



**MRPA**  
MARYLAND RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION

**2020-21 MRPA Board & Council Second Quarter Report:  
July – September 2020**

**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the MRPA Fall General Membership meeting was held virtually. This report is usually provided in-person at the meeting.**

**Executive Director and MRPA Office Reports-** *Executive Director is the Managing Director of MRPA who reports to the Executive Board. Responsible for designing, developing and implementing strategic plans in collaboration with the Executive Board. Supervises operations of the MRPA Office and staff*

**Chuck Montrie, Executive Director**  
**Adrienne Varieur, Office Manager**  
**Armeana Street, Members Services Associate**

- No Report

**Executive Board Reports-** Elected Officers of MRPA. Responsible for the overall business of the Association, as well as oversight of the MRPA Office (Executive Director and Staff).

**President- John Nissel**

- No Report

**President Elect- Terri Hilton**

- The first ever Virtual Summer General Membership meeting and training was held on July 22, 2020 from 9:30-12:30pm. We had over 110 people in attendance and our speaker, Rich Dolesh, spoke on “The Future of Parks and Recreation.”

**Past President- Holly Harden**

- Beginning preparations for the 2021-22 election process. Nomination information will be shared at the Fall General Membership Meeting. If anyone is interested in running or wishes to nominate someone, please contact me.
- Reaching out to branch chairs regarding upcoming nominations to their board
- Assisting with preparations for 2019-2020 Leadership Institute graduation Oct 16.
- Supporting 2020-21 Leadership Institute class launch.

**Vice President- Jennifer Mogus**

- Engaged Aquatics Professional Learning Community (PLC) members through email and resource sharing
- Submitted Aquatics COVID position statement to MRPA Executive Director for Return to Play documentation
- Conducted Aquatics PLC meeting on September 30 with M-NCPPC host
- Mentored by President Elect Hilton during planning stages of Fall GMM meeting
- Surveyed Committee Chairs about their Data Storage practices (most Committees are using Google Drive)
- Worked with Training Committee Chairs, MRPA staff, and NRPA to offer a virtual Aquatic Facility Operator (AFO) certification course.

**Treasurer - Karen Warnick; Treasurer Elect – Courtney Weinstock**

- No Report

**Secretary- Jennene Blakely**

- No Report

**PARC Branch (Park and Resource Conservation)- Lisa Shore, Chair**

- The PARC Branch has been working on planning a virtual workshop on the topic of citizen science.

**RALS Branch (Recreation and Leisure Services)- LeighAnn Eckenrode, Chair**

- We are currently working on the State of Maryland Scavenger Hunt for MRPA members and families. The State of Maryland Scavenger Hunt is a way for people to get out and discover new park and recreation locations in our awesome state. We do not have a roll out date as of yet. We are working on logistics, locations, and being safe during the hunt. We are also working on different types of fundraising opportunities that can be done safely at a social distance. The Arts Showcase is still scheduled for October 9th but a virtual back-up plan is being created.

**TR Branch (Therapeutic Recreation)- Rebekah Sutfin, Chair**

- Held TR PLC Planning meeting- looking to schedule TR PLC in November
- Began planning for a TR Branch Board Meeting in October.
- Began planning for a TR Branch meeting in October.

**Committee Reports-** Committee Chairs are members of the Executive Council. Each Committee report lists the Chair(s), a brief description, and the quarterly highlights.

**Awards- Matt Purkins and Corey Smith, Co-Chairs**

*Recognizes members for a variety of MRPA and Branch awards; quarterly and at the MRPA Annual Conference. Evaluate and recommend changes to the awards as warranted.*

- No Report

**Finance- Michele Potter, Chair**

*Monitors MRPA's long-range financial plan, advises the Board on financial matters, prepares periodic reports on the association's investment funds, and works with the executive director and accountants on audits, reviews and overall management.*

- The Finance Committee met with the President, Treasurer and Executive Director on August 5 to discuss the overall financial status of the organization. We are pleased with the financial standing given the pandemic and volume of cancellations of revenue producing events, meetings and trainings. With the help of technology, some were and are able to continue. Thankfully, everyone continues to think outside the box. We finished the month of August with a Reserve Balance of \$871,086.13. This is an increase of \$19,680.87 over July's statement. And, given the economy, we are only \$6,761.38 behind the prior year (August, 2019).
- In July, the investment portfolio total was \$851,405.26; in September it was \$858,312.03, an increase of \$6,906.77 or .81%. With the downturn of the economy due to COVID-19 earlier in the year, this is a good return on investment (ROI) for this quarter.

