

**Cromwell Valley Park Council, Inc.  
Minutes – December 7, 2020**

CVPC Executive Board Meeting

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

Absent: Joe Rector

Park staff: Kirk Dreier

Guest: Corey Johns, R&P liaison and is working for Delegate Guyton

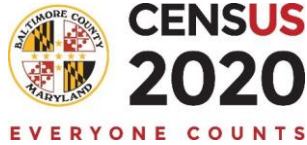
**1. WELCOME FROM PRESIDENT – MIA WALSH**

- a. Mia called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The meeting was conducted online using the Zoom meeting app, due to safety considerations during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Mia presented the agenda, which had been distributed by email. As only one board member was absent, we had a quorum.
- b. Mia reminisced about prior December meetings when we could be together and enjoy a bit of festive food and drink before knuckling down to business. For now, we must continue to meet virtually.
- c. Keep Parks Clean campaign – Mia described a meeting attended by herself and John Canoles, called by Corey Johns and Delegate Guyton in support of creating legislation to establish best practices for County Park management of appearance and cleanliness. Corey spoke about the project.
  - Currently there is no County-wide guidance for keeping parks clean. The work is in the early stages, getting input from frontline park representatives. Ultimately, the legislation is expected to address cleanliness standards and how to manage this, including signage for communication of behavior expectations for park visitors.
  - Mia thanked John for his insights and expressed appreciation to Corey and Delegate Guyton for their efforts.
- d. Helpful park neighbors – Sam Wahbe reported a “trash dump” he had observed at the Park. Sam contacted the County for pick-up, and this was accomplished in short order. We appreciate our community members who take action to help our park.

**2. GOVERNANCE**

- a. Meeting minutes acceptance from November meeting: Kim provided a suggestion made by Bill regarding strengthening a statement in the Guest Discussion portion of the minutes in which our guest, Erica, took issue with our August 2019 minutes. We determined to modify the November minutes to more clearly state Erica’s feeling that our 8/19 minutes assumed resolution when issues were still outstanding. We agreed to include Erica’s perspective with the clause “in her opinion”. The minutes were approved with the agreed change. [Follow-up – Kim revised the minutes on 12/9/20 and submitted these for posting.] These are on the Park website. <https://cromwellvalleypark.org/about-cvpc/park-council/>.
- b. Treasurer’s Report – Kristin McFaul
  - 1) Giving Tuesday - Mia provided the results of the fundraising appeals which resulted in donations of \$4,021 through Facebook, email appeal, our website and remittance envelopes with Calendar. This was a strong response.
  - 2) Budget Finalization – Prior to the meeting, Kristin provided Budget vs. Actuals P/L data as well as the preliminary 2021 budget as a template to discussion and finalizing for a vote.

Budget review - Mia brought up the document and recorded the changes during the line item review. Adjustments were made in an effort to reduce the budget deficit of ~\$8,000 that resulted from our November discussion.

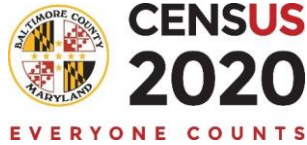


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Line item discussion:

