

**Friends of the James River Park Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, May 5, 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  
Cat Anthony  
Jake Savage  
Scott Silvester  
Kevin Tobin  
Greg Velzy  
Brooks Whitten  
Cary Wing  
Brittany Zamborsky

**Staff members in attendance:**

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

**Introductions**

Katherine Mitchell called the meeting to order. Board members participating in the virtual greeted one another.

**April Meeting Minutes**

Katherine asked for a motion to approve the draft April meeting minutes. Three amendments were mentioned. Kevin Tobin motioned to approve the April meeting minutes as amended and Scott Silvester seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Superintendent's Report - Bryce Wilk**

Bryce Wilk reported education information is being posted to the Friends of the James River Park website. Park staff members are creating content to promote the City of Richmond's parks. Bryce and his Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities colleagues are working on a reopening plan. Bryce plans to continue with park monitors through the summer months. Manchester Climbing Wall is now closed. Sunday was a very busy day in the park system. Bryce is working with the Richmond Police Department to enforce regulations. There were a number of water rescues over the weekend. The park monitoring program is being expanded outside of the park system. The program has 40 park monitors. Bryce is working on repairing the boat ramp at Tredegar and the Potterfield Memorial Bridge. A window was kicked in at the Hydroelectric Plant on Belle Isle. Bryce is working on repairing it. Bryce is seeking \$8,300.00 in financial support from Friends of the James River Park for new flooring at the Pony Pasture bathroom. The bathroom will also be painted. Director Chris Frelke has been working on the FY21 budget and Bryce does not anticipate significant changes to the park budget. Park system parking lots could be reopened during the second phase of statewide reopening.

Greg asked board members if we need to vote on Bryce's request for \$8,300.00 to pay for new flooring at the Pony Pasture restrooms. Greg motioned to appropriate \$8,300.00 for new flooring at the Pony Pasture restrooms. Mary Kay seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Brittany Zamborsky offered to assist Bryce with budget advocacy. Kevin asked Bryce if recent high water impacted the park. Bryce responded no. Floodwater above 15' typically impacts the park system.

Bryce spoke with Ryan Rinn about bringing additional acreage into the park system. Ryan provided Bryce with guidance.

Greg asked Bryce about the Universal Access at Huguenot Flatwater project. Bryce has been working with Timmons Group to get permits and blueprints. Bryce has only been able to confirm \$150,000 available in the City of Richmond's Capital Improvement Plan for the project. A total of \$330,000 should be available for the project. Bryce contacted Kristen Larson and hasn't heard back yet. \$100,000 from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation is available for universal access projects in the park system.

Bryce reported volunteer activities in the park system have been limited. Small groups of five individuals or less will be allowed to volunteer in the park system.

Park visitation was 71% higher in March 2020 compared to March 2019.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Executive Committee Report - Katherine Mitchell**

Katherine is wrapping up her term on the board. Katherine will be focused on membership and fundraising as past president of the organization.

#### **Treasurer's Report - Dean Brunson**

Dean Brunson reported very little activity in the past month. Dean reported the organization has net revenue of \$85,000. After planned expenditures the organization should have \$35,000 in unrestricted cash at the end of June, which will leave the organization with a total of \$143,000 in unrestricted cash. Dean reviewed the 2021 budget worksheet with board members. The \$33,000 deficit proposed in the FY21 budget can be covered by the \$143,000. Dean discussed the challenges of selling merchandise and reporting sales tax. Justin Doyle asked if we have budgeted any money for master plan implementation. None of the \$143,000 is currently being used for master plan implementation. Dean pitched the idea of using some of the money as a fundraising match. Dean questioned the reliability of the license plate revenue as a result of the poor economy. The license plate revenue makes up 50% of budgeted revenue. Scott doesn't believe people who have the license plate are going to return it. Katherine asked about the role of the Finance Committee in approving the draft FY21 budget. Jake, Shawna, and Dean have pulled the budget together and will seek input from other members of the Finance Committee before bringing the budget to the board for approval.

**Finance Committee Report:** Jake Savage reported the committee is working on getting financial statements in good shape. The committee is working on a monthly two to three page financial report for board members to review.

**Membership Committee Report:** Katherine Mitchell has some ideas about membership in the coming year. She is working with Shawna on updating the renewal letter. She would like to organize another membership event like the one held at Legend Brewing last year. She would like to organize special events for individuals who make a qualifying donation. She would like to recognize donors who contributed to the creation of the master plan and volunteers. She will work with the committee to develop a plan.

**Board Leadership Development Committee:** Greg Velzy reported elections are held in August and September 14 is the last date for the current officers. New officers begin their terms on September 15. Greg encouraged board members to get in touch with him. The organization has five vacancies and has received six applications.

**Communications Committee Report:** Scott Dickens is absent. Katherine reviewed the report Scott shared via email. Katherine suggested featuring educational content. Bryce mentioned a successful tree planting at Huguenot Flatwater. Greg asked Bryce how soon we can promote the Pony Pasture restroom upgrades. We can mention it in May. Greg suggested writing something about recent highwater.

**Branding Action Team:** Shawna Shade reported the organization has received three proposals for branding services. Two additional proposals are outstanding. The Branding Action Team will review the proposals in the near future. Members of the action team will have a week to consider proposals.

**Master Plan Implementation Committee:** Mary Kay Martin reported Brittany Zamborsky suggested launching a capital campaign. Mary Kay is receiving feedback for how to organize and kickoff master plan implementation from committee members. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 28. Katherine asked Mary Kay and Bryce if we should be budgeting for master plan implementation.

### **Old Business**

#### **Artist in Residence**

Brooks Whitten communicated with Natalie Kane who is interested in doing virtual workshops given the circumstances. Shea had a lot of good things to say about Natalie. Katherine asked Bryce if the artist can connect with youth in the park system. Bryce is open to future opportunities. Katherine asked Brooks if she can determine when Natalie would like to start.

#### **FY21 Capital Improvement Plan**

Justin Doyle reported no money has been proposed for master plan implementation in the City of Richmond's FY21 Capital Improvement Plan.

### **New Business**

#### **Business Partnerships - Mary Kay Martin**

Friends of the James River Park has been approached by two businesses that would like to donate proceeds to the organization. Mary Kay would like to know how we should handle business partnerships that benefit the organization. Mary Kay reached out to Scott Dickens and Justin Doyle for input. What does Friends of the James River Park do for businesses in return for their support? Mary Kay drafted a proposal to guide business relationships and shared it with board members.

#### **FY21 Events - Katherine Mitchell**

Banff Mountain Film Festival, Riverrock, annual membership event, and Winter Solstice are events Friends of the James River Park consistently participates in and organizes. Katherine asked how many events the organization has capacity to handle. Bryce and Cat suggested using members of the organization to staff events. Jake suggested mobilizing volunteers to help. Scott suggested board members should commit to two cleanups and two event shifts.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at 6:30 pm**