



Cromwell Valley Park Council, Inc. (CVPC)

Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2025, 6:00 PM

1. COUNCIL MEETING ATTENDANCE

- The meeting was held in person and Google Meet
- Board In attendance: Rachel Allshouse, Mia Walsh, Deb Lee, Laura Jenifer, Ray Reed, Rick Childs, Kate Joyce, Keith Kridenoff, Kelly Emerson, Carol Gold
- Attended Virtually: Joe Rector, Bill Curtis
- Park Staff: Kirk Dreier
- Membership/Guests in attendance: Mary Gregory, Vanessa Blackner, Kaity Handley
- Absent: Pat Novak

2. WELCOME FROM PRESIDENT, MIA WALSH

- Call to Order at 6:01pm, the agenda was adopted, and a quorum was established
- Welcome to Kaity Handley, AA Tree Experts
- Thank you to all who volunteered and participated in the Shakespeare in the Park event, especially Kelly Emerson
- Thank you to the History & Culture Committee for assisting in the Sherwood House Tour, especially Keith Kridenoff
- Friends of Oregon Ridge/Marshy Point/Lake Roland will not be co-partnering with Baltimore County Department of Recreation & Parks (BCRP) in 2026. They will finish out planned events through 2025.
- October 15- York Manor Garden Club Lime Kiln History. The History & Culture Committee will be helping. Depending on weather, Sherwood House can be used for the presentation.
- Maryland Non-Profits - 20 hours of consulting with CVPC.

3. SPECIAL GUEST, Kaity Handley, khandley@aatreeexperts.com, Beech Tree Disease Presentation

- Overview of types Beech Trees; types, size, prevalence in area, nuts are important
- Symptoms of Beech Tree Disease:
 - Dark banding between leaf veins, eventually twist and curl up, lost leaves.
 - Once affected, young saplings survive 2-5 years, older trees 6-10 years. 90-95% mortality.
 - Logging companies don't want their wood.
- Cause:
 - Beech Leaf Disease Nematode, little worms.
 - Impacts all kinds of Beeches
 - Unsure how carried/gets in buds.
 - Started in Lake County, Ohio in 2012
 - Spread as of 2024 map shown. Coming from the north, spreading east.
- Treatments
 - Two kinds being tested. Need a license to treat them.
 - 1. Macroinjection, drill holes in base, fungicide (same as Dutch Elm disease). Takes 1.5-2 hours per tree. Long process. Good for two years. Repeat for multiple years. Start in Summer before they set in the buds. Tree takes fungicide up and it kills the nematode.

- 2. Spray-if sapling is under 10 inches (tri color beeches) use spray. Have to get every single leaf.
 - Hopeful other treatments are being developed.
- Where are Beeches on CVP property?
 - Sherwood Farm drive is lined with 9 European Beech trees. Over 70yrs old.
 - In the forest (AI suggested 25% of canopy).
- Treatment at CVP Discussion
 - How will the community respond to pesticide? Does go directly into the tree, not spraying.
 - Treatment vs. replacement. Pick special ones to save? Are some stressed/weak?
 - Cost through AA Tree Experts is \$38/inch Diameter Breast Height (DBH). Less if treating multiple.
 - Does Hampton National Historical Site have this issue? Yes and they are addressing it.
 - Would a plan include replacement and treating? Big trees should be able to be saved.
 - Research says good control with injection methods, even if surrounding areas are infected.
 - Pruning is not effective, because it is in the bud. That has not been a recommendation.
 - What is the responsibility of BCRP? What would CVPC's role be in funding?
 - To finance potential costs, consider Sponsorship of Trees, with a plaque in the ground.
 - We have time to decide/plan. Do not inject until July. Scope of project at CVP would be considered big.
 - Consider contacting a company who produces chemicals to volunteer time/equipment.
- Discussion of developing a Forest Management Plan
 - Utilize Cub Hill Ranger Station Department of Natural Resources (DNR).
 - For a property this size, having a plan is recommended.
 - Examples of grants/assistance/resources
 - Gunpowder Conservancy
 - Alliance of the Chesapeake Bay—received a grant to plant trees
 - Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/eqip-environmental-quality-incentives/maryland/environmental-quality>
 - Deb Lee provided a computer generated draft Forest Management Plan for CVP. Kaity looked it over and provided feedback.