- Overall, we maintained the position that the budget anticipates a year with COVID limitations on programming. As progress is made over the pandemic, and as restrictions are eliminated, we will revisit and revise these numbers.
- **Income**
  - (100/120) Dues and donations were raised again, each to \$10,000, to help offset a high deficit. Our success at raising funds this year supports this increase and continued fundraising efforts are expected to be launched in 2021.
  - (402) Internal Public Programs – Rick asked why our budgeted income and expense were so similar when there is typically a significant net surplus. Mia explained that the expense now carries half of the cost of CampBrain, since CampBrain is now used to manage registrations for our public programs as well as the Summer Camp. During the first year CampBrain cost \$2,000. The second year, as we expanded its use, the price went to \$2,500. Kristin asked if this cost might come down if our usage slowed, and Mia agreed that it might.
  - Rick asked how much money we have in unrestricted funds. Kristin said that this stands at \$87,000 according to our bank and balance sheet statements. Abe asked if there was any specific use for this, and Rick said that it is just generally available as we identify needs or projects.
- **Expenses**
  - (250) Based on last year's expenses, and anticipation that Park promotion activity should remain strong, Bill suggested that we raise the Communications Committee budget to be in line with actual 2020 expenses. This was supported, and the line item was adjusted to \$2,800.
  - (252) Meetings cost was reduced to \$50 as meetings are anticipated to be virtual well into 2021.
  - (262) Garden Subcommittee - \$500 has been a placeholder, although there have been no expenses for 2019 and 2020. Rick said that, in the past, there have been funds used for planting, but agreed that we could reduce it to \$250.
  - (270) External Programs – As there are no imminent plans for this due to COVID constraints, the \$750 was reduce to \$0.
  - (409) Credit Card Fees – Rick suggested reducing this to \$1000 from \$1400, as we expect fewer charges due to restrictions on programming.
  - (501/502/503) Council Sponsored Events – The net zero events are maintained as these have no effect on the bottom line, and the Fall Harvest Festival is late enough in the year that it might actually happen.
  - The resulting loss was reduced to \$3,825 from \$8,275.
- **Press release** – Bill Curtis suggested that we provide a press release on behalf of the CVPC, expressing that we have approved a deficit budget for 2021, showing that we are continuing to support our park community despite restrictions that reduce our income. This was generally agreed.
- **Vote** – Mia moved to approve the budget with a loss of \$3,825 and the understanding that we may revisit and adjust line items as COVID restrictions lift. The motion was followed by many seconds, and the budget was approved unanimously.



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c. Election in March, 2021 – Mia

1) Officers' terms expiring

- Mia – President, term limit applies, Abe has agreed to run for President, but invites others to challenge him.
- As Abe currently serves as VP, this leaves a slot open. Mia asked if any present were interested in the VP position, but there was no response.
- Kristin – Treasurer – agreed to another term if nominated.

2) Directors' terms expiring – term limits do not apply

- Both John Canoles and Joe Rector agree to serve another term.

3) Nominations Committee – Mia said that she would be happy to serve on the committee and invited others to consider being a part of it. She said that she will ask Kelly Emerson to chair the committee, as she has done in the past.

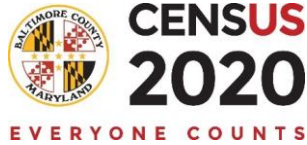
3. MANAGEMENT

a. Ongoing Projects

- 1) Gazebo Project – Joe Rector and Abe Yoffe – Mia asked Kirk if there has been any follow up from the County in response to the Citizen Request Form that was submitted to obtain County approval to start the repair and restoration project. Kirk said that he hasn't yet heard from the County on the project approval but would follow up with Bob Smith.
- 2) Recreation Trails Program – Abe Yoffe – Abe submitted a grant application for the Cromwell Valley Park Footbridges and Trails project. The grant program is run by the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration. Their response letter on Nov. 25 expresses their support of the intent but cannot approve the grant for this year. They recommended resubmitting in 2021 with a better definition of scope and budget.
  - Abe and Rick discussed the need to go through the County for work on bridges. Kirk said that Pat McDougall would be the person with whom to discuss this. John said that we are free to raise the money, but we need County approval to use the funds on the project. Abe said he would check on the process and suggested a joint meeting with Pat McDougall and Mia to understand the process better.

b. Park Staff Report – Kirk (See attached report for details.)

- Kirk reported on two programs that were new: Geology of Maryland was presented to a group of twenty homeschoolers, and a Hike into History was conducted for Grace Classical Academy. Both programs were very well received.
- Project Feeder Watch kicked off last week. Noble and bundled-up volunteers are sitting for their watch and recording observations.
- The Hawk Watch bird feeder is being repeatedly vandalized. Mia and Bill will install a camera that Mia can lend towards the effort of catching the vandal in action for identification and correction purposes. This camera has day and night capability.
- The shoot is complete for the Fort Garrison program video. Time-consuming editing work lies ahead.
- Weekend programs registrations have been full, but only about half of the registrants actually participate.
- Kirk's "acting" role for the nature park group has been consuming a lot of his time, as he anticipated.



