

Friends of the James River Park Board Retreat

September 4, 2018 at 4:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Board members in attendance:

Katherine Mitchell, President
Mary Kay Martin, Vice President
Shawna Shade, Treasurer
Justin Doyle, Secretary
Cat Anthony
Trammell Beckmann
Mike Doerr
Scott Silvester
Kevin Tobin
Greg Velzy
Cary Wing
Michael Burton (Interim Superintendent)

Meeting Minutes

Katherine circulated meeting materials and welcomed board members. Board members reviewed the Friends of the James River Park Board Member Agreement. Greg motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the August board meeting. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Needs for the James River Park System

The creation of a master plan for the James River Park System will cost between \$220,000 and \$250,000. This cost is based on the joint proposal from Hargreaves Associates and VHB. Katherine reviewed the project schedule for the James River Park master plan with the board. Nine neighborhood meetings, to be held in each council member's district, and one public meeting are planned. The meetings are anticipated to begin in October. Nathan Burrell, Facility Maintenance Manager for the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, is scheduling neighborhood meetings. The board is in charge of scheduling popup meetings at community events such as the Folk Festival, Second Street Festival, etc. Cat will ask Venture Richmond for booth space at the Folk Festival and Second Street Festival. The draft online survey should be available by October. Online engagement is scheduled to begin in October and conclude in February. Greg suggested posting signage promoting the survey throughout the park system. A draft of the master plan is scheduled to be complete in March. A second public meeting will be scheduled in March. Nathan is assembling internal and external stakeholder teams. The creation of a third team consisting of funders was recommended. Katherine

suggested scheduling a lunch meeting with the planning team and funders. Mike suggested scheduling meetings at which funders can review the draft plan and final plan.

Current Conditions Report

Katherine shared the Capital Region Land Conservancy's Current Conditions Report for the James River Park System with board members. Cat will contact Parker Agelasto, Executive Director of the Capital Region Land Conservancy, to request a digital copy of the report.

James River Regional Cleanup

Matt Mason, Volunteer Coordinator for the James River Park System, requested to volunteers to assist with the James River Regional Cleanup at Pony Pasture. The annual cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, September 8. Mary Kay and Scott volunteered to assist.

Budget Items

Mary Kay and Shawna are in favor of increasing the budget line item for Park Master Plan Fundraising Events, currently \$2,000. A discussion regarding \$50,000 for Park Master Plan Implementation resulted in Mary Kay motioning to remove the line item from the budget. The motion was seconded by Cat and unanimously passed.

Strategic Plan

Katherine reviewed 2017 objectives for the three-year strategic plan.

Superintendent Search

Friends of the James River Park will participate in the Superintendent search and selection process. Michael Burton, Interim Superintendent, will follow up with Nathan regarding the process.

Key Messaging for the Upcoming Year

Katherine led a brainstorming session to determine which messages should be conveyed by the Friends of the James River Park during the next year. Messages include the following.

- We want your input for the master plan
- Fill-out this survey
- Sign-up for the e-newsletter to get master plan and park updates
- Who are Friends of the James River Park?
- What is the James River Park System?
- Master Plan: What is it? Why is it important?
- Friends of the James River Park is advocating for its creation and implementation
- Without a master plan, Friends cannot advocate for projects
- Access to the park will be a component of the plan
- Wildlife preservation will be a component of the plan
- Master plan will be a guiding document for the new Superintendent
- Scope of the master plan differs from the scope of the Richmond Riverfront Plan

Cat suggested creating an FAQ document for the master plan. Michael Burton suggested creating a webpage for the master plan.

What does Friends of the James River Park do?

- Mission statement
- Support Invasive Plant Task Force
- Oversee implementation of park master plan
- Sponsor RVA Osprey Cam
- Raised \$250,000 for the creation of the park master plan
- Funded the creation of an economic impact study of the park system
- Provide updates about the James River Park System
- Educate the public about the James River Park System
- Organize monthly volunteer cleanups
- Advocate for the park
- Support programs
- Fund website that connects people to the park system

Committee Goals

- **Finance Committee**
Katherine Mitchell, Shawna Shade, and Justin Doyle are hereby signers on all of our financial accounts, and all other previous members, are no longer signers. Scott is leading the effort to move the organizations CDs into a CD ladder with assistance from Katherine, Shawna, and Justin.
- **Communications Committee**
Trammell would like to recruit board members to join the Communications Committee, create a communications calendar, and a communication plan for the master plan. Trammell suggested transitioning away from Constant Contact.
- **Advocacy Committee**
Mary Kay reported the Advocacy Committee will build support for the master plan by scheduling a meeting with each member of City Council. The Advocacy Committee will schedule a meeting of organizations.
- **Board Development Committee**
Greg reported the board is in a healthy condition and consists of park users. Skill sets that will benefit the board should be identified. Skill set needs include writing, graphic design, media relations, political influence, and event planners. Greg would like to work

increasing racial, ethnic, and geographic diversity on the board. Qualities every board member should have include:

- Time (2-10 hours per month)
- Use the park
- Ambassador of the park

- **Membership Committee**

Cat agreed to identify opportunities to promote membership in our event schedule and through Constant Contact. She offered to work with Shawna to contact members to renew their memberships. Other ideas pitched included a monthly membership report, a speaker series, and membership discounts. Cat will create a list of membership benefits.

- **Events Committee**

The Events Committee will create a list of events to be considered at the next board meeting and needs for signage/giveaway items/handouts based on message points listed above.

Part-time Employee

The job description for part-time employee will be amended. Board officers will hire the employee.

Monthly Cleanup: James River Regional Cleanup (Pony Pasture) on Saturday, September 8, 2018

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 2, 2018, at 6:30 pm