



MRPA
MARYLAND RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION

**2020-21 MRPA Board & Council Third Quarter Report:
October – December 2020**

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

- Conducted Fall GMM on November 18
 - o Speaker Annie Frisoli presented "Resiliency & Innovation: How They Tie Together"
 - o 147 registrants

Past President- Holly Harden

- No report

Vice President- Jennifer Mogus

- Co-Taught NRPA's Aquatic Facility Operator course in November (16 hours); certified 10 candidates
- Shadowed President Elect Hilton during Fall GMM (November 18)
- Selected speaker and scheduled Winter GMM (February 10, 2021)
- Scheduled next Aquatics PLC (February 23, 2021)

Treasurer - Karen Warnick; Treasurer Elect – Cortney Weinstock

- Reference Finance Committee Report below

Secretary- Jennene Blakely

- Worked with President to establish meeting agendas and disseminate, along with calendar invites
- Recorded meeting minutes and presented to BOD for approval

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

- Planned Tour of Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage's Barnstable Hill Farm site (Nov 17). Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage is the only nonprofit