

Friends of the James River Park Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 5, 2021 at 6:30 pm

Board Members in Attendance:

Mary Kay Martin, President
Jake Savage, Vice President
Justin Doyle, Secretary
Madge Bemiss
Dave Broocke
Scott Dickens
Scott Silvester
Greg Velzy
Bryce Wilk, Senior Superintendent (ex-officio)

Staff Members in Attendance:

Josh Stutz, Executive Director
Shawna Shade, Office Administrator

Guests in Attendance:

Bill Draper (board candidate)
Matt Rigby (board candidate)

Introductions: The meeting was called to order by Mary Kay Martin, President, at 6:33 pm. Josh Stutz, Executive Director, introduced two of three candidates for the board, Bill Draper and Matt Rigby. Bill introduced himself to board members followed by Matt. Bill is a supporter of the James River Park System and local photographer. Matt is coming to the board with an appreciation for the board and a lifelong love of nature. He resides on Riverside Drive with his family. Board and staff members introduced themselves to the candidates.

Meeting Minutes: Board members reviewed minutes from the September board meeting. Greg Velzy motioned to approve the minutes. Scott Silvester seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Executive Director's Report: The Friends of the James River Park event at Legend Brewing was successful. Josh met a prospective board candidate at the event and is following up with the individual. Josh led a tour of Great Shiplock Park last week. Josh met three or four board candidates at a Leadership Metro Richmond. The next cohort of board candidates to consider will be considered in January. Mayor Stoney proposed allocating ARPA funds to Crooked Branch Bridge, James River Branch Trail, and North Bank Tower. Josh has been working hard to advocate for the Mayor's proposal. Wood River Run, a 5k run at Pony Pasture, will be held on April 23. An announcement about the event in memory of Christian Wood will be made in

October. Josh established a \$30,000 fundraising goal for the event. Josh has made a number of corporate requests for funding in recent weeks. Organizational strategic planning is scheduled for January 11, 2022 and board members were asked to save the date.

President's Report: Mary Kay reported that she and Jake Savage will meet with Josh for his 90-day performance review next week. Performance reviews will also be scheduled at six months and 12 months.

Superintendent's Report: Bryce Wilk, Senior Superintendent, reported 175,000 visits to the James River Park System were counted in September. Counter malfunctions have been a challenge. The Universal Access at Huguenot Flatwater project groundbreaking was held and construction is moving ahead. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation awarded the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities a \$200,000 grant for an Americans with Disabilities Act compliant pathway at Pump House Park. 29 volunteer events were held and over 600 volunteer hours were documented in September. First phase of Reedy Creek native plant garden is underway with support from Bill Shanabruch and Ashley Moulton. A new gate was installed at Riverside Meadow with financial support from Matt Rigby. The bollard at The Wetlands needs to be replaced. The James River Park System Superintendent position is being reposted in the near future. Madge Bemiss asked about the remaining funding available to keep the coordinators of the Invasive Plant Taskforce employed. Madge emphasized the importance of their work would like to make funding their positions a fundraising priority.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee: Jake Savage introduced the Stock Donation Policy as recommended to the board by the Finance Committee. Per the policy, stock donated to the organization will be immediately sold. The board approved by the policy by unanimous vote.

Membership Committee: Dave Broocke is the new chair of the Membership Committee and is excited to engage folks at all membership levels.

Leadership Development Committee: Greg Velzy reported accounting, real estate, DEI, and advocacy backgrounds are needed on the board. The committee is seeking six or seven individuals to fill vacant positions. Numerous board members are scheduled to leave the board over the next year as their terms expire. Scott Dickens motioned to add Bill Draper, Kendra Norrell, and Matt Rigby to the Friends of the James River Park board as recommended by the Josh Stutz and the Leadership Development Committee. Jack Savage seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Communications Committee: Scott Dickens reported organizational communications have included information about ARPA funds proposed for parks and a new ParkStar video. He is looking for a ParkStar to feature in October.

Advocacy Committee: Mary Kay reported she intends to speak at the upcoming City Council meeting in support of the Mayor's proposed funding plan. Josh Stutz also intends to speak at the meeting. Mary Kay encouraged Richmond residents on the board to speak at the meeting.

Invasive Plant Task Force: Madge Bemiss did not have an update to share with the board.

Organizations Updates: Greg Velzy reported the James River Outdoor Coalition (JROC) will be distributing beer at the Trampled by Turtles show at Maymont on October 9. King of the James is on November 14. InLight will be held at Great Shiplock Park on November 14.

Old Business

No old business was discussed.

New Business

Mary Kay Martin's Birthday: Shawna Shade presented Mary Kay with a bouquet of flowers and a birthday card from the board.

Scott Dickens motioned to adjourn the meeting. Scott Silvester seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 at 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted by Justin Doyle, Secretary of Friends of the James River Park.