



Cromwell Valley Park Council

Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2023, 6:00 PM

Council Meeting Attendance:

1. In-person: Abe Yoffe, Mia Walsh, Stacey Cruise, Kim Shapiro, Rick Childs, Dave Votta, Deb Lee, and Kate Joyce
2. Virtually: Pat Novak, Bill Curtis, and Joe Rector
3. Absent: Kelly Emerson
4. Park Staff: Kirk Dreier
5. Membership in attendance: Dave Schroeder

Welcome from President Abe Yoffe

- The President called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. The meeting was hybrid via Google Meet and in-person. The Agenda was adopted, and a quorum was present.
- The President recognized the letter from volunteer Mike Beck, who praised Park Naturalist Laura Page for effectively rescuing two injured and lost teenage hikers. Laura Page's efforts resulted in the safe reunion of the hikers with their family members.
- A donation of \$1000 was made by a Park member, who also took the opportunity to express gratitude and extend thanks to both Ranger Kirk and Ranger Breena.
- The President officially welcomed Dave Schroeder as the new editor for the newsletter.

2. Governance

A. May and June Meeting Minutes: Stacey Cruise: During the July Council meeting, the Board Secretary received clarification from Kate Joyce regarding the Lease Holder's May 2023 report. The Board Secretary updated the May 2023 report for approval during the September Board meeting. Revised June 2023 meeting minutes are also submitted to the Council for review and approval during the September 2023 meeting.

B. Treasurer's Report: *Mia Walsh*

- The Treasurer asked Bill Curtis to summarize his observations from his informal internal review of checks written by the Council from 2021-2022. He noted minor errors but found the checks to be accurate.
- The prior Treasurer reported that year-end taxes for 2022 must be recategorized.
- The current Treasurer explained that adjusting the 2022 taxes changes the year-end balance sheet statement, which informs our statement of financial position.
- The Treasurer provided several content options for compiling and formatting the Annual Report.
- Quickbooks and the savings account are both balanced.
- Achieved the dues budget. Reminder: Lifetime membership is \$1000.
- Surpassed the donation goal.
- Member expenses are up because of the upcoming Member Appreciation Day Event.
- To date, the County has yet to request funds for summer camp. CVP will request an accounting of the funds paid to the County for programming.
- The Vice President will investigate the prices of Adirondack chairs made from various materials as memorials for recently passed influential donors.

C. Background Checks: *Abe Yoffe*

- One Director must update their background check by September.

D. Director Candidate Openings

The President provided a general overview of the five individuals who responded to the vacancy announcement. He plans to make a recommendation to the Council during the September meeting.

3. Management

A. Park Staff Report: Kirk Dreier

- June was full of training sessions for Seasonal and full-time staff. We have first-aid and CPR.
- All the camps have been going well. We started today with the 8-10-year-olds, and so far so good. Outdoor Discoverers camp went well, and they liked the program's fishing part, which culminates on Friday by cooking what they caught.
- We are into the first day of our fourth camp, Young Naturalist, and all is well. They are 8-9-10 years old. Staff keep them cool with water activities on really sultry days.
- We are handing out Parents' evaluation forms for each camp. The feedback has been pretty good, and we will use the observations by the parents to make these programs better next year.
- Juneteenth at Banneker went off pretty well.
- Wayne and Rick have been working with the rest of the grounds crew to clear up storm damage from all the rain. Trees have collapsed under the soft soil, and the Weight of vines is pulling them down. The Red Trail, the Mine Bank Run trail, the Sherwood Trail, Wellington Woods, and the Nature Discovery and Outdoor Classroom have all had downed trees needing to be removed.

B. Leaseholder's Report (Talmar): *Kate Joyce*

- Postponed the VA graduation due to the road collapse
- There is significant damage due to the heavy rains.
- Programs and volunteering were suspended for two weeks.
- Securing barns and other properties because of trespassers.

C. Friends Of Sherwood Report: *Mia Walsh*

- The President will need to follow up with the Citizens Generated Request to have Maxalea perform the work this fall in the Sherwood Gardens. The television, conferencing, and mount have been ordered per the June meeting, and the expenses will be taken out of the Sherwood House restricted funds.

D. Standing Committees-

1) Building and Grounds: *Rick Childs*

- Taking down trees and vines
- Filling in the erosion on the Blue Trail
- Heat and looming storms impact daily work and schedules

2) Programs: *Kelly Emerson (Abe Yoffe reporting)*

- Working to secure a band for the Member Appreciation event on September 23rd.
- The Migration Celebrations/ Art in the Park planning committee meets every two weeks and is progressing.
- Talmar's wagon will be used as a stage for the band performing during the Migration Celebration.
- The committee decided to forgo asking vendors for donations based on their gross sales.

3) Communications: *Mia Walsh*

- We sincerely farewell long-time Communications Committee member and director Sya. The Nominating Committee is looking for a replacement for the Director position and someone to take over the newsletter.
- Lots of activity on Social Media over the last two months due to several outstanding factors: SinkHole, Black Bear, Fox Kits, Coyote, and Canadian Smoke. Black Bear had 60,513 viewers, with 20,762 viewers engaging in the content, which was shared 592 times!
- Abe is following up with Facebook to enroll us in the Facebook Charitable Giving program.

- Bill Curtis' Critter Cam continues to be a huge source for community engagement.
- We continue to increase the number of followers on our pages. In December 2022, we had 4,226 Facebook followers and 1,551 Instagram followers. That is an increase of 15% on Facebook and 10% on Instagram in six months.

4) Volunteers: *Pat Novak*

5) Finance: *Rick Childs*

Membership: Finance sub-committee: ***Kim Shapiro***

- CURRENT MEMBERSHIP DATA: Total memberships as of 6/8/23: 477 Last report (Apr.): 468 Lifetime: 13 Patron: 4 Sustaining: 22 Contributing: 29

4. New Business

A. Baltimore County Nature Council DEI Discussion: *Joe Rector*

- Corey Johns, Head of the Baltimore County Recs and Parks Board, invited the presidents of CVP and Oregon Ridge to meet to discuss DEI.
- Joe Rector attended in Abe Yoffe's stead.
- Transportation and language are the two most common barriers
- Reaching out to Irvine for models of successful DEI implementation
- Research on the demographics of Park visitors is needed.
- Some possible next steps are signage with a QR code in various languages, and website visitors can translate the site into multiple languages.

5. Old Business

A. Proposed changes to committee structure: Kim Shapiro

- Kim Shapiro is leading this work. She prefers to work as a committee and prepare and submit proposed changes to the Council via email to review and discuss. Maryland Nonprofits has model By-laws. The three standing committees are the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and Governance/ Development.

B. Plexiglass on dining room walls: *Abe Yoffe*

- No update.

C. 2021/2022 financial audit: *Mia Walsh*

- Joe Rector has obtained the files from Bill Curtis and will conduct his review for Treasurer.

D. Night Out With Nature: *Pat Novak*

- September and November programs are planned. Still planning for the October event. Advertising for the September event begins in August.

Motion to adjourn at 7:27 pm

Respectfully submitted,

*Stacey Cruise
Council Secretary*