details.)
 - (1) 2019 was a great year. The year was originally budgeted to show a \$7,400 loss; however, due to successful fundraising, the year ended with a \$9,200 surplus. Most accounts were on target or better.
 - (2) Pat asked about the final numbers for Night Out with Nature, which ended up with a \$402 surplus, and which Mia displayed in a P&L Comparison summary sheet in the board packet.
 - (3) Other comments on information in this summary show a loss regarding compensation for the building attendant, which from year-to-year shows a running loss; a higher than anticipated Summer Camp surplus coming from shared expense of CampBrain costs with Public Programs; and a relatively high surplus of \$1,282 for the Holiday Open House event.
 - (4) Rick asked about the Restricted Funds category, and Kristin responded that there was no change there, and details may be provided if needed.
 - (5) Pat asked about the Deady account. Mia said that this family makes donations each year and that these have been assigned to that line item. There is no real need, though, to keep these funds separate from general donations, so Kristin will make that change.
 - (6) Paypal is holding about \$3,800 of late year giving, which was transferred to Bank of America on January 13th. There is a 2-3 day delay before it will reach our account.
- d. Nominations Committee Report – Mia for Kelly Emerson
 - (1) Mia presented the report which was included with the handouts for the meeting.
 - The newest addition to the slate is the addition of Joe Rector for a Director position, nominated by Kristin and supported by Mia. Mia met with Joe to learn of his interest in the park, which includes enjoyment of the trails, interest in fundraising and management of projects for the park. Kristin has a long-standing relationship with Joe through his frequent visits to McFaul’s for business meetings. Joe also was in attendance at the mini Art Show at McFaul’s in December, donating and purchasing a canvas.
 - Also for approval at the March general meeting are the following:
 - (i) Abe Yoffe for Vice President (4/20 through 3/22)
 - (ii) Kim Shapiro continuing as Secretary (4/20 though 3/22)
 - (iii) Sya Buryn Kedzior for Director (4/20 though 3/22)
 - (iv) Bill Curtis continuing as Director (4/20 though 3/22)
 - (v) Joe Rector replacing Abe Yoffe (4/20 though 3/21)

Pat moved to accept the slate as presented in the report. Bill seconded. The motion carried.



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- (2) Distribution – We discussed ways to provide the slate to Council members. We can include the slate in the upcoming newsletter, which Sya and Kim will work on as the newsletter layout is in the works for issuance in early February. Pat offered to post this on Facebook, and it can also be posted on the website. Election of these board members will occur at the March general meeting on March 9th.

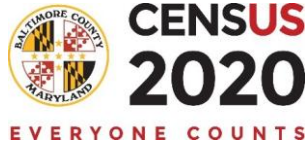
3. MANAGEMENT

a. Park Staff Report – Kirk (See Sr. Naturalist report for other details.)

- (1) Holiday Open House and Christmas relevant programming dominated the month of December.
- (2) Eagle Scouts will be working on a Fire Ring in the boulder field and painting fencing. Completed projects include storage bins at the Hawk Watch and Primitive Tech Lab.
- (3) Kirk is conducting a 5-day bow course at Marshy Point.
- (4) Sign-ups for visiting schools began on January 2nd, and there were a lot of groups signed up.
- (5) Brina Doyle has been hired as the CS1 position at the Park. Her first day was January 13th. She will be working on exhibit projects that have been on hold recently.
- (6) Kirk shared an artifact from Donald Delgavio whose brother found it at the Sherwood Farm in 1959 when he was 14 years old. Kirk described the item as likely of Swedish or Finnish origin and dating back to the early 1900's, and likely a purchase by the Sherwood's while traveling in Europe in the 1930's. It will be on display at Willow Grove.
- (7) Trail Guide training takes place March 25th and 26th. Bill Curtis will be leading a field trip visit to Fort McHenry as part of this training. The purpose of the training is to prepare volunteers to assist the staff in the school programs at the park.
- (8) Rick asked about park gate closure and how that has been working out. Kirk said that a visitor was actually trapped in the park on one recent occasion. A jeep took liberty to drive around the gate. Time of gate closure brought some discussion. A Talmar staff member is currently responsible for the gate closing, but to avoid confrontation has been delaying about 30 minutes. Bill said Hampton Mansion has a specific time of 5 pm for closure, and there was a question about change in hours with seasonal change. Kris said that the issue is on his list as all parks must deal with it. Currently, the rule is parks open at sunrise and close at sunset, but this is hard to manage. The answer will wait until a BCDR&P Director is in place.
- (9) Rick also asked about the plan to remove a downed tree that is just off the Blue Trail. This will be an issue in storms as it will block water flow along the stream. Kirk said he'd address this.
- (10) Mia got word from a park visitor's observation that "the beavers are back".

b. Leaseholder's Report – Kate for Talmar

- (1) Kate thanked those who came to the retirement party for Cate Murphy. It was a nice send off. Mia received a thank you note from Cate recognizing our \$250 donation to Talmar in her honor.
- (2) Talmar staff are very focused on "mission first" - Therapeutic horticultural programming for all ages, all abilities. They are doing some redesign work to make workable program space with protection from weather. Office redesign is in the works and anyone that can offer carpentry skill is very welcome.
- (3) Reminder of February 18th mental health training opportunity – no cost due to a grant from Mosaic Community Services.
- (4) Plant sales will be held on 4/25 and 5/9 – starter plants.