4. GOVERNANCE

- Approval of July 2025 Minutes – *Rachel Allshouse*
 - The minutes were approved unanimously and will be posted to the CVPC website.
- Treasurer's Report—Deb Lee (detailed report p.3 of September Agenda Packet)
 - Profit & Loss Statements and Budget vs. Actuals were provided (pp.4-7)
 - Highlights of Balance Sheet & Budget vs. Actual Reports
 - Business Owners property & liability insurance annual premium is renewed in September
 - Regarding \$12,821.70 (vs. budgeted \$600) Park Program Expenses, Summer Camp and Polliwog, a reminder that this was due to the disputed bills from 2024. This expense will not occur again.
 - Will there be grants available for Park Councils again next year? We have asked, but we do not know and should not count on them.
 - Internal financial review update
 - The Finance Committee discussed this internally and supported it.
 - An out of budget motion was submitted, requesting to spend \$3,000 to engage C.E.A. Scholtes & Associates for financial controls review (p.9)
 - Motion highlights, rationale, pros, cons, alternatives were shared.
 - Rich Childs shared that because laws have changed since the procedures documents were made over a decade ago, this would be beneficial.

- Ray Reed asked if there would be a manual/template to be used in the future. That would be the hope.
 - The motion was passed unanimously.
 - Background Checks (p.8)
 - Rachel Allshouse reported everyone up to date until November 2025
 - Nominating 2026
 - Please let Mia know if plan to return to Board or not in April 2026.
 - VP will be stepping down.
 - Secretary will be stepping down.
 - Preference to stack board with people's skillsets. Desire for nature-focused.
 - Would someone like to take over communications? Mia holds several roles.
 - Co-chair for History and Cultural Heritage?
 - Consideration of New Nominating Committee Chairman since Ray Reed is now on Board.
 - Email blast to membership with upcoming openings.
- MANAGEMENT
 - Park Staff Report – Ranger Kirk Dreier
 - Ranger Kirk was on leave in August, but noted the summer camps went well and that no one had any major issues with the heat. For that he is grateful.
 - We finally received additional training on the new mower, but have not had time to actually mow. We will be using it more as soon as staff vacations and such are over.
 - Chief only wants staff on the new mowers, until confident enough to train others.
 - Agreement with the Department about the Fall Harvest Fest with TAC has to be signed and sent to Ben, Jessi and Fran Spero and we are running out of time to get that completed.
 - Cark Gold reviewed what was last sent.
 - Income sharing detail not complete yet.
 - Food vendors have their own insurance. CVPC assisted with paperwork process.
 - Kirk will contact Fran Spero directly.
 - Goal is to finalize this agreement so that it does not need adjustments in the future.
 - Apple Orchard project is scheduled to go to the review board
 - The broken and falling pine trees are concerning, and a request was made for an arborist to survey and assess them.
 - The concrete pipe that fell into the stream issue. Environmental Protection and Sustainability will be visiting the site with the Chief and Ranger Kirk to tell us what we can and cannot do to mitigate the erosion ditches on either side of the pipe that is still above on the trail itself. The chief said that a date for that site visit has not been scheduled just yet, but he anticipates it will be soon.
 - Mia Walsh has requested to attend site visit. Ranger Kirk will ask.
 - Projects that are grandfathered into the MOU for CVP such as the memory garden for maintenance:
 - Wait for the chief to let me know which contractors the Department uses for horticultural work and will they let you hire them to do regular maintenance.
 - You can make a restricted donation to the Department of \$4,999.00 and a letter of intent of what the money is to be used for. If it's a \$5,000 or more donation it has to pass through the County Council hearing and if no one objects to the project then it is okayed and you still need a letter of intent to go with a larger donation as well. The difference is that will take longer.
 - Hired additional weekend staff over the summer. Moriah Joy will be joining us soon.
 - Bad news, is that our long time building attendant Kerry Doster was hospitalized. All of us are waiting on news.
 - We are working on set up for the Primitive Technology Weekend.
 - Thanks to Rick Childs for mowing the section of hillside where we hold the balloon