**Legislative- Kathy Burley, Chair**

*Develops a network and procedures to track and monitor state-wide legislation prior to and during the Maryland General Assembly session. Develops a list of issues and concerns, communicates issues to the appropriate parties, and leads discussions to develop a course of action, including testimony strategy. Following legislation is being followed or anticipated:*

- No Report

**Marketing and Communications- Desiré DeGrange, Chair**

*Promotes general membership meetings and workshops, MRPA news and information, training and education programs, networking and social events, and the annual conference.*

- No Report

**Member Engagement and Outreach- Jennifer Jennings, Chair**

*Focuses on membership retention and new member recruitment. Fosters development of a professional network and opportunities for "Young Professionals" ages 21-35. Identifies, communicates and evaluates membership benefits and fees.*

- No Report

**Professional Certification Board- Chuck Kines, Chair**

*Approves CEUs for workshops and MRPA Annual Conference educational sessions.*

- No Report

**Professional Standards- Bill Offutt, Chair**

*Promotes and encourages professional certification among the membership through educating agencies and individuals on the value and availability of continuing education opportunities.*

- No Report

**Scholarship Committee- Amanda DeFilippo and Jenny Morgan, Co-Chairs**

*Reviews applications and recommends scholarship opportunities and criteria. Scholarships may be available for trainings, MRPA and NRPA annual conferences, the Leadership Institute, and other trainings, certifications and internships that benefit the individual and MRPA.*

- No Report

**Social Justice, Racial Equity, and Inclusion (SJREI) Committee- Dr. Maureen Dougherty and Bill Tyler, Co-Chairs**

*The social justice, inclusion, and racial equity initiative reinforces our commitment to be a welcoming community where all our members are treated with respect and dignity and provided with opportunities to succeed. This initiative will establish a Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee that will include MRPA members.*



- The co-chairs met and determined the committee objectives:
  - o Objective 1: To define Social Justice, Racial Equity, and Inclusion. (initially developed but evolving)
  - o Objective 2: To Identify a small working committee. (Completed: Events, Training & Education, and By-Laws and Policy have been established)
    - Objective 2a: To create meaningful programs and trainings that are focused on SJREI related topics for MRPA.
    - Objective 2b: To review MRPA by-laws, and research websites and policies of NRPA and the forty-four state park and recreation agencies in the country to establish best practices and recommend new policies to create permanent change.

