

Friends of the James River Park Board Meeting
Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 6:30 pm
Meeting Minutes

Board members in attendance:

Katherine Mitchell, President
Mary Kay Martin, Vice President
Dean Brunson, Treasurer
Justin Doyle, Secretary
Byron Chafin
Scott Dickens
Jake Savage
Scott Silvester
Greg Velzy
Cary Wing

Staff members in attendance:

Bryce Wilk, Park Superintendent
Shawna Shade, Friends of the James River Park

Guests in attendance:

Catherine Farmer, Invasive Plant Task Force
Brooks Whitten, board candidate

Introductions

Katherine Mitchell called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Park Superintendent's Report - Bryce Wilk

Bryce Wilk provided a report on the James River Park System. Bryce reported Nathan Burrell recently departed the City of Richmond's Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

The James River Park System Master Plan was adopted by City Council on January 27. A press release announcing the adoption of the James River Park System Master Plan is planned.

Additional land totaling nearly 200 acres is being added to the James River Park System conservation easement. Ryan Rinn, a provisional employee of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, is identifying parcels of land to be added to the conservation easement. A presentation to the Capital Region Land Conservancy will be given on Friday.

Operations staff members have been busy.

Recent and upcoming projects include invasive plant removal at The Wetlands and repairs to the shelter used by outfitters.

A show benefiting the park system is scheduled for February 28 at Gallery 5.

Invasive Plant Task Force Update - Catherine Farmer

Catherine Farmer of the Invasive Plant Task Force provided an update on the work of the task force. Work on Belle Isle happens every Thursday morning. Privet is being removed and replaced with understory trees and shrubs. National Invasive Species Awareness Week kicks

off with an event at Pony Pasture on February 23. Invasive plant removal happens every Saturday morning at The Wetlands. Volunteer signups are facilitated by HandsOn Greater Richmond.

Treasurer's Report - Dean Brunson

Dean Brunson reviewed the statement of financial position and budget vs actuals with board members. Membership and license plate revenue are strong and exceeding what was budgeted. Dean and Shawna Shade are meeting monthly.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes from the January board meeting were shared with board members. Scott Silverster motioned to approve the minutes. Mary Kay Martin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Strategic Planning Retreat Followup - Katherine Mitchell

Katherine reported committees will meet between now and the March meeting. Committees will create work plans and identify missing skill sets. The Membership Committee will create a membership plan and identify alternative sources of revenue for the organization. The Finance Committee will commission an independent financial review of the organization. The Advocacy Committee will work with the Master Plan Implementation Work Group to advance implementation of the James River Park System Master Plan. The Marketing and Communications Committee will create a marketing and communications plan. The Leadership Development Committee will recruit new board members, cultivate board members, and consider creating an Executive Director position. New committees include the Fundraising Committee and Master Plan Implementation Committee. Members and supporters can serve on committees. The Membership Committee has been tasked with membership events as the Events Committee was eliminated. Upcoming events include Shiver in the River, Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour, Pump House Springfest, Que Pasa Festival, Riverrock. Katherine reviewed the organization's board meeting attendance policy with board members.

Committee Reports

Communications Committee: Scott Dickens reviewed the Communications Committee Report with board members. Volunteers are needed for Friday and Saturday of the Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour. Pump House Springfest is April 18. Invasive Species Awareness Week is in February. Scott is seeking nominations for ParkStar videos. Scott is interested in scheduling headshots of board members to be added to the website. Communications Committee membership includes Byron Chafin, Mike Doerr, Scott Dickens, and Shawna Shade. Scott suggested creating a signature beer for the park that could benefit Friends of the James River Park. Suggestions include "Park Porter" and "Park Pilsner."

Board Development Committee: Greg Velzy reported the board is working on formalizing the the board member on-boarding process. Greg will share the new process with board members. Greg mentioned Ralph Hambrick's new book "Transforming the James River in Richmond" is coming out soon.

Events Committee: Byron Chafin reported Shiver in the River is coming up on February 29. Keep Virginia Beautiful invited Friends of the James River Park to form a team. Volunteers are needed for the Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour at James River High School March 5 - 6 and Pump House Springfest is April 18.

Finance Committee: No report.

Membership Committee: No report.

Advocacy Committee: No report.

Old Business

Conservation Easement Inspections

Greg Velzy reported annual monitoring of the James River Park System conservation easement is underway.

New Business

Shawna's Upcoming Vacation

Shawna reported she will be away from the office February 22 through 29.

Next Meeting: March 3, 2020 at 6:30 pm