



Cromwell Valley Park Council, Inc.
Minutes – February 8, 2021

CVPC Executive Board Meeting

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

Absent: Ken Keady, Sya Kedzior

Park staff: Kirk Dreier

1. WELCOME FROM PRESIDENT – MIA WALSH

- a. Mia called the meeting to order at 7:05 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 two board members were absent, we had a quorum.
- b. Continuing Parking Issues – Mia reviewed the situation on a particular day when three tow trucks were called to extract cars from mud-slick parking spots. County staff was notified of the issue as a reminder of the importance of improvements needed.
- c. Thank You Video for Park Staffs by R&P – Mia expressed appreciation for the participation in creating Cromwell Valley Park's contribution to the effort. Mia produced the video that included messages of staff appreciation from half of our board members. The video had been requested by Director Roslyn Johnson to help show the staff appreciation for their efforts in this challenging time of pandemic restrictions. The video was presented at the Friday (2/5/21) meeting of Recreation and Park staff. Kirk said that 124 people were in attendance for this virtual meeting. (Link to video: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1dzSjiq5Dpsl3bnpB0KlmlTSw24Sui_i1)

2. GOVERNANCE

- a. Meeting minutes acceptance from January meeting: Kim asked if there were any changes needed to the meeting minutes distributed within the week following the January meeting. There were no changes requested. The minutes were accepted by the Board. These are on the Park website. <https://cromwellvalleypark.org/about-cvpc/park-council/>.
- b. Finance
 1. 2021 Financial Documents – Kristin distributed current Balance Sheet and Budget vs. Actuals prior to the meeting. The following changes of note occurred since our last meeting: PayPal donations were transferred, and some funds came in from programming. Mia said that the March timeframe will yield more significant membership income.
 2. Fundraising Donation Update - Mia
 - New Year's cards were sent out to donors of \$50 and higher as well as some major volunteers. Mia said that she received notes of appreciation for the beautiful cards. Included with the cards were letters of receipt of donations and remittance envelopes. Remittances were sufficient to cover the costs associated with the mailing.
 - Tax receipts to all donors in the CampBrain system were sent as a batch email. As new donations are entered into CampBrain, tax receipts are generated in the system and Mia is sending these out immediately. This process is very efficient and is part of the recently purchased CampBrain Fundraising module.
 - Guidestar – Gold Seal of Transparency – Mia – Guidestar is an organization that provides tracking of 501(c)(3) organizational performance and access to this information. Mia completed information on CVPC. Our resulting rating in their system is Gold level. A higher level exists, but this requires focused goals and plans in particular performance areas beyond our current planning efforts.
 - Donation Planning Meeting – Abe reviewed progress on setting a policy for handling donations of honorarium items for the park, such as donation of a bench in memory or honor of someone. The result



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of the committee's January meeting was to prepare a list of items and expected cost as a guide to potential donors. Mia sought input from staff, and the response was the need for a Kubota and trail committee equipment for a new Kubota. Mia said that this should be a separate discussion. Abe suggested that the next step would be determining placement for donated installations (e.g.: benches, dog way stations) and establishing priorities. Mia suggested that we consider the upcoming capital projects and look for opportunities there.

- ◇ Rick brought the subject back to the Kubota wish. He said that some parts of the property are difficult to access with the current vehicles (Barrans-Baldwin), and that perhaps an ATV would be a better service vehicle for this steeper terrain. As this wish would be a donation to the County rather than a Council-owned vehicle, that the County would not accept an ATV. Bill added that he would not approve any vehicle that burns fossil fuel and would expect clear stated needs and planned use – how and by whom.
- ◇ Joe asked what we currently have. Kirk said that we have a County Kubota (currently requiring repair) and two Gators (Council). Rick said that any purchases to be donated to the County must be on the County list.
- ◇ Abe asked if the County could cover the wished-for Kubota. Kirk said that the County has purchased nine new ones, but all are destined for other locations.
- ◇ When asked the cost of the Kubota, Kirk estimated \$20,000.
- ◇ Mia suggested that Bill join this committee to define the donation plan and commented that we should establish a fundraising plan.
- ◇ Abe asked how potential donors might react knowing that what we buy with their donated funds would be further donated to the County. She replied that some would not like it, but others would be OK with it.