- o Objective 3: To apply these definitions and determine their meaning in relation to the Recreation and Parks Profession and Professionals in the state of Maryland.
  - o Objective 4: To identify specific criteria that will broaden understanding and address equality at all levels of the organization.
- OBJ 1 (Initially accepted but evolving: There is an interest in defining each of the terms): What is a social justice, racial equity, and inclusion framework?
  - o Social Justice-actions and ideas that promote equality and solidarity to create a fair and just society that values human rights and recognizes the dignity of all people and to actively work to counter systems of oppression within a society. (John Datillo, 2012)
  - o Equity-ensuring access to the same opportunities by all people with the recognition that advantages and barriers may exist based on socially constructed group affiliation and the systematic and institutional hierarchy created in the society and working to dismantle systems that reinforce differential outcomes for all groups of people. (centerforsocialinclusion.com)
  - o Racial Equity- Ensuring that one's racial identity does not determine access in terms of wealth, health, education and many other aspects of life and eliminating policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them. (Racialequitytools.com)
  - o Social Equity- Public parks, recreation services and recreation programs including the maintenance, safety, and accessibility of parks and facilities, should be provided on an equitable basis to all citizens of communities served by public agencies. Social equity is a critical responsibility borne by every public park and recreation agency and the professionals that operate them. It is a right, not just a privilege, for people nationwide to have safe, healthful access to parks and recreation. (NRPA)
  - o Environmental Equity- protection from environmental hazards as well as access to environmental benefits, regardless of income, race, and other characteristics. (UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation)
  - o Health Equity- the means for fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care. ( Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)
  - o Equity in Access- Creating the necessary conditions so individuals and organizations desiring to, and who are eligible to, use services, facilities, programs and employment opportunities. (Orpa.org)
  - o Inclusion - authentically creating a culture that places value, acceptance, and leverages respect for individuals and/or groups of different identities and abilities who may traditionally be excluded. It allows for opportunities to participate in processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that is welcoming and shares power. (Racialequitytools.com)
- OBJ 2: Completed: 3 working sub-committees have been established:
  - o Events Sub-committee: Kristopher Yeh, Bill Tyler, Captain Jeff Coe,
  - o Training & Education – Kori Jones, chair, Sheema Hai, Rob
  - o By-Laws and Policy – Edith Michele, chair, Sheema Hai, Maureen Dougherty, Tyrell Williams, and Sue Simmons,
  - o OBJ 2a & 2b: Completed:
  - o EVENTS: Bike Ride for Social Justice and Racial Equity – September 12, 2020 – over 100 registrants and 40 riders who rode from Bethesda to Washington D.C. and ended at Black Lives Matter Plaza. All proceeds went to MRPA Minority Scholarships. 100 T-shirts were ordered and distributed. Event sponsors included the following:
    - Let's Go with Dr. Mo, LLC
    - Anne Arundel Recreation and Parks
    - Fisher & Sons Company
    - Kompan
    - SportsTurf
    - Finch Services
- OBJ 3: IN PROGRESS: To apply these definitions and determine their meaning in relation to the Recreation and Parks Profession and Professionals in the state of Maryland. Working on developing an online library of resources available on the MRPA website so that all member organizations can utilize the same language and definitions. Additional materials such as TED Talks, books, articles, YouTube videos, and peer-review research will be made accessible.
- OBJ 4: IN PROGRESS: To identify specific criteria that will broaden understanding and address equality at all levels of the organization. Through the events, trainings, small group discussions, member input, expertise, and research, the SJREI committee hopes to address specific issues specifically associated with systemic in-equities and create long term changes within MRPA and provide innumerable resources to our members and member organizations.

### **Social Media – Shelby Bowers, Chair**

*Coordinate the efforts of all social media outlets disseminating information pertaining to trainings, event highlights, member experiences and upcoming events.*

- Continued posting about 3 times per week on all socials (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
  - Continued with: #MeetTheTeam weekly series, advertising virtual training opportunities
- Finished campaigns for: #MRPARideForJustice and Leadership Institute 1
- Edited and uploaded each virtual training recording to our YouTube page (we're up to 12 videos on our channel!)
- **Highest performing posts of the year**
  - FACEBOOK
    - Post with highest reach: Parks & Recreation Month T-Shirt (3,264 reached)
    - Post with highest engagement: video of John introducing his presidency & goals (483 people engaged)
    - Post with most likes: photos from virtual swearing-in ceremony (71 likes)
    - Post with most comments: video of John introducing his presidency & goals (16 comments)
    - Post with most shares: Will Smith's LI1 testimony (11 shares)
  - INSTAGRAM
    - Post with most likes: tie between the post announcing the #MRPARideForJustice event and the post for Leadership Institute 1, excerpt from Darrick (34 likes per post)
  - TWITTER
    - Tweet with most re-tweets and likes: Bill Tyler's video clip promoting the #MRPARideForJustice (8 re-tweets, 20 likes)
- **Current following**
  - Facebook: 1,014 likes (we hit our goal of getting over 1,000 likes!) (up from 990 likes last quarter)
  - Instagram: 255 followers (up from 233 followers last quarter)
  - Twitter: 258 followers (up from 251 followers last quarter)

### **Sponsorship and Resource Development- John Kennedy and Nancy Pfeffer, Co-Chairs**

*Raises funds for MRPA, including funding scholarships and paid personnel, which may be appointed by the Board of Directors. Works with volunteers to coordinate golf tournaments, silent auctions and other activities for the benefit of the association.*

- We are working diligently to secure sponsors for our virtual programs, Rudolph's Office supplies will be sponsoring the Fall membership meeting. We are also working with the conference committee to secure sponsors for conference and any other programs that come up.
- If another committee or event is approaching a sponsor for anything that they go through the resource and development committee first before they approach a potential sponsor, as we may have already approached them for something else or have a strategic plan with them in mind.

