



Cromwell Valley Park Council, Inc.
Minutes – January 11, 2021

CVPC Executive Board Meeting

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

Absent: Ken Keady

Park staff: Kirk Dreier

Guest: Bob Smith, Chief, Recreation Services Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks

1. WELCOME FROM PRESIDENT – MIA WALSH

- a. Mia called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 introduced Bob Smith who recently became Chief of Recreation Service responsible for Nature, Agricultural and Environmental Centers. Bob explained the changes in the organization and he also recognized Kirk for his work as Acting Regional Coordinator. Bob took a couple of questions.
 - 1) A meeting is being scheduled at Betty's Garden regarding Park access issues from the Providence Road community. Mia said that a representative of the neighborhood was allowed to present the issue at the November meeting of the CVPC Board.
 - 2) Mia informed Bob of fees in lieu that the County has committed to CVPC through the Cromwood Coventry community.

2. GOVERNANCE

- a. Meeting minutes acceptance from December meeting: Kim asked if there were any changes needed to the meeting minutes distributed within the week following the December 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. Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation 2021 Annual Report Filing – Mia completed this year's Personal Property and Annual Report filings with the State. A copy of this was included in the Board meeting packet.
- c. Baltimore County Background Checks – Mia included a list CVPC board members and expiration dates of the most recent background checks so that all are informed for timely reapplication. This is the "old" online system that is to be replaced by a more rigorous system including fingerprinting once the County is ready to roll it out. Bob Smith commented that the new process is one hold due to the restrictions of the pandemic. (Follow-up: At Abe's emailed request on 1/12, Mia distributed background check instructions to the members of the Board.)
- d. Nominating Committee (Refer to the Nominating Committee Report in the Board packet.)
 - 1) Mia reviewed the slate of officers and directors as it currently stands. Two-year terms are staggered, with President, Treasurer and two Directors on odd years and the rest on even years.
 - 2) The Secretary's position, though, is on the slate as bylaws describe the term limit as four consecutive years, and Kim has been serving since April 2017, replacing Mia half-way through her term.
 - 3) The plan is that the Officers and Directors slate will be prepared and presented by Kelly Emerson 30 days ahead of the Annual meeting in March. At present nominees are as follows:
 - Officers: President - Abe Yoffe; Vice-President – Kim Shapiro; Secretary – Mia Walsh and renewing Kristin McFaul's term as Treasurer
 - Directors: John Canoles and Joe Rector



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- 4) Making up the rest of the Board are committee chairs, which begin the next one-year term following Board approval at the April meeting. Some positions will be changing, and commitments to positions have been worked out through separate discussions via email and phone. Anticipated changes are as follows:
 - Programs – Ken Keady is resigning from his position due to family commitments. This position will be open. Mia requested that board members recommend individuals that are interested and may be a good fit. Joe asked for some documentation which describes the position, as this will help with recruitment. Kim said that she'd be able to provide this.
 - Communications – Mia has offered to take this on, as she is doing a lot of the Communications work, particularly social media. Pat wishes to continue posting events to Facebook.
 - Volunteers – Pat Novak agreed to take on Volunteers, and Michelle Mancuso, who has an interest in CVPC board activities, will work closely with Pat on this committee once the Board approves the annual renewal of Chair terms.
 - 5) Mia recalled that community outreach was successful at bringing Abe, Sya and Ken to the organization, and we could use that approach again. Both she and Joe suggested that we take three or four weeks to recruit among our own contacts.
- e. Fundraising and Donations Update – Mia
- 1) CampBrain Fundraising module – Mia expressed that the past year fundraising campaigns have been very successful, but it has also greatly increased the amount and complexity of managing the work of recording and recognizing donors, as well as understanding what works well. December donations were numerous and brought our total of individual donations to 516 for the year and total donations to over \$35,000.
 - CampBrain introduced a new module to help manage this work, and this was demonstrated by a CampBrain staffer in a virtual meeting with Mia, Abe and Kim. Based on follow-up communication with Abe, Kim, and Kristin, Mia decided to move ahead with the module purchase (\$800). Mia admitted that she now knows that this should have been done with Board approval first. Abe said that the new module has powerful features and should help us. Kim said that there are some unknowns considering the various sources of donations.
 - Population of the database – Mia said that she was able to get help from an intern to load in our data. She used this data in a PowerPoint presentation that showed the tools in the new system using our own data. The presentation showed the use of the structure of “Donor Management” in the CampBrain system and the flexibility in sorting and reporting data. Mia distributed this presentation to the Board members for future reference.
 - Discussion – Regarding varied sources of donations, Abe asked if there was a way to link the website donations directly to CampBrain. Mia said that this can be done but requires that donors must have an account in CampBrain, and if not, they would need to set one up. Bill suggested that that complexity may cause us to lose some donors and is perhaps not advisable. Kirk asked about links to Paypal, and Mia said that CampBrain just takes credit card info. The website defaults to PayPal, but there is an option to use the credit card directly, but it isn't obvious.
 - Approval – Bill asked if Mia would like the board to approve this purchase after the fact. Mia asked for a motion. Bill moved that we approve the \$800 purchase of the CampBrain Donor Management Module for use in managing donations from our fundraising activities. The motion was seconded by Joe and was approved unanimously.
 - 2) Mutt Mitt Campaign – Mia/Rick
 - This campaign, initiated through a donation by a Council member, and expanded through promotion by



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Mia, brought in donations that have funded three complete dog station systems and three dispensers and additional mitts.