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c. Leaseholder's Report – Kate Joyce, Talmar

- 1) Kate announced that Talmar is sold out of Christmas trees. The supplier limited them to the order specifics of 2019. She is just sorry that she didn't have more trees to sell. She recognizes that doing more would have been difficult considering the limited staff. The signs for the tree sales are now down.
- 2) There is no programming now until spring.
- 3) Talmar is now maintaining only one staffer on site at a time. Others work at home when not on site. The intention is to keep staff safe, considering COVID. "It is quiet on the Eck Farm."
- 4) Talmar is considering family-focused programs, keeping participation to a household pod.

d. Buildings and Grounds – Mia – newly proposed memorial project. CVPC was approached by a family who knows Abe. The family recently experienced the death of a young son who lived to just 3 months. They have offered a \$1500 donation for a memorial installation, plus additional funds curated by family and friends. Early discussion considered the installation of a pond and/or a wheel-chair accessible picnic table, particularly in the center area of the Lillian D. Jenifer Accessible Path. Wheelchair accessibility is appealing as the child, had he lived, would have been wheelchair-bound. Discussion points are:

- John suggested that a pond would not be an appropriate addition to this "old field" themed site.
- Abe suggested that the picnic table should be situated in another location and not in the center part of the Accessible Path.
- John and Kirk talked about the condition of the center area, which unfortunately had been mowed by the County staff, compromising the native planting there. John said that it takes time for these plants to establish themselves. Kirk said that there are invasive species in the area as well. John said that stilt grass may be one invasive that will continue to be part of this area.
- Sya suggested doing something "accessible" in the Children's Garden.
- Rick said that he is thinking of a space near the Accessible Path that may work for this project.
- Bill and Pat suggested areas around Sherwood that may be appropriate, but Kirk cautioned that changes at Sherwood are governed by Maryland Historical Trust, and that this is best avoided.
- Mia proposed that both a picnic table AND a pond be considered within the scope.
- **Field trip** – Rick suggested a field trip of interested parties to evaluate what might be the best location-for and scope-of the project. Mia, Rick, Abe and John will meet at the park at 9 a.m. on Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Abe asked if County approval was needed to install a pond. Mia said that it is not. Both Kirk and Bill cited sources of wheelchair accessible picnic tables.

e. Programs – Ken

- The planned "night run" with Baltimore Roadrunners Club went off as scheduled. Otherwise, there are no new plans or requests for outside programs.

d. Volunteers and Membership – Kim (See report included in the meeting packet.)

- Mia said that she added Bobby Phillips donation to the report and described the initial anonymity that was caused by PayPal, but also the additional contribution of more than \$20 that came through some charitable program PayPal is using.
- Kim thanked those who provided their volunteer hours for November, which gave us 90 hours for Kirk's report.



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e. Communications

- Sya invited board members to provide articles for the upcoming Spring newsletter.
- **Motion** - Dog Park position statement. Kim wrote a one-page summary of our consideration of a proposal for a Dog Park. The statement is intended to inform any future considerations. Kim asked if any changes were recommended, and none were needed. The statement was approved unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS – Abe asked Kirk if there was any movement on the proposed changes for improved parking at the park, as well as the funds for mobility features from both Cromwood Coventry and the State Bond Bill sponsored by Delegate Guyton . Corey addressed this as he is involved with work on a Master Plan at the County level. Oregon Ridge expressed concerns and ensured their involvement in the planning process for their own park. Corey said that CVP is included in the work, and he will check for an update on our behalf. Mia recalled an original projection of work to resolve parking issues and mobility enhancements to begin in the first quarter of 2021.