### **Training and Education- Tara Eggleston-Stewart and Shawn Beaumont, Co-Chairs**

*Coordinates training opportunities for members. Promotes professional certification through nationally recognized certifications (CPRP, etc.). Creates educational tracks/modules for our members, including Programming, Parks Maintenance, Supervision and Leadership, and Budget & Finance.*

- Recent Efforts
  - We've facilitated three additional webinars since our last Board & Council Meeting, and have two more on the books currently. We are constantly searching for ideas to add to our list of offerings – so please spread the word and let us know if you have any ideas! One of our priority items for our Committee meeting next week is to seek out members to assist with our webinars. Adrienne, Tara and I have largely shouldered the responsibilities for planning and implementing these trainings and we would love a (few) helping hand(s).
- Online content facilitated to-date
  - Tuesday July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020
    - "How to Host a Fortnite Tournament from Start to Finish"
  - Thursday August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020
    - "Lessons of Limited Use: Natural Grass Field Maintenance Planning-2020 into 2021"
  - Thursday August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020
    - "Creating Positive Practices to Reduce Unconscious Bias"
  - Thursday September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020
    - "Solving Common Problems on Baseball & Softball Fields"

- o Thursday September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020
  - “Moving into the Future: The Power of Transformational Leadership”
- Upcoming online content
  - o Thursday October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020
    - “When Traumatic Events Impact Your Organization: Recovery, Support & Strength”
    - **39 already registered**
- Registration Statistics to-date
  - o We have hosted **11 virtual learning opportunities** (webinars and town halls) with a total of **921 participants** from organizations all over the state and beyond. That is 152 registrations since our last Board and Council Meeting in July.
  - o Our current overall registration average: **83 participants per event** (down from 96 from March-July).
- Other Updates
  - o Next committee meeting will be held virtually on September 18<sup>th</sup> at 10:00AM
- Short-term Goals
- We are continuing to focus on our virtual content planning and facilitation, filling a few roles on the committee, and continuing to support the PLCs, LI 1&2, Recreation University, and our various other subcommittees.
  - o We are in the process of planning the transition back to in-person professional development opportunities. We have also been soliciting non-COVID19 related topics for future trainings.
- Additional Projects on our Radar (mostly unchanged from last report)
  - o Creating a Virtual Learning Presentation Application to assist in vetting potential webinar and town-hall speakers
  - o Creating In-person Training Guidelines to have in place prior to restarting our in-person sessions
  - o Update SOP to include guidelines for virtual learning sessions
  - o New roles in the committee that need filled:
    - Online Training Committee – to plan and facilitate future online content- **MOST IMPORTANT VACANCY**
    - Park Operations and Management Committee – to plan and facilitate future Park Operations and Management related trainings
    - Evaluation Coordinator – to help gather, track, and display data from our training evaluations.
- Training Partnerships
  - o HCRP has provided an update on their training program planning. They have decided to reschedule their October/November/December trainings to Spring and Fall of 2021. They are still moving forward with planning their January-March offerings.
  - o As always, HCRP will provide 25 seats for MRPA registration for their sessions.

Training	Trainer	Date	Location	CEUs	COMMENT
TBD – Moved Leadership Lessons of a Career Professional to April/May	TBD	TBD October, 2020	Virtual	.2 (pending)	MOVE TO SPRING
The Pursuit of “Getting Better Every Day”	Bill Tyler	November 18, 2020 (9:15AM– 12:30PM)	Virtual	.3 (pending)	MOVE TO FALL 2021
Why Customer Service is Important for Maintenance Employees	Jeff Ruark	January 27, 2021 (9:30AM– 12:30PM)	Virtual	.3 (pending)	MOVE TO FALL 2021
Situational Awareness in the Workplace – Playing Offense & Defense	Jeff Ruark	February 24, 2021 (9:15AM– 12:30 PM)	NLCC 9411 Whiskey Bottom Rd. Laurel, MD 20723	.3 (pending)	



