



Cromwell Valley Park Council

Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2023, 6:00 PM

Council Meeting Attendance:

1. In-person: None
2. Virtually: Abe Yoffe, Deb Lee, Carl Gold, Kate Joyce, Bill Curtis, Stacey Cruise, Joe Rector, Dave Votta, Mia Walsh, Kim Shapiro, and Pat Novak
3. Park Staff: Kirk Dreier (Virtual attendance)
4. Absent: Rick Childs and Kelly Emerson
5. Membership in attendance: None

1. Welcome from President Abe Yoffe

- The President called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM. The meeting was virtual via Google Meet. The Agenda was adopted, and a quorum was present.

2. Governance

A. The Council approved the October 16, 2023 meeting minutes. **Stacey Cruise:**

B. Treasurer's Report: Mia Walsh

- Monitor spending carefully, as there are many line items at or over budget for 2023.
- Any expense over our 2023 budget must be approved in advance. Review the P&L statement for those areas and contact the treasurer with any questions.
- Bill Curtis and Joe Rector performed an audit review for 2021 and 2022. Despite the disorganized paperwork and backup documentation, neither auditor found areas of financial concern.
- A copy of the Internal Audit Report was emailed to the Board of Directors, summarizing those findings on 10/30/23. 3. Year End 2022: The prior Treasurer sent the finalized documents for Year End 2022 on 10/18/23. The treasurer submitted the amended 2022 990 tax documents online on 10/29/23. The IRS accepted these as complete. The 990 filings, Schedule A, B, and O, were emailed to the Finance Committee and uploaded to the President and Treasurer's Google Drive.
- A 2024 Budget Meeting was held on October 24th. A review of historical and

current documentation and P&L statements by the program was conducted. After discussion, a draft of the 2024 proposed budget was emailed to all Board of Directors and relevant Park Staff on 10/30/23 for further discussion at the November meeting. The email also included questions to Park Staff about Year-End 2023.

- It was noted that the Staff Administrative Assistant is requesting and authorizing check request forms for Park Staff. Though the requested items are valid, the Council respectfully asks that Park Staff have one person request and a second person authorize the expenses on the signature lines.
- The vote to approve increased costs associated with the Newsletter was unanimously approved.
- Moving money to a Money Market account will be discussed with the Finance Committee.
- During the budget meeting, a discussion regarding adding a fund under restricted funds for equipment purchases requires a vote.
- The Treasurer gave a detailed overview of the 2024 budget. The 2024 budget was unanimously approved with the following modification to increase by \$2000 in expenditures for a Volunteers Appreciation event.
- ACTIVITIES OR ITEMS FOR THE UPCOMING MONTH: Prepare the finalized 2024 budget document for voting at the December 2023 meeting
- SPECIAL RECOGNITION: Rick Childs, Abe Yoffe, Bill Curtis, and Deb Lee, thank you for attending the Budget Meeting. Bill Curtis and Joe Rector are responsible for performing the internal audit. Kristin McFaul is responsible for finalizing the 2022 year-end tax information and helping with questions as needed.

Donations and Fundraising: **Mia Walsh**

- Posted leftover Christmas ornaments and framed photographs to Facebook for purchase for the 2023 holiday season. Added items on the website for easier purchasing. We need a plan to display these at the Holiday Open House to clear our inventory.
- Dr. Pat Kingman's family donated \$5,000 to the park.
- Laura L. is providing a list of Eastern Bluebird boxes to replace and add. We need to discuss further where to use the additional funding.
- ACTIVITIES OR ITEMS FOR THE UPCOMING MONTH:
 - 1) Prepare Giving Tuesday documents for social media.
 - 2) Order and mail Holiday cards to high-end donors.
 - 3) Order new remittance envelopes.
- SPECIAL RECOGNITION:

Thank you to the Trails Committee for planting the trees purchased in honor of Dr. Alan Lake.

D. **Background Checks: Abe Yoffe**

- All Directors have current background checks.

C. Committee Structure Changes - Kim Shapiro

- Abe Yoffe, Pat Novak, Bill Curtis, Carl Gold, and Joe Rector will join Kim Shapiro to form the committee to review and update the current By-laws. The committee will present a proposal of By-law changes that will govern how the Council conducts business.

3. Management

A. Park Staff Report: *Kirk Dreier*

- October and November are busy with special events: The Primitive Tech Weekend on the 14th and 15th, the special program at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, and the Thanksgiving Holiday event at The Fort Garrison on the 19th.
- School visits are winding down.
- The Scout project was completed this past weekend. The old fence line was taken out and replaced by Samuel Fatkin. They used the stockpiled posts in the apple barn and the old fence boards collected by Rick and Wayne. They also bought some that were needed. It looks good. He and his troop will return to paint the fence to match the others.
- The Hawk Watch will soon get a “facelift” of its seating. Anibal Gonzalez’s troop will be doing that work. Also, they will repair and refurbish the Old Shed near the trail that runs by Kelly Emerson’s House.
- Sadly, the ole Sycamore was cut down. The stump and one slice of the tree were saved for an exhibit and a future Eagle Scout project.
- The Christmas tree will be purchased by December 2nd.
- Andy Anders help is needed with performing holiday songs at the Open House; otherwise, an alternative will be Mr. and Mrs. Dreier.
- A portable sound system is authorized for purchase.