- The discussion of placement of the stations and trash receptacles occurs later in these minutes.

- 3) Accessible ADA picnic tables. Mia’s birthday campaign on Facebook brought in funds for two of these tables, and the Rolon family donation will support one to two additional tables.
- 4) Amphibian Pond addition – The Rolon family donation includes an amphibian pond. Rick will work with Kirk for approval of the location selected by a site visit in December by John, Rick and Mia. Abe will make arrangements with Miss Utility to check for any obstructions.

f. Year-End Financial Documents

1) Treasurer - Kristin

- Kristin provided draft documents: Budget vs. Actuals for 1/1/20 through 12/31/20, a Budget Overview for 2021, and a Balance Sheet for 1/11/21. For the meeting, she said that she made some minor changes, particularly as these apply to funds in CampBrain for future use by registrants of programs that were paid for but canceled in 2020. We need to track these funds, and CampBrain maintains these as credit that is reduced as the account holder “spends” against it.
- Kristin suggested that we might make these funds restricted, but Mia said that for such one-and-done pockets of money, we might not use the restricted criteria. She recalled prior discussions where restricted fund line items can become difficult to close out, particularly where there are small amounts of funds remaining after the relevant projects are complete. Kristin said that we should consider developing a policy for classifying funds as restricted. The Finance committee will determine a concrete plan for these type of donations in conjunction with the new donor module.
- Volunteers line item – Pat asked about the budget line for the Volunteers Committee, which reads zero. Mia said that postage falls under that line item, awards are in the President’s line and celebrations are unlikely to occur this year but could be funded later if appropriate. Pat was satisfied with that response.

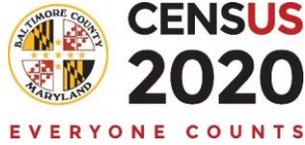
2) 2019 County Recertification

- Annual audit - Mia described the intent to conduct annual financial audits even though these are only required by the County every two years. Bill and Joe conducted and reported on the audit for 2019. We have not gotten any word from the County about review of that report. Bob Smith said that these go to the Rec. and Parks Board for consideration. He said that he’d be attending a meeting with that board later in the week and could inquire, but Mia indicated that it was not a critical need.
- Audit for 2020 - Mia asked if Joe and Bill would consider doing this again for 2020 during this first quarter, and both agreed. Kristin said that she can provide the documents in about a week. Mia recalled the need for a printed register of checks to assist the audit, and Kristin said that she will provide that.
- Available check records - Mia also said that she has some file folders that she has organized through her own tracking of donations, and these are available to Kristin.

3. MANAGEMENT

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

- 1) Visitation – December count of visitors is over 31,000. The large volume of visitors results in issues for the park, particularly damage of trails and major parking issues. The staff is dealing with these issues.
- 2) The Gazebo Project – The Citizen Generated Project filing has moved on to Property Management, but Kirk



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has received further word on it.

- 3) Staff is finished video projects and is now planning for spring programs.
- 4) Summer Camp – Seasonal staff has been confirmed. Planning is still going on across the County system.
- 5) Additional parking control signs have been installed.
- 6) Mutt Mitt station have arrived and will be assembled. Placement is being planned between Kirk and Rick. (See Buildings and Grounds section.)
- 7) A tri-tank is now available at the Nature Center. The expectation is that it will be used to display fish of the Minebank.
- 8) Deer culling is planned for February or March as a high deer population is a problem for the park ecology. The baiting and shooting will occur at night. Abe asked if there is a quota, but Kirk said that is hard to manage. Deer are removed intact and dressed offsite. The meat is ground and donated.
- 9) Primitive Tech weekend is cancelled again this year, due to its planned occurrence early in the year, ahead of adequate proliferation of vaccinations against COVID-19. Plans are in place to develop programs around some of the related activities. These would be handled like regular public programs requiring registration.
- 10) Community Garden – As part of a County-wide effort, CVP is considered for hosting a community garden. The area proposed is the former horse paddock where water is available. There is a question about the existing historic value of the fencing, and how to treat that considering the expectation to use deer fencing. If this becomes a real program, community participants would pay for use of plots.
 - Mia said that, if money is part of this, the Council would need to be included in the plans. Mia also suggested that we should review the County Master Plan for the park.
 - Kate asked if the community has expressed an interest, as in her experience, such gardens can become a “maintenance nightmare.” Kirk said that he didn’t have any information about community interest. Bob Smith said that they are in the early stages of looking at developing this and are considering other parks as well.
 - Bob Smith further explained that the County is working with University of Maryland Extension and DNR, looking to come online in the fall. Studies are planned for spring to assess community interest and determine garden areas.
 - Abe suggested checking on other Councils’ experiences.
 - Regarding a selected site, Bill suggested that selecting a site of historic gardens may be better. Rick proposed a couple of locations of CSA gardens which were part of CVP in the past.
- 11) Parking plan – Rick asked if there has been any progress on addressing parking and road access at the park. Kirk looked to Bob for an update, and Bob said that there nothing at the moment, and that he would try to get an update from Property Management. Mia said that a walk-through had already occurred. Kirk recalled Pat McDougall’s comment that work was out a year in the future and that planning may begin in 1st quarter 2021. Abe said that the CVPC should be involved in the planning.
- 12) Summer Camp – Rick asked about the finances of Summer Camp, if fewer participants, should we look at a different cost/fee structure.
 - Mia suggested the use of young people in need of community service hours to help reduce cost by expanding the ability to handle more children. Kirk did not favor that approach and mentioned additional concerns about the status of building availability.
 - Bob Smith said that the spring and summer programs are being considered as a system-wide approach.