- popping shot. It should do that trick for not losing arrows.
 - The whole field and fields above where we park cars for large events and the fields to the west of Willow Grove will be closed to all foot traffic Sunday 9/14 from 8-10:30am. They've all been posted since yesterday.
 - The grounds crew will be out tomorrow to assist with set up for the event. The two pole tent will be going up next to the "Big Top", and various rain flies will be set up too.
 - I've included the agenda for all of you to take a look.
 - Ranger Matt was on vacation all last week and Ranger Breena has been on a well-deserved vacation since Sept 1st . She will be back on the 11th this week.
 - Our first school starts on September the 18th with Fall Harvest program. Polliwog pre k starts up on the 16 th and 17 th of September.
 - Tour of Sherwood House went well.
 - Shared concerns about tree diseases and Beech.
 - Rick Childs asked about fall field cutting program. Yes, but haven't heard back. Suggestion to cut twice a year instead of once.
- Leaseholders Report - Talmar - Kate Joyce
 - Still no lease. Kate Joyce is meeting with the law department this week (9/10 at 4:00pm. TALMAR's Board President will also be there).
 - Kate will not sign anything until her board reviews.
 - 15 year agreement and needs to be approved for long-term.
 - Logs still laying outside. Anyone who has complications walking cannot get under the oak tree on TALMAR's property because of the logs. Kirk will try again.
 - Verbal notice that a grant to replace trailer will come in January (nothing written).
 - Talmar will have Christmas Trees for sale and will have tree-ordering again.
 - Standing Committee Reports
 - Governance – Carl Gold
 - Shared two combined emails (sent on 8/28) from Emily Deaver, the Project Manager for the Pumping Station contractor. If anyone is interested in an on site meeting, please let Carl know.
 - Wayne, Bill, and Mia are interested in participating. Carl will include anyone interested in email exchange.
 - Clarification of indemnification clause. Insurance companies would need to hire a lawyer.
 - Finance – Raymond Reed
 - A request was made to create a finance chair email address through CVPC.
 - Thanks to the Finance Committee members who helped prepare the 2026 Budget; Deb Lee, Rick Childs, Mary Gregory, and Mia Walsh. Joe Rector has resigned from the committee.
 - **2026 Budget**
 - CVP Bylaws Article X, Section 2 - Budget: All Standing Committees whose activities require Council funding shall submit a proposed annual budget to the Finance Committee allowing time for consideration in advance of the December meeting. Specific time requirements are defined in the Policies and Procedures Manual.
 - A request was made for a copy of the Policies and Procedures Manual? (This was shared with the CVPC Board via email on 9/11 from Rachel Allshouse).
 - The committee has received requests from many of the committees and subcommittees.
 - The committee is meeting next Monday, 9/15 to review the funding requests and make recommendations for the proposed 2026 budget to the board by the October 20 board meeting.

- Is there anyone who has not submitted their request for funding?
 - **Insurance**
 - Crime policy was issued effective 7/16 with an annual premium of \$768.
 - Endorsement adding contents and liability coverage at Willow Grove Nature Center and Barn was issued effective 7/23 for a pro-rated additional premium of \$90.
 - To comply with the policy warranty, Ray Reed installed a smoke detector in the barn. Notice was mailed to Bob Smith, Director, BCRP, advising him that we made modifications to a Baltimore County Building (as required in the MOU), and asked if the county would be able to extend the central station fire and smoke alarm system that is used in the Nature Center over to the barn. Ray Reed will follow up in 30 days.
 - We have received the BOP policy renewal and paid the renewal premium of \$2,239.
 - **Contact with other Nature Centers**
 - Mia sent Ray Reed the names of the Presidents for 3 Baltimore County Nature Centers and he has been in touch. Marsh Point is inactive at this time. Ray is in the process of organizing a meeting with Oregon Ridge and Lake Roland to discuss our insurance programs with the goal of improving coverage and reducing premium expenses.
 - **Nominating Committee Chairman (see Nominating 2026)**
 - Ray Reed acted as nominating committee chairman for 2024 and 2025. What is the protocol for finding an individual to take this position now that he is a board member? Should we send out a blast to the council membership to solicit a volunteer?
- **Fundraising – Mia Walsh (p.11)**
 - Not included in the report, a large donation (\$2,000) was made from Anne Craig.
 - **New Donor Management Software Motion**
 - Mia Walsh presented a new motion to spend a maximum of \$3,492 (likely less than when motion was submitted), to replace CampBrain software with Bloomerang (new Donor and Membership Management Software).
 - A presentation was given and included in the Board Agenda (pp.13-18)
 - Highlights include an auto-renew option, higher functionality, providing donor giving data, event registration/sponsorship, integration with quick books, and ability to have multiple admins.
 - CampBrain is paid through December 2025. There is a 60 day migration. The payment would be in 2025 even though it will go into effect in 2026.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
 - **Membership Sub-Committee – Kim Shapiro (p.10) - report stands as submitted.**
- **Building & Grounds – Rick Childs**
 - Information provided about Beech Tree Disease
 - Discussion about goals for field clearing and methods for addressing goals (kudzu and other invasives)
 - DNR said goats would not help in the fall. Get them in March/April, but that is too late to go in after to cut everything else down.
 - Option of equipment rental? Mowing is in the MOU. Ranger Kirk can ask the Chief. Rick will follow up with Kirk . Mia will contact Jeff Budnitz from Lake