B. Leaseholders Report (Talmar): *Kate Joyce*

- Christmas trees arrive Tuesday, November 21st. Sales start Friday, November 24th, from noon to 5:00 pm.
- The Council will purchase a tree for the Holiday Open House
- The VA Farms program participants graduated. Eighty guests attended. WJZ and WMAR covered the event.
- WYPR is interviewing Kate Joyce about social groups on Wednesday, November 14th.
- The pizza party held on Veterans Day was successful.
- December 2nd is the low-sensory Santa event featuring Corey Johns.

C. Friends Of Sherwood Report: *Mia Walsh*

1. Distributed a design of the revamping of the Honor Garden with a list of plans or items to plant in the spring.
2. Went to the nursery with Sue Lake to purchase native trees for the honor garden, which the Trails Committee planted.
3. SPECIAL RECOGNITION:

Thank you to Wayne Skinner for planting the two trees purchased by Sue Lake in

honor of her husband and to Rick Childs for measuring out and marking the area to be planted.

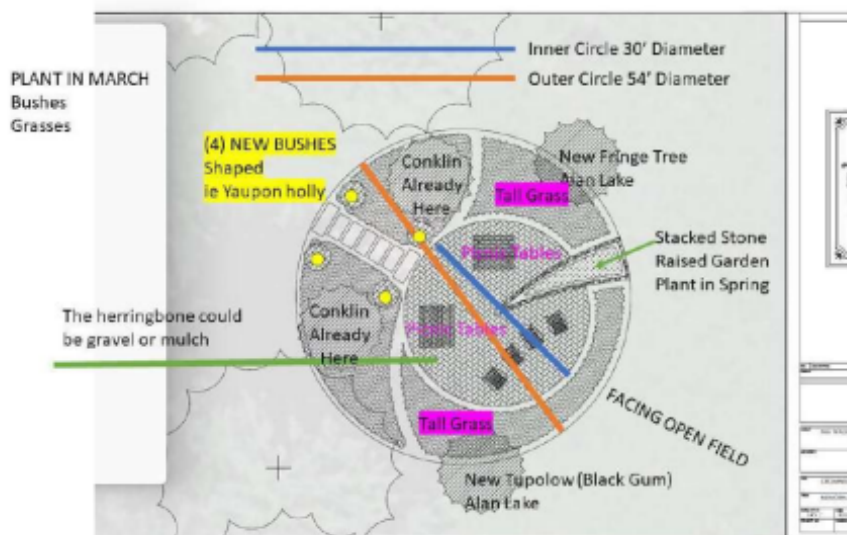
Thank you to the Trails Committee for their work on the Adirondack Chairs and refurbishing the older ones, which could be repaired.

4. ACTIVITIES OR ITEMS FOR THE UPCOMING MONTH:

Review the signage in the Honor Garden and decide what needs to be updated or replaced.

Order Dr. Lake's nameplate for the Adirondack chair.

Contact Maxalia for a quote to refurbish the Honor Garden.



D. Standing Committees-

Building and Grounds: **Rick Childs**

No report

Programs: **Kelly Emerson**

1) PPIs / Events pending - Debbie Trout reports two event requests await approval:

- Baltimore Road Runners Club: February 11, 8-1. 5K and 10 K Trail Race. Contact - Bart Reed. Event participant Max 300.
- Chesapeake Bay Association Shamrock Run - Morning Run, Flexible date around St Patricks. Proposed dates include March 9, 10, and 16,17.

Debbie Trout also reports that all future events should be requested/ planned / PPIs submitted a year in advance to allow the county scheduling time.

2) Fall Migration / Harvest Festival/ Arts in the Park Date choice. Included

Elizabeth Davidson's request letter to the council of 11/3. Her group is also planning an event at the Hampton Mansion next year. Choosing a date as soon as possible is in the park's best interest. The park staff has penciled this in but has yet to confirm.

3) 2023 Migration/ ARTs in the Park summary analysis documents:

Document One - Financial analysis Migration/TAC 2021-2023

a) Spreadsheet - Page One - Summary Financial analysis. This summarizes the financials of the Migration and TAC events for 2021-2023 and reviews the pre-COVID Arts in the Park event (date unknown).

- Incoming Vendor donations have been slow due to procedural/ process issues. Best practice development here is in the works with CVP/TAC. Vendor satisfaction is high, with only two notable exceptions. We can collect 10-15% of vendor sales as estimated on the spreadsheet.

b) CVP Vendor report, provided by Debbie/Mia.

c) Spreadsheet page three - TAC Vendor report, provided by

Kelly/Elizabeth/Susan Walters - TAC vendor coordinator

d) Spreadsheet page four - 2021 and 2022 numbers with excerpted minutes.