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- (5) In the spring, some work is planned to provide a raised row in the field for use by participants with some ambulatory limitations.

c. Buildings and Grounds – Rick

- (1) Benches have been assembled for placement at points around the park. Five of these benches be will placed at the request of specific donors, either for recognition of a personal event or in memory of an individual. Rick asked if there were specific location requests, and Mia said that she was aware of one by Larry Craig, which talked of beech trees at Sherwood. One bench will go to replace an old bench in the Children’s Garden. More will be placed along the trails.
- (2) Cemetery – Jim Kelly provided a motion to support early research at the area referred to as a cemetery near Willow Grove. (See Motion included in the board packet.) The initial work involves Chesapeake Search Dogs and Ground Penetrating Radar to ascertain if there is real evidence of graves. There is later more substantial work, but that is not included as part of this motion. Jim proposes that the expected cost of \$1100 be covered by unspent fund from the France-Merrick Restoration Fund, leaving only about \$16 to be covered. Rick proposed that we move ahead on this, Kristin seconded, and the motion passed.
- (3) Rick said that Jim commented on the budget regarding money for oral histories, which was reduced to \$0 due to lack of expenses in 2019. Jim has plans for transcription and would like to have that covered. Kristin said that we can put some dollars in the budget for it.
- (4) Gator Fund Motion – Mia suggested that we consider the motion to add donations for the Gator fund at this point. A significant response came with appeals for money for this purpose, and Mia proposes that we assign other recent receipts to this fund: monies received through the remittance envelope campaign and two \$500 donations that were not specifically directed. Pat seconded the motion and the motion carried. Mia suggested that we fund the complete purchase, but Rick suggested that we wait until we are closer to the purchase. Mia said that we may have another donor through the Baltimore Road Runners.

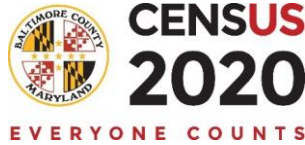
d. Membership & Communications reports are attached. Sya and Kim are working together on the upcoming newsletter in preparation for Sya to take ownership for the next issue and ongoing.

e. Volunteers – Sya & Kim

- (1) Sya will be handing over responsibility of the Volunteers Committee to Kim in April.
- (2) Volunteers Spotlight – Sya is adding a Volunteer Spotlight piece to the newsletter and asked for others to provide suggested celebratees.
- (3) Appreciation Day – Kim suggested that we are long-overdue for a celebration of volunteers and supporters of the park, having had our first and last big celebration in 2007. The outlay for that party, which was catered and took place on the Sherwood lawn with games and a time for short speeches, was ~\$2000. We discussed how many might be considered for attendance, recognizing that there are a number of different pools of volunteers at the park. We talked about the benefits of including donors in the celebration, as well. Doing such an event got a nod from the group, so we will continue to put a plan together to this end.
- (4) Honorarium Display – Kim suggested that we consider doing a special exhibit for those who go above and beyond for the park, perhaps using a perpetual plaque that can be updated over time. Pat said that there is already one of these for Shining Star recipients. There was no further determination for this.

4. OLD BUSINESS – none

5. NEW BUSINESS – Abe suggested that we consider another means besides benches as a way for someone to contribute to the park. He suggested bird boxes might be a way to do that. John said that he was involved with a project with Long Green Valley Conservancy in placing bird boxes throughout the valley based on individual



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contribution followed by a report to the donors. Kirk suggested that “blue bird kits” might work for that. There is a changeover in leadership in the bluebird monitoring effort, and that Laura Lechtin might be interested. Abe said we could look at donation tiers. Mia said we have had some experience with that recently. At the conclusion of this discussion, Pat moved that we adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 10th, a closed board meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Shapiro, Secretary
1-14-20

2020 CVPC Meeting Dates

Voted Upon at November 4, 2019 Meeting

MEETING LOCATION: SHERWOOD HOUSE

DATE 2020	MEETING	Open to Public?	Time
Monday, January 13	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, February 10	Executive Board Meeting (closed to Board only)	No	7:00 p.m.
Monday, March 9	Council Meeting (open to Public – Annual Meeting)	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, April 13	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, May 11	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, June 8	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, July 13	No Meeting		
Monday, August 10	Executive Board Meeting (closed to Board only)	No	7:00 p.m.
Monday, September 14	Council Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, October 19 (moved from 10/12 Columbus Day)	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, November 9	Executive Board Meeting (closed to Board only)	No	7:00 p.m.
Monday, December 7 (moved from 2 nd week)	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.