c. Statement of Civic Responsibility – Board inclusivity - Mia suggested that we hold this discussion for a later meeting but suggested that we consider putting this work into policy work that Kim is considering for her potential future role as VP.

d. Preparation for Annual Election – Distribution of slate of nominees – Kim

1. Paper mailing of 18 letters to those without email addresses in our CampBrain database went out on Friday 2/5.
2. CampBrain mailing to over 350 email addresses went out on Saturday. Kristin confirmed that she received hers around 5 pm on Saturday. Kim asked if others received it. Abe said he had not, but Mia realized that it may have gone to only the primary email address for the household, and Kim confirmed that to be true.

3. MANAGEMENT

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

- 1) The Spring Calendar of Events has been completed, and new parking instruction and responsibility signs have been installed.
- 2) Mutt Mitt kits were received, and assembly and installation has begun. Bob Newton installed his own family donation, and Rick and Wayne Skinner will work on others.
- 3) Summer Camp – Planning begins with expectation of having 10 participants per session rather than the normal 20, with the hope that 20 will be possible at some point. Rick asked about the cost impact of a reduced number of participants, and Kirk said that he is trying to manage that with staffing. Mia suggested



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that she may be able to get some intern involvement from 18/19-year-olds who need community service hours. Kirk said that he would check with staff.

- 4) Two Eagle Scout projects have been identified: Hawk Watch kiosk and Chicken Yard gate.
- 5) A Brownie project to install steps at the Minebank Run is planned.
- 6) The Community Garden proposal by the staff has been submitted to Roslyn Johnson and Bob Smith at BCDR&P. The proposal identifies an area near Sherwood that was previous CSA garden area. It is a small area of about a quarter acre.
 - Because of an issue with implementation of a plan at a Dundalk park, there seems to be more scrutiny on planning.
 - Kirk's proposal is a phased in approach that would take a year to implement. Anne and Jasmine would be the staff members involved.
 - Kate asked if there was known community interest in community gardens. She expressed that she has been involved in this type of project over the years and recognizes the need for community commitment to sustain the project. Kirk said that he didn't anticipate the issue, expressing that interest has been discussed among those involved in the educational Children's Garden.
 - ◇ Kate reiterated that it is important to get early community engagement. Kirk said that he would look for Mia's help on this through social media and our website.
 - ◇ Kate is also wondering about potential impact on Talmar's programs.
 - ◇ Mia said that it makes sense to get some community input and would post information to that end. Joe agreed that a survey should get a read on the "pulse from the community," and we should consider establishing simple bylaws regarding responsibility of plot users.
 - ◇ Kirk said that the proposal is still preliminary. Abe suggested that we wait to find out if the program is approved before we move ahead on promotion to the community. John said that we should do a survey of the community early.
 - ◇ Pat asked if the staff has knowledge of other such gardens, and Kirk mentioned that Perry Hall has one as does Marshy Point.
- 7) We are waiting on crushed stone for frequently visited areas of the park to aid in the myriad of parking issues that have occurred in the last month.
- 8) Primitive Tech weekend is again canceled due to the pandemic restrictions, but programs led by Kirk and Breena will be run that weekend on a registration basis, with morning and afternoon sessions both weekend days. Bill said that he was sorry to see this good program canceled once again.
- 9) Regarding the Citizen Generated gazebo project, Mia said that Bob Smith notified her of approval.
- 10) Park access issues:
 - Wellington Woods survey markers are the result of a survey through a home sale in that area.
 - Providence Road access issue led by Dr. Olfeldt is ongoing. A recent meeting between the complainant and the County, attended by Olfeldt and attorney and County staff Kirk Dreier, Bob Smith, Roslyn Johnson and Pat McDougall, left unresolved issues. Kirk anticipates another meeting.
- 11) Kirk expressed appreciation for the Thank You video that was shown at the Rec. & Parks meeting on 2/5.
- 12) Frog Pond/Picnic Table Memorial Project - Mia proposed that we move ahead with purchase of four wheel-



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chair accessible picnic tables associated with recent donations by the Rolon family and Mia & Brian Walsh.

