



Cromwell Valley Park Council

Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2023, 6:00 PM

Council Meeting Attendance:

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

Welcome from President Abe Yoffe

- The President called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM. The meeting was hybrid via Google Meet and in-person. The Agenda was adopted, and a quorum was present.
- The President congratulated and thanked Kelly Emerson for the superb coordination and execution of the Migration Celebration/Art in the Park and the Member Appreciation events. The President also thanked the Park staff for their support and work during these three recent events.

2. Governance

A. The Council approved the September meeting minutes. Stacey Cruise:

B. Treasurer's Report: Mia Walsh (Abe Yoffe reporting)

- The President reviewed the budget versus the actuals, indicating the income was 110% of the budgeted revenue. Currently, we are under budget for all current expenses.
- Donations: Number of donations = 196. Total donation amount: \$12,208.91
- An ad hoc budget committee is being formed to plan for the next Council year.

Background Checks: Abe Yoffe

- All Directors have current background checks.

C. Committee Structure Changes - Kim Shapiro

- A separate meeting will be scheduled to discuss the proposed changes to the current committee structure and then present to the Council.

3. Management

A. Park Staff Report: Kirk Dreier

- September was busy; we held the Migration Celebration and had about 1000 people attend.
- The school visits began, and the “Tentatorium” is back in use as classroom space. The school field trips started on 10/3, and there are 20 more field trips scheduled until the end of November.
- Pollywog Camp started on the 13th with people “fighting to get in” to Ranger Anne’s famously popular program for children.
- The Senior Stroll program started on September 13th and has become so popular we had to increase the number to 20 participants.
- Trail Guide training began on the 26th and ended on the 28th. There was a good turnout. It was held at MPNC. The Chief is asking for more in the division to participate and changing the name to volunteer training.
- The winter calendar was submitted before October 15th. The spring calendar is due by January 1 for the county’s new online system, CIVIC REC.
- Bird walks with Ranger Lechtizin started on September 30th and are quite popular.
- Officer Jennifer Scott’s son took up an Eagle Scout project for the park. He will repair and rebuild the second raptor cage.
- Officer Scott has been bringing the JOINS kids to work with Ranger Anne in the children’s garden for years for DIG for Drop-in Gardening.
- We had the first NOWN program at Sherwood on September 27th with Loren Lustig and the Thin Green Line about his experiences of 12 years as a PA Game Commission deputy game warden on the waterways of PA. It was a successful evening.
- Primitive Tech weekend was rainy, but all my speakers came, and those who attended enjoyed it. On Sunday, a few hundred people learned tool work, bows and arrows, and cooking with Ranger Laura.

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

- Secretary Woods visited the site at the invitation of the veterans.
- A presentation was given to Recs and Parks
- VA Farms graduation is October 26th.
- The fall event is November 11th
- Christmas tree sale starts November 25th
- Low-sensory Santa arrives on December 1st

C. Friends Of Sherwood Report: *Mia Walsh*

No report

D. Standing Committees-

1) Building and Grounds: *Rick Childs*

- Both mowers are out for repairs.
- Mowing schedule: Dave Votta configured a GPS map. Our preferred mowing schedule was sent to Brian Shepard.

2) Programs: *Kelly Emerson*

There are no pending PPI requests.

Migration/ Arts in the Park Feedback 2023

- Staff support for the event was overwhelmingly positive, “smoothest ever.” Even though two days in a row seems a lot, we have reduced the work from 3-2 days, and the staff required for the second day is minimal.
- The volunteers’ effort, especially in advance, was very helpful. Wayne’s team is indispensable for parking and activity setup. Apple peelers, too. Staff- High praise for staff from TAC and Committee: organization, flexibility, good humor. The placement of the tent for Tac was deemed perfect. The quality of the vendors was appreciated- “great eclectic blend,” “very appropriate partnership.”
- The music was amazing, and the food was very delicious. The Health Department inspector on site was satisfied. Clean up was well done.

Suggestions include

- More volunteers are needed earlier during the event to assist with parking.
- Explore strategies for working with teens and local high schools. Develop relationships with service opportunity coordinators at local high schools well in advance so students can bring their supervisors. For teens, more waivers in advance and have this list available for reference.
- Determine what organizations we can develop relationships with to franchise certain tasks. Example – X business always brings x number of volunteers
- Have volunteer managers in certain areas; too many volunteers were requested in some areas.
- Develop a more formal council protocol to thank volunteers from the council (thank you’s from me went out later than I would have liked).

Vendors

- Arrivals would be smoother if more volunteers knew where everyone goes. Each vendor should receive a paper note for their dashboard in advance, indicating where they should go.
- Potatoes are a much-liked activity but are deemed a little slow.
- Vendor donation request letters could go out earlier.

Notes

- A Council member on the day of the event in charge of developing relationships
- Build a positive relationship with the Health Department
- Parking: More volunteers earlier, double white lines the day before, and more exit signage. A parking table is a plus, but it should be neater
- Branding/ Marketing: We should reclaim the Fall Festival title and its history. We have lots of nostalgia for this event. It was requested that we use the older, simpler format for the brochure. Cooperate earlier with TAC on postcards/flyers, etc.
- Tents: What can we plan next year if we don't have a large tent? Can we build a relationship with Loane brothers or another tent company?

The Members' Appreciation Event

- The first Members' Appreciation Event was well received. The members enjoyed being in the Sherwood House. The members enjoyed the band. The staff was very helpful with set-up, and some members volunteered to help. The activities were popular with both the children and adults. Donations were received. One idea is to include a Volunteer Recognition segment in the Members Appreciation event.

3) Communications: **Mia Walsh**

No report

4) Volunteers Committee: **Pat Novak and Kim Shapiro**

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

Last Name	Hours	Category/Event
Childs		
Cruise	23	Migration Festival, Art in the Park, adult and family events, and meeting minutes
Curtis	6	Critter Cam
Emerson		
Gold	14	Trail guide training
Lee	12	Migration Festival and BCRP meeting
Novak	20	Trophies for Shining Star and NOWN
Rector	7	Park business and checked on trails
Shapiro	32	By-laws, communication, membership, and Migration (=August)

Walsh	17.75	Treasurer, membership, receipts, emails, and Migration
Yoffe		
Votta		
Total		115.75

5) Finance: *Rick Childs*

Membership: Finance sub-committee: *Kim Shapiro*

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP DATA:

- Total memberships as of 9/5/23: 511
- Last report (Sept.): 498
- Lifetime: 13
- Patron: 4
- Sustaining: 24
- Contributing: 29

Year 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023

- Oct. totals 344 359 (Nov.) 407, 416, and 511
- 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

4. New Business

- The President announced the need to begin planning for the holiday celebration scheduled for December 2nd at the Sherwood House.

5. Old Business

A. Plexiglass on dining room walls - *Deb Lee*

Extensive research for determining the best way to preserve the dining room walls included contacting the Senior Paper Conservator for Colonial Williamsburg. The Conservator expressed concern about using plexiglass to protect and preserve the walls. Five other experts agreed and expressed concern about mold, particularly on exterior walls. Questions were raised about the priority of this project.

B. Furniture and plaques replacement- *Mia Walsh*

No Report

Motion to adjourn at 8:01 pm

Respectfully submitted,

*Stacey Cruise
Council Secretary*