Roland.

- Programs & Events – Kelly Emerson
 - **7/19 and 7/20 - CSC's Shakespeare Beyond, 7:00pm**
 - Saturday rain out, Sunday was a go
 - Both nights drew a good if smaller crowd than last year.
 - Shorter show appreciated as it allowed for earlier departures
 - Baltimore Banner advertising was confusing
 - Food vendors well received
 - ASL interpreter was provided for Saturday by Talmar and other donations secured by the council. County last minute secured a translator for Sunday
 - Positive feedback received all around
 - Parking was a team effort. Thank you trail crew for help setting up. Park staff and volunteers for working together so well.
 - **Upcoming Event: Saturday, 10/11-Fall Harvest Festival (FHF):** One day event partnered with TAC rain or Shine, Willow Grove, 10-4. A live planning document is available for view for anyone interested.
 - Planning generally on track
 - Main goals this year to improve parking and signage
 - TAC reports that they have secured 23 vendors and 2 bands
 - TAC has ordered new banner should be ready this week
 - Friendraising / Fundraising ongoing
 - Food Vendors secured - Once upon a Potato, Charles Village Pub, Ritas. Conrad's a possibility.
 - A link to the New county event document is available for view to compare with last year's document. Thank you to Carl for reviewing the legal terms.
 - The Holiday Open House is held the first Saturday in December (12/6)
 - In 2024, CVPC had a table set up and helped with parking.
 - Asked Ranger Kirk to inquire about CVPC level of involvement this year.
- Communications – Mia Walsh (pp.18-19)
 - Report as submitted.
 - No fall newsletter. We are over budget and would prefer to send it in November/December.
 - Meeting members agreed as long as the newsletter is out in preparation for Giving Tuesday, History & Cultural Heritage Subcommittee
 - Keith Kridenoff will be co-chairing the committee.
 - Discussion about a new co-chair and recruiting efforts. Can we advertise at kiosks that we are looking for involvement from parkgoers?
- Volunteers - Rachel Allshouse for Pat Novak
 - Report as submitted
 - Total hours were provided for July (324.5) and August (279) 2025.
 - Not all CVPC members are submitting. What volunteers are we not capturing?
- Special Committee: History and Cultural Heritage - Keith Kridenoff
 - The Sherwood House Tour was very popular. Attendees asked if they would be at the FHF. They will have a table at the FHF event.
 - Continued work on the Olivia Shanklin box from 1906 - old school documents.
 - Discussion about the future of Night Out With Nature (NOWN).
 - TALMAR plans on focusing on more themed education. Consideration of sharing

curriculum or co-hosting selected events.

- NEW BUSINESS
 - Fence Maintenance Internship Project - Deb Lee (for Brian Lee)
 - A brief presentation and proposal was included in the Board Packet (pp.23-31)
 - Deb Lee can share the entire proposal
 - Asked 84 Lumber for donations.
 - A painter was willing to make instructional videos for volunteers to use.
 - There is a new sign being manufactured for the Sherwood Farm park entrance.
- OLD BUSINESS
 - Sewer Project - Gunpowder Interceptor Relief Sewer Line, Soil Borings, and Test Holes
 - Approval letter to access manholes to shoot liquid into the existing sewer. The section is over two miles long.
- The meeting adjourned at 8:46pm.
- Respectfully submitted by Rachel Allshouse, Secretary 9/15/25
- The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 20th at 6:00pm at Sherwood House and virtually.