- Bill asked if the table depicted in the board packet would be workable due to the need to fasten to concrete and Mia said that the tables intended are supported on legs.
- Abe asked about the placement decision on the pond, which was shown via shared screen. There was discussion about project impact regarding the floodplain. John said that the intended placement was not in the Minebank floodplain. Kirk asked the size of the pond, and Mia said that it is 270 gallons, a relatively small one.
- Abe asked about getting an assessment of site clearance from utilities, understanding that BG&E is behind on fulfilling inspection requests. He suggested that we pay for a private company to do the work to keep the project moving.
- Rick asked about the 100-foot distance from the Minebank that he had encountered in a past project. John said that that is a forest buffer consideration and not a floodplain stipulation. Rick also mentioned the nearby sewer access point, which was agreed is not an issue.
- Based on the input, Abe said we should move ahead and Kirk concurred. Mia has a list of purchase needs and will place those order. Abe will get a cost on potential utility impact inspection.

b. Leaseholder's Report – Kate Joyce, Talmar

- 1) Kate said that Talmar will be advertising to fill a position, and that Talmar is currently operating with only one staff person on site at a time.
- 2) Programs start in March and the Veterans' program begins on 4/5.
- 3) Mia asked how Christmas sales went, and Kate reported that this went well.

d. Buildings and Grounds – Rick

- 1) Tree work by the volunteer grounds crew has begun.
- 2) Rick wants to get an idea from Abe on the needs of the Gazebo project.
 - Joe said that he has confirmation from the contractor (Award), and Mia said that the first third payment bill was received. Joe said that he will ask Award what is needed in terms of site prep. Rick said that he would need the timing for project start.
- 3) Mutt Mitt Stations – Rick and Kirk worked out the locations for the full stations and trash receptacles. Mia said that another full station has been funded, and that she has ordered the plaques per the various donors' requests.
- 4) Trail grant – SHA – Abe would like to have a virtual meeting with Property Management regarding our grant-writing for SHA, to ensure we are fully complying with BC's processes. Abe will contact Bryan Shepherd and Pat McDougall to plan the meeting and Mia will set it up in Zoom.

e. Programs – no report

- f. Volunteers and Membership – Kim (See report included in the meeting packet.) Mia asked what our highest level of membership has been. Kim said that due to early registration for Summer Camp, the high number is somewhat artificial as numbers drop with annual expiration at the end of March. Recent maximum truer numbers are around 400.
- g. Communications – Newsletter – Kim said that once all parts of the newsletter and calendar arrive from the printer, Sya and she will split the assembly and labeling work. Both Mia and Pat offered their assistance.



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5. OLD BUSINESS – Raccoon story – the thief of the bird feeder has been identified, a four-footed one. Kirk expressed doubts about the raccoon’s responsibility for all the actions, but both Pat and Mia assured him, based on personal experience, that the culprit is fully capable.
6. NEW BUSINESS – Mia offered thanks to John for leading a great bird walk.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m,

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 8th at 7:00 p.m. – Annual meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Shapiro, Secretary
2-10-21

2021 CVPC Meeting Dates

Approved at November 9, 2020 Meeting

MEETING LOCATION: REMOTE via ZOOM or SHERWOOD HOUSE

DATE 2021	MEETING	Open to Public?	Time
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 th (10/11 is Columbus Day)	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.
Monday, November 8 th	Executive Board Meeting (closed to Board only)	No	7:00 p.m.
Monday, December 13 th	Executive Board Meeting	Yes	7:00 p.m.