



# Cromwell Valley Park Council, Inc.

## Minutes – June 13, 2022

### CVPC Board Meeting

Board members in attendance: John Canoles, Rick Childs, Kate Joyce, Sya Kedzior, Pat Novak, Joe Rector, Kim Shapiro and Abe Yoffe.

Guest: Stacey Cruise

Park staff: Laura Page

Absent: Bill Curtis, Kelly Emerson, Kristin McFaul and Mia Walsh

#### 1. WELCOME FROM PRESIDENT – Abe Yoffe

- a. Abe called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. The meeting was conducted online using the Zoom meeting app, due to park office closure that day. Kim announced that she herself would be taking minutes in Mia's absence. A quorum was established.
- b. Volunteer Dave Davenport of the Weed Warriors team was recognized for his efforts to help clear kudzu with expert Eric Duce.
- c. Abe welcomed Stacey Cruise, a CVPC Council member who had attended our January meeting to introduce a children's book project with granddaughter Kimberly. The book, entitled "Naturally Smart", is nearing completion. Stacey showed an early printing of a draft in full size and highlighted portions of the book that specifically refer to Cromwell Valley Park.
  - Illustrations in the book are done by Stacey (backgrounds) and Kimberly (critters). They are colorful and fun.
  - Stacey read through the dedication in the book and bio written by Kimberly and comments about the park by Kimberly's brother. We were all charmed at the beauty of the words and the light it sheds on Cromwell Valley Park.
  - Her MSAC grant requires that the project be completed in one year. When completed, her project must be presented to the community. Pat Novak asked if the book will be available in time for the Autumn Migration Festival in September, and Stacey said that it would be. The festival can be an opportunity to fulfill a requirement for the grant. She described a book-reading/art-activity that could be done at the festival. Stacey offered Mimi Knuth of the park staff as a possible resource for the activity. Abe offered the Council's help wherever it is needed.
  - Kim asked if the festival plan would fulfill the requirements of the grant. For the purpose of nature education, Stacey described a 4-season- field trip that could involve one set of students visiting specific areas of the park to observe seasonal differences, which has been chosen as the format of the book. MSAC would provide the funds.

#### 2. GOVERNANCE

- a. Meeting minutes acceptance from May meeting: Kim, standing in for Mia, asked if there were other comments, but there were none. The revised minutes were approved. The minutes were accepted by the Board. These will be placed on the Park website. <https://cromwellvalleypark.org/about-cvpc/park-council/>.
- b. Finance
  - 1) 2021 Financial Documents – Kristin distributed the finalized documents electronically to the board in advance of the meeting.
  - 2) Abe reviewed the year-to-date documents. Income from Summer Camp shows at over \$22,000. Membership and Donations are over budgeted expectations. Kim asked about overbudget expenses and suggested that we should have a formal way deal with those. Pat recalled that the Bylaws do not deal with that issue.
  - 3) Fundraising Donation Update – Abe reviewed Mia's Fundraising report that was included with the board



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packet for the meeting. Noteworthy is the time gap in availability of a fee processing module that has since been rectified.

- c. No report was received from Baltimore County Dept. of Rec. and Parks
  - d. Background Checks – Abe presented the list of board members and background check expiration dates. A few of us will need to re-up in August.
3. MANAGEMENT (Committee reports. See reports attached to the agenda.)
- a. Park Staff Report – Laura Page led the review in Kirk’s absence.
    - 1) Primitive Tech Weekend had low attendance due to weather and blocked access to the park, particularly on the first day of the event.
    - 2) Summer Camp staff attended a chainsaw workshop that produced wood for a mushroom-growing project at Talmar.
    - 3) Carroll Manor school was one of six schools that visited in May. The theme of the trip was 18<sup>th</sup> century life and living, which included subjects of environment, animals, shelter, and our own lime kiln industry exhibit.
    - 4) Seasonal Naturalist training was held earlier this month.
    - 5) Juneteenth event planning is underway. It will be held at Banneker on June 18<sup>th</sup>. It is likely to have a higher turnout than last year.
    - 6) Summer Camp preparations are planned for this week of the 13<sup>th</sup>. Staff include veterans Alisa Fried and Alex Waugh and new staff member Grace Wiess.
    - 7) The Gilchrist Hospice event came off well, although there were some issues with parking.
    - 8) Two Eagle Scout projects will be happening at the park: work on the Primitive Tech Lab deck and refurbishing a kiosk in a field behind Willow Grove.
    - 9) More apple and pear trees were planted as part of the project to revive the Sherwood orchard. We now have 20 trees.
    - 10) Kirk is having the Autumn Migration Festival signs updated for the September event.
  - b. Leaseholder’s Report – Kate Joyce
    - 1) Talmar’s liaison with the County was transferred. Kate is looking to connect with Duron Edwards, who will be taking on this role. Abe has contact info and will send it to Kate.
    - 2) Talmar’s farm stand is now open from 4-6 p.m. Monday through Friday, located next to the greenhouse. Produce is looking good.
    - 3) A volunteer appreciation event will be held on the solstice.
  - d. Buildings and Grounds – Rick Childs
    - 1) Rick mowed areas that would be used during the Gilchrist event.
    - 2) Maintenance is being performed this month on Council mowing equipment.
  - e. Programs – Abe presented Kelly Emerson’s report.
    - 1) PPI’s – No new ones have come to Kelly’s attention.
    - 2) Gilchrist event – Rick asked about impacts on handling parking at larger events, considering the wet ground made it a factor during this smaller event. Abe made a note to address this in the face of the September



