



# Cromwell Valley Park Council, Inc.

## Minutes – January 9, 2023

### CVPC Board Meeting

Board members in attendance: Rick Childs, Bill Curtis, Kate Joyce, Kim Shapiro, Abe Yoffe

CVPC Member in attendance virtually: Keith Kridenoff

Park Staff: Kirk Dreier

Absent: John Canoles, Kelly Emerson, Kate Joyce, Sya Kedzior, Kristin McFaul, Joe Rector, Mia Walsh

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

- a. The President called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. The meeting was conducted both online using GoogleMeet and in-person at the Sherwood House. With only five Board members present, we did not have a quorum.
- b. Abe wished all in attendance a Happy New Year.

#### 2. GOVERNANCE

- a. December Meeting Minutes: As none of us had received meeting minutes representing the December meeting, we were unable to consider them for approval.
- b. Finance, Kristin McFaul, Treasurer - Abe briefly reviewed the income and expenses submitted just prior to the meeting by Kristin. As only nine days of the current year had passed, there was little data to review. Expenses were above income at this point, the difference being only about \$100.
- c. Report from Baltimore County Property Management, Bryan Sheppard – No Report
- d. Background checks – Abe reviewed current status. John Canoles, Kate Joyce and Rick Childs showed as needing renewal. Rick said that he had recently submitted his request, and Abe said that the report only showed results through the end of December.

#### 3. MANAGEMENT

- a. Park Staff Report –Kirk Dreier
  - 1) Roslyn Johnson has vacated her position as Director of Recreation and Parks and that Bob Smith will be acting in that position until a decision is made on Johnson's replacement.
  - 2) The Trails Committee installed "No Parking" and "Authorized Vehicles" signs at places where parking abuses have been occurring. Some park visitors are parking outside of gates so that their cars will not be locked in after the gates are closed at sunset. Kate Joyce is also experiencing this issue at the Talmar entrance road. She and her staff are concerned about their safety when they are closing the gate at sunset. There was discussion about options, including potential installation of an automatic gate, however that would be a capital expense. Abe mentioned that Bob Smith emailed all of the council presidents about setting up in person meetings in the near future (no specific time identified), and Abe said that he would bring up the security issue at that meeting.
  - 3) Jim Gephardt has been transferred from Marshy Point to Cromwell Valley Park. He has been helping Kirk with some projects for making equipment transport easier.
  - 4) More than a dozen schools have contacted staff to schedule participation in spring educational programs. The Pollywog preschool begins in the coming week.
  - 5) Summer Camp registration is scheduled to begin Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>. Park staff is working on a rewrite of the curriculum for the camps for children age 7 to 10. As none of the camp leaders from last year are returning, Kirk will be hiring 3 staff for those duties. He reached out to us to help get the word out. There was some discussion about parents of camp participants attempting to step around the age requirements. Abe suggested



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that a Grade Level approach may help that situation, but staff is sticking to the age defining the structure.

- 6) Kirk's staff took training early in January in cheese making. The information and experience was so positive that the staff is considering adding this in the near future as a program for the public.
- 7) Two part-time staff members have left employment at our park to establish a wildlife sanctuary in Florida. Their work is underway.
- 8) Kirk suggested that the Migration Celebration be planned for September 16<sup>th</sup>.
- 9) Primitive Tech weekend will not be held in May due to conflicts with other County plans, so Kirk is rescheduling it for the second weekend in October, the weekend that was given annually to the Fall Harvest Festival, until COVID-19 closures brought it to a halt.
- 10) Kirk has ordered a new road counter to monitor traffic in and out of the park, as the one that has been in use stopped functioning. These numbers support our efforts to maintain and upgrade our facilities for park visitors.
- 11) The Barrans-Baldwin parking area has been closed by the County.
- 12) Efforts are underway to gather equipment and build the cage needed for our upcoming addition to our educational wildlife collection, a screech owl.