Building an Effective, Efficient and High Performing Work Team	Bill Tyler	March 24, 2021 (9:15AM– 12:30PM)	NLCC 9411 Whiskey Bottom Rd. Laurel, MD 20723	.3 (pending)	
Leadership Lessons of a Career Professional	Joe O'Neil	TBD April or May, 2021 (1:00 – 4:15 PM)	RCCC 3000 Milltowne Dr., Ellicott City, MD 21043	.3 (pending)	

### **Conference- Emily Lawrence and Jake Chesnutt, Co-Chairs**

*Plans the MRPA Annual Conference for professionals, volunteers, board members and vendors from across the state and region. Offers a variety of educational sessions and networking opportunities, and acknowledges outstanding accomplishments of both departments and individuals.*

- First committee meeting held on Friday, August 21, 2020 with 20 committee members present.
- Confirmed theme for 2021 Conference: “Hats Off to You: Celebrating Maryland Recreation & Parks”. Save the Date: April 13-25, 2021!
- 2020 Conference Speakers were contacted and 29 sessions are available to return for 2021 Conference. Some timely sessions have been used by Education & Training for fall virtual programming, including Lori Hoffner’s upcoming sessions.
- Outreach completed to potential Keynote Speaker.
- #240 members’ registration from the cancelled 2020 Conference will roll over to 2021.
- The next committee meeting will be held virtually on Friday, September 18th at 10 a.m. The committee will be discussing COVID-19 impacts/considerations/adjustments.

### **Director’s Summit – No Report**

### **Ritch Stevenson Leadership Institute I- Todd Johnson and Henry Coppola, Co-Chairs**

*Develops future leaders who will take on leadership positions within their organization and in the Maryland Recreation and Park Association. Reviews applications and selects cohorts for a 8-month program focusing on several areas of leadership development.*

- Ritch Stevenson Leadership Institute 1 Class of 2021: “We are all in this Together”
- The Leadership 1 Retreat/Kick-off has been pushed back to Oct 8 & 9. The Retreat/Kick-off will be held at Rockwood Manor on Oct. 8th and Calleva Adventures on Oct. 9th. We have a total of 13 promising Parks and Recreation professionals representing a diverse group of backgrounds, agencies, and careers. We are really excited about what the future holds for the Ritch Stevenson Leadership Institute Class of 2021.

### **Leadership Institute II- Marybeth Dugan, Chair**

*Leadership Institute II (LI2), is a new management program that invites the MRPA Ritch Stevenson Leadership Institute (LI1) alumni, to enhance their leadership skills- it is a continuum of LI1. This experience is purposeful and intentional as participants meet, develop and present a useful project for a partnering Parks and Recreation agency while engaging in advanced level management educational sessions.*

- Thank you to the LI2 committee that continues to meet and develop the program.
  - o The team has developed a tag line for LI2. It is:  
**MRPA Leadership Institute II...  
Educate. Engage. Empower.**  
The MRPA Marketing Committee is assisting to enhance the design. It will be used on communication efforts, forms, apparel, etc.
  - o We are receiving positive responses from Directors/Senior Management teams of Parks and Recreation agencies from across the state requesting to be agency partners.
  - o The application is being developed and will be distributed to LI1 alumni by Sept 23rd.
  - o The cost of the program is \$575. Limited scholarships are available.
  - o The sponsorship team is developing a sponsorship brochure that will be distributed to potential funders/sponsors who can assist with funding to offset the program costs.
  - o We continue to work closely with Sue Simmons, chair of the Director’s Summit and her team about LI2 involvement and participation at the Summit.
  - o Our next committee meeting is September 30, 2020.

**Professional Certification Board- Chuck Kines, Chair**

*Approves CEUs for workshops and MRPA Annual Conference educational sessions.*

- No Report

**Professional Learning Communities- Carrie Sprinkle and Derrick Thompson, Co-Chairs**

*Facilitates Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and works with members to identify new topic areas. PLCs are opportunities for members to join together to discuss hot topics, share best practices, and develop a network of fellow professionals in related positions and areas.*

- No Report

**Recreation University** – No Report

**Speakers Bureau** – No Report