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migration event.

- 3) The Towson Arts Collective representative, Elizabeth, sent questions regarding the planned event on September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. We will help get answers to these. Elizabeth plans to join the CVPC board meeting in July.
  - f. Volunteers – for Pat Novak – Kim reported the board member volunteer hour total for the month of May at 86. Abe asked about work on the gazebo project that was still needed. Joe said that he would contact the contractors to get that moving.
  - g. Membership – Kim – Our current membership number stands at 377, on par with last year at this time. She announced high level members during the last month. Kim pointed out that the Donofrio family once again purchased Lifetime membership. We don't have a way currently to recognize these folks regularly. Abe suggested that we come up with a way to do this.
  - h. Communications - Abe for Mia – Abe reviewed Mia's work list for the prior month.
    - 1) This includes the issue with late release of the Summer Calendar, which led to an inability to promote early programs and subsequent cancelations. When asked about the calendar approval process, Laura explained that the new management has put this process in place across the County.
    - 2) Mia recognized John's nature article contributions.
    - 3) Abe is handling the T-shirt order for Summer Camp. He recognized Laura's contribution of the T-shirt graphic. (Kim will pick up the order and deliver to the park.)
    - 4) Mia requested the approval of an expense of \$350 to pay for upgrading the mobile app to handle membership and donations as it is not working uniformly across devices. This money exists in the budget, so no vote was required.
  - i. Ad hoc committees
    - 1) Migration Celebration – Kim said that we have good, committed representation of exhibitors. Where we are uncertain is in the area of vendor representation. Laura will check with Laura Swinson on progress.
    - 2) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Abe reported that the committee is pursuing establishing a relationship with Towson University's Naturalist program, recruiting a junior board member and placing signage at the park entrance that welcomes all people to the park. Pat asked if notes might be issued on these meetings, as she was unable to attend the meeting through its duration. She volunteered to serve as Secretary in future meetings. Stacey said that she was pleased with the tone and intent of the committee.
4. NEW BUSINESS - None
  5. OLD BUSINESS
    - a. Update on Memo of Understanding with the County - none
    - b. Cemetery Research and Wall Repair – Sya said that there is nothing to report for May.
    - c. Stream bridges – Citizen Generated Request – no update
    - d. Member appreciation event – Pat – some contacts made, but no action since
    - e. Capturing memories – Kim said that there is a need to move on this, but not able to begin until August. Abe suggested that Bill Curtis may be a good resource.
    - f. Mowing plan – John – The best situation for habitat maintenance is to mow fields in phases. It is best if no field is mowed completely, but half at a time, allowing for continuation of habitat. Abe showed a map that depicts this plan throughout the fields/meadows at the park. Ideal would be each portion mowed every other year. Kirk is



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concerned about the growth of wood during that time, making it difficult to mow. Mowing every year may be required, where half-spring/half-fall should serve. Property Management prefers to schedule one visit for this “brush-cutting” type of mowing. Kate said that this team is different from the teams sent out for routine mowing of lawn areas. John and Abe said that we should work with Property Management to get what is needed to maintain the field habitats. Pat agreed that habitat maintenance is critical.

- g. Summer meeting – Pat recalled that the board usually does not meet for one of the summer months. We agreed to skip the August meeting. We need to update the calendar to reflect the time change and the change to the summer meeting schedule.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. – Executive Board meeting.**

Respectfully submitted by Kim Shapiro for Mia Walsh, Secretary  
06-14-22