

Friends of the James River Park Board Meeting
Tuesday, November 5, 2019 at 6:30 pm
Meeting Minutes

Board members in attendance:

Katherine Mitchell, President
Mary Kay Martin, Vice President
Dean Brunson, Treasurer
Justin Doyle, Secretary
Cat Anthony
Scott Dickens
Jake Savage
Scott Silvester
Kevin Tobin
Greg Velzy
Cary Wing

Staff members in attendance:

Bryce Wilk, Park Superintendent
James Harlow, Labor Crew Chief
Shawna Shade, Friends of the James River Park

Guests in attendance:

Rob Evans, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation/Invasive Plant Task Force
Brooks Whitten, park enthusiast

Introductions

Bryce Wilk introduced the James River Park System's new Labor Crew Chief, James Harlow. James is coming to the park system from Virginia State Parks. Board members, staff members, and guests in attendance introduced themselves.

Meeting Minutes

Justin Doyle circulated minutes from the October board meeting. Greg Velzy motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Jake Savage seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Invasive Plant Task Force Presentation

Rob Evans of the Invasive Plant Task Force presented meeting attendees with information about invasive plant species and their impacts on the park system. Rob informed attendees that invasive plant species are impacting the tree canopy. The Emerald ash borer is killing Ash Trees. Fig buttercup is an emerging invasive threat. Native plant hotspots exist in the park system and Joey Thompson is documenting plant communities. Help is needed.

Park Superintendent's Report

Bryce Wilk reported he would like to hire a natural resources specialist. Take a Kids Mountain Biking is Saturday and King of the James is Sunday. 1.7 million visits to the park system have been counted through October. James Harlow is the new Labor Crew Chief. Bryce is working

with Pocahontas State Park to renew IMBA certification. Bryce is working with Timmons Group to develop a plan to stabilize the rolling mill on Belle Isle. The Pump House Park kiosk is 90% complete and a Friends of Pump House Park event is this weekend. The James River Park Master Plan was recommended for approval by City Planning Commission. City Council will consider the plan in January.

Treasurer's Report

Dean Brunson reported the organization is in good shape. \$15,000 to \$20,000 in memberships and/or grants is needed to close the deficit gap. Dean is seeking feedback on the monthly report.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee: Scott Silvester reported the Finance Committee needs input from committees and Bryce on budget needs.

Events Committee: No report.

Membership Committee: Cat Anthony and Shawna Shade recently met to discuss the organization's end of year giving strategy, which will include a snail mail solicitation. Giving Tuesday is coming up. Board members will be asked to assist with stuffing envelopes. Almost every board member is current.

Board Development Committee: Greg Velzy is always seeking good candidates for the board. He spoke with Jane of Capital Region Land Conservancy regarding annual conservation easement monitoring. Board members will be asked to assist with monitoring in December/January.

Advocacy Committee: City Planning Commission recommended approval of the James River Park Master Plan. It will be considered by City Council in January.

Communications Committee: Scott Dickens reported he met with Webbones. He provided board members with an overview of the services Rocket Pop Media is providing the organization compared to the services Webbones provided.

Old Business

Strategic Planning Retreat

Willow Oaks Country Club is not available. Justin contacted Ruthie Morrison to inquire about facilitation the meeting. Bill Conkle of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation was suggested. Justin will check on meeting space at The Boat House at Rocketts Landing. Kevin Tobin offered to host the retreat at his home in Ashland. Katherine Mitchell suggested committees should meet before the retreat.

New Business

Christmas Party

Board members agreed the December meeting will be short and roll into a Christmas party.

Winter Solstice and James River Advisory Council Parade of Lights

The annual Winter Solstice event is not happening this year. Park staff members will be at Libby Hill Park for the annual JRAC Parade of Lights.

Friends of the James River Park System Logo

A logo action committee was created to consider new logo options created by Rocket Pop Media. Bryce, Cary, Greg, and Scott Silvester joined the committee and will come up with a recommendation.

Rocket Pop Media

Katherine will ask Scott Dickens for a proposal for the board to consider. A memorandum of understanding between Rocket Pop Media and Friends of the James River Park was suggested.

Next Meeting: December 3, 2019 at 6:30 pm