6. NEW BUSINESS –None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m,

**The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Kim Shapiro, Secretary  
12-11-20



# 2021 CVPC Meeting Dates

Approved at November 9, 2020 Meeting

MEETING LOCATION: REMOTE via ZOOM or SHERWOOD HOUSE

<b>DATE 2021</b>	<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Open to Public?</b>	<b>Time</b>
Monday, January 11	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, February 8	Executive Board Meeting (closed to Board only)	No	7:00 p.m.
Monday, March 8	Council Meeting (open to Public – Annual Meeting)	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, April 12	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, May 10	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, June 14	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, July 12	No Meeting		
Monday, August 9	Executive Board Meeting (closed to Board only)	No	7:00 p.m.
Monday, September 13	Council Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, October 18 <sup>th</sup> (10/11 is Columbus Day)	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, November 8 <sup>th</sup>	Executive Board Meeting (closed to Board only)	No	7:00 p.m.
Monday, December 13 <sup>th</sup>	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.



ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE BOARD PACKET:

	<b>Cromwell Valley Park Council Monthly Board Report</b>
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**BOARD MEETING MONTH:** November    **YEAR:** 2020

**REQUEST TO ADD ITEM TO MEETING AGENDA?**  Yes  No

**SUBMITTED BY:** VOLUNTEERS Committee – KIM SHAPIRO

**ITEMS OF INTEREST WHICH OCCURRED IN PRIOR MONTH IN YOUR AREA:**

The tally of reported volunteer hours for board members is shown below.

Volunteer Hours		
Last Name	Hours	Category/Event
Kedzior	3	Communications
Shapiro	6	Special Event
Shapiro	4	Membership
Shapiro	3	Communications
Canoles	6	Special Event
Curtis	6	General Admin
Novak	2	General Admin
Walsh	30	General Admin

**60 total**

**SUBMITTED BY:** MEMBERSHIP Sub-Committee (Finance) – Kim Shapiro

**CURRENT MEMBERSHIP DATA:**

Total memberships

as of 6/5/20:            359    (Nov. 2019: 344, 2018: 355)

Last report (Sept):    340

New high-level members/donors:

- Contributing:    Cindy Hunter and Phillip Reese
- Donations:      David W. Buck Family Foundation (\$500)
- Jerri & Denis Muller (\$250)
- Gail & Bernard Levy (\$50)
- Jan & Dagmar Bohlmann (\$50, yoga program)
- Candice Pellet (\$25, Arundel Homeschoolers)

11/27/20 Bobby Phillips donation \$500

Came Through Paypal Charitable Contributions



## Sr.Naturalist's Report for CVP Council Board Oct – Nov 2020

Our autumn was busy with the various projects and programs we have scheduled. I can report that our Pollywog Preschool program was completely filled and both sessions went smoothly with nobody being sick or getting sick. It wrapped up on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Our Saturday bird walk registrations have been completely full. This program is led by Ranger Laura Lechtzin. During the Halloween season we had a Halloween Trail Trek put together by Ranger Anne Wedgeworth and 51 people participated.

Paint a pumpkin program was well attended. We held this in the barnatorium, due to inclement weather. All doors were open and 14 parents and kids painted their own pumpkin.

A "Sound Garden" was installed in the children's discovery zone. This was built by Eagle Scout candidate Elliott Kolberg. It was completed on the first weekend of October and since then has seen heavy use. Apparently the Kolberg's have been coming back and repairing it. The kids in the Discovery Zone like it to death.

Ranger Breena finished the editing on the Native Americans of Maryland and that has been put on our | website You Tube. Somewhat lengthy it can be watched by teachers in increments (picking the particular thing you are interested in only) or watch the whole thing. It took us about a week to film it, and it took Ranger Breena's magic with editing; probably 30 hours to put it together. Ranger Laura and I filmed it. Ranger Breena and I filmed our Fort Garrison program at Fort Garrison with the help of two Re enactor friends who typically help out at that facility. We filmed the whole thing there in one day. It is now in Post production. Which means all the repetitive editing has to be done by Breena.

We received a large glass corner tank, as a donation and we had the magic of Cap'n Jim Gephardt's carpentry skills from Marshy manufacture a custom corner table, strong enough to hold the tank full of water. This is to be located in the kitchen area of the Nature Center in the hopes of one day having the exhibits open again to the public.

Currently all programs are to be held outside at safe distances or the Barnatorium with all the doors open.

We held our first school, (home school) on Wednesday. It was on the Geology of Maryland and it went smoothly and safely. We used the Barnatorium with all doors open.