**b. Leaseholder's Report – Talmar, Kate Joyce**

- 1) Burst water pipes in the greenhouse during the low temperatures around Christmas have claimed a lot of time and focus. The system is not well-understood and will take some effort of tool it so that it works properly. Pat McGregor and his staff are involved. Until the fix is in place, management of the greenhouse plantings is inefficient.
- 2) Veterans programs kick off on March 20<sup>th</sup>. The program is open to veterans who are healthy enough to perform the operations required in the program but have been diagnosed with behavioral health issues. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> year for the program.
- 3) The mushroom program will continue this year. Kate attended a professional workshop on raising mushrooms which included presentations by Cornell and Penn State Universities. Mushrooms can more effectively generate revenue over other types of produce.
- 4) Talmar brought on a part time volunteer coordinator.
- 5) Rick asked about a specific area described as “between the deer fences”. Kate would like to use this area for memorial tree planting, and it will require the use of heavy equipment to prepare for this. Kirk will talk to Jeff Budnitz about availability of equipment to do this job. Veterans will be involved in preparation and planting.

**c. Buildings and Grounds – Rick Childs**

- 1) Mowing – Rick suggested that current discussion among the committee favor identifying and mapping areas that should be mowed annually and those that would be mowed every other year. Areas where saplings frequently grow would be mowed yearly.
  - Abe suggested that Rick talk to John Canoles, who was already suggested and mapped a plan. Rick said that the County resists requests for mowing in spring and fall, and so the yearly approach may be more favorable for County planning.
  - Kirk said the County prioritizes the recreation programs, so mowing should be scheduled before baseball season.



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- Volunteers should not consider taking on this work as safety becomes an issue with the heavier equipment. Also damage to tires is inevitable, which makes progress slow. Rick mentioned that Mel Stimmel had permits that allowed him to use County equipment to support the work for Horses in the Park.
- 2) Rick asked Kirk about progress on the Community Garden project. Kirk said that some work has started.
- 3) The Community Garden is moving forward and they will be using a new shed. Kirk is going to ask Property Management to plow where there is plastic to kill the weeds. There is still the question of electric and water getting to that area. Kirk stated that water is an on-going issue, which includes new pressure tanks and system. The project is slowly inching along.
- d. Programs – Kelly Emerson, no report
- e. Communications – Mia Walsh, no report
- f. Volunteers – Kim Shapiro for Pat Novak
  - 1) Kim submitted the volunteers tally, which was lower than prior months. She will include missed reports in next month's tally.
- g. Membership – Kim

Numbers of members are good but are lagging slightly behind last year's numbers. When Mia returns Kim will check with her to see what might be different this year than last. Last year yielded the most members, breaking the 500 mark.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Motorized Equipment Inventory - Bill Curtis proposed that the Council take and record an inventory of all of the equipment that is powered by fossil fuels: Questions should include: What is it? Who owns it? How old is it? What does it cost to run it? Who can use it? Abe suggested to also include "Who purchased it?" Kate asked about insurance on use of the equipment, and Rick said that we understand that the County covers that; but, the question about insurance for theft was less certain.
- b. 2023 Migration Celebration – Proposed date 9/16.
- c. Night Out with Nature – Kirk suggested that volunteers should arrange for speakers; may reach out to membership to get suggestions. Kim will look at prior years to see how many sessions we held in a season.

**6. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Member Appreciation event – suggested date Earth Day 4/22, proposed start time 4 or 5 p.m. Catered, campfire, Abe has a band in mind.
- b. Capturing Memories – Kim said that no new interviews have been scheduled at this time. Jim Kelly has been productive in documenting written history of the park and submitting those to Rick Childs and Kim. These can be the basis for discussions. Several people who would provide important memories are shy of the camera. Kate suggested perhaps audio recordings may be more agreeable for these folks. Kirk will try to get in contact with Bob Stanhope. He was the first manager at CVP.
- c. Sherwood House history information kiosk – no report.
- d. Easter Egg Hunt – there was general agreement that we should put our energy into doing a member appreciation event on Earth Day 4/22, rather than doing the Egg Hunt this year. The event for membership would be potentially more helpful to raise interest in participation in the work of supporting the park for the community.



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- e. 2023 Arts in the Park dates May 20/21 proposed
- . The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m,

Respectfully submitted by Kim Shapiro for Mia Walsh, Secretary 1/12/23

The next meeting will be held on Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at Sherwood House and virtually.