Document Two contains original meeting feedback notes and new comments from John Canoles, Deb Lee, and Frederick Wood with helpful suggestions.

Documents three and four, contain the full minutes from 2021 and 2023 and the financials to analyze those years. These are also excerpted in spreadsheet page four.

Other notes:

The park is owed \$50.00 cash from Sunday parking for the TAC event.

Two additional documents will be submitted. These include photos of Rick Child's parking report for 2023 and A photo of Elizabeth Davidson's pre-COVID report. Volunteers are needed for the December 2nd Holiday Open House. A possible date for the 2024 Migration Festival is September 21st. A suggested date for the 2024 Holiday Open House is December 7th.

1) Communications: **Mia Walsh**

- The website is updated with all approved minutes.
- The 2022 donor listing is on the website.
- The December 2023 events are on the website and added to CampBrain.
- The Winter 2023 Newsletter was mailed out on 11/13/23. The new process allows the printing company to print the addresses and mail directly from the shop, so we don't need labels.

ACTIVITIES OR ITEMS FOR THE UPCOMING MONTH:

Continue working on the 2023 Annual Report as appropriate.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION:

David Schroeder, thank you for preparing the Winter 2023 Newsletter.

2) Volunteers Committee and NOWN: **Pat Novak**

- This table shows a tally of reported volunteer hours and estimates of known activities of Council members for October 2023.

Last Name	Hours	Category/Event
Childs		
Cruise	2.5	Meeting minutes
Curtis	8	Critter Cam and Finance Report
Emerson	27	Event Organization, Prep, and Follow-up
Gold	12	Several trail guide trips, review 80-page insurance documents, draft
Lee	7	CVPC meeting, budget meeting, wallpaper project
Novak	15	NOWN and Facebook
Rector	3	Administrative work, trail monitoring
Shapiro		
Walsh	35	Treasurer, CampBrain, Honor Garden, Website, Budget Reports
Yoffe	18	Member Appreciation Event, attended a meeting to prepare the 2024 budget, and conducted general Council business via email
Votta		
Total		120.5

- NOWN: The attendance numbers have increased for the Night Out With Nature (NOWN) event. Most participants learned about this event from the e-newsletter. Participants agree that Wednesday nights are best for attending NOWN. The next event is Wednesday, November 29th, and the topic is Native Bees. Planning for the spring NOWN series is in the works.

5) Finance: **Rick Childs**

Membership: Finance sub-committee: **Kim Shapiro**

- CURRENT MEMBERSHIP DATA:

Total: 520
Lifetime: 13
Patron: 5
Sustaining: 25
Contributing: 31

New high-level memberships:

South (Patron), Goldman (Sustaining), Del Bene (Contributing)

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Nov. totals	344	359	409	428	520

- Coming month: Continue to send out thank-you cards/membership cards to renewing households.
- Recognition: Thanks go to Mia for gathering membership data from all sources, mail-in, website, and CampBrain, inputting membership data into CampBrain, and forwarding records of membership purchases.

4. New Business

- Recreation for All **Abe Yoffe**

Baltimore County Rec and Parks hosted a presentation via the County Executive's Office of Immigrant Affairs. Highlights from the presentation included data that the Asian community is 10% larger than the Latino community. The Council can get more accurate demographic data from this office. The presenter shared the importance of having language options on all printed communications. The Council should investigate making sure the website, etc, is multi-language accessible. Bob Smith announced the Citizen Generated Request is now the Community Generated Request. One idea is to post a welcome sign and park rules in various languages. Clarification on the MOU process is forthcoming.

- The last meeting of the year is on Monday, December 11th at 6:00 pm at McFaul's.
- Twelve signs warning park visitors about park closing hours are ordered.
- An appreciation lunch is planned for the trail crew.

were approved during the Council Meeting on November 13, 2023.

Unless otherwise indicated, all meetings will be held in the Sherwood House and via Google Meet. *The park office is closed for federal holidays.

Meeting Date	Time	Class of Meeting
Monday, January 8	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (open to public)
Monday, February 12	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (closed)
Monday, March 11	6:00 p.m.	Annual Meeting (open to public)
Monday, April 8	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (open to public)
Monday, May 13	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (open to public)
Monday, June 10	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (open to public)
Monday, July 8	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (open to public)
Monday, August 12	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (open to public)
Monday, September 9	6:00 p.m.	General Meeting (open to public)
Monday, October 7	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (open to public)
Monday, November 4	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (closed)
Monday, December 9	6:00 p.m.	Executive Board (open to public)

5. Old Business

A. Plexiglass on dining room walls- Deb Lee

Rick Childs shared a resource connected to the Hampton Mansion, curator Gregory Weidman. Reached out to the Historic Preservation of Baltimore County.

B. Furniture & plaque replacement- Rick Childs

The furniture and the 3rd Shining Star plaque are ready to be placed.

Motion to adjourn at 8:21 pm

*Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Cruise
Council Secretary*