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- Mia suggested the use of porta-pots if buildings are not by then open to the public.
 - Sya suggested considering other options for scheduling half-day programs to allow for more children to engage, charging a lower fee. She expected that parents would be open to this.
 - Mia suggested that we use our resources to think out of the box in order to make Summer Camp a possibility for the children who will have had a year of virtual learning.
- 13) Survey stakes – Rick said that he observed three stakes placed in the Wellington Woods area, two near the community and one further into the park. Neither Kirk nor Bob was aware of this, and there was a discussion about community concerns - about the issues with public access to the park from these communities. Mia said that we have had issues about three such points of access. Bob Smith asked Kirk for a photo showing the survey markers. (At this point, Bob left the meeting.)
- 14) Snappy the turtle – In response to complaints by a park visitor that the snapping turtle’s container was not large enough, Kirk moved the turtle from the 50-gallon tank to a 100-gallon tank.
- John had a conversation with another concerned visitor and researched standards for housing display animals. Abe asked how the tank volume is determined. John said that there is a calculation that relates the shell size to the volume.
 - John suggested that we use this research and work with the staff to improve our animal display area, as this is the part of the Nature Center that draws the most interest. Having such a project will give us an opportunity to run a fundraising campaign to support our work for the animals.
- b. Leaseholder’s Report – Kate Joyce, Talmar
- 1) Kate said that park visitors are parking in Talmar. She has found that some are there after dark, perhaps by design, as they are outside of the gate. She said that on one occasion she was blocked in and clearly could smell the presence of marijuana. Kirk asked if she felt Talmar should have its own gate. She said that it would be best to consider this issue when planning how to deal with parking in general.
 - 2) Programs start-up is planned for March and hiring will begin to support it. Programs during these times of continuing restrictions for COVID will be family-unit-focused, serving families with a member with special needs. Talmar is open to suggestions on this idea.
 - 3) Talmar is moving ahead with the program for Veterans.
- d. Friends of Sherwood – Mia suggested that we look at fees for use of Sherwood facilities since the cost of the building attendant is going up.
- e. Buildings and Grounds – Rick
- 1) Revisiting the Mutt Mitt station installation:
 - A map was provided to the board describe the proposal. Mutt Mitt stations will be located near parking areas. More concern lies with placement of trash receptacles so that fewer visitors drop the poop bags along the trails. Rick will work with Kirk on this.
 - Once finalized, Mia suggested that we publicize the map, and John said that we should include this in the weekly email as an article that helps park users understand the importance of disposing of dog poop trash appropriately.
 - 2) Weed warrior debris needs to be disposed of appropriately and not left in mowed areas of the park.
 - 3) Tree removal – small trees are being removed from areas intended for mowing
 - 4) Trail damage – trails are suffering from high traffic on the trails. Wood chips are being placed on the trails as



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needed, particularly where trails are often wet. Mia asked if wood chips are available, and Rick said that the park has a supply.

- f. Programs – no report
 - c. Volunteers and Membership – Kim (See report included in the meeting packet.) Kim thanked those who provided their volunteer hours for December.
 - d. Communications – Sya reminded the board members who have agreed to provide articles that these are now due by January 20th. The Calendar is delayed because of decisions at the County level on program restrictions. It was suggested to include the news about the new dog Mutt Mitt stations, so Mia encouraged Rick and Kirk to get the locations worked out.
5. OLD BUSINESS – None
6. NEW BUSINESS –
- a. Ad hoc committee – create a policy to address handling donations that result in installations at the park, such as benches, picnic tables, etc. Kirk said that the County has policies on that. Bill offered to help. Kim offered to document the decision. Abe will arrange a meeting.
 - b. Footbridges and Trails grant – Abe said that he will be reapplying for grant money through the Recreation Trails Program offered by Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m,

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

Respectfully submitted by Kim Shapiro, Secretary
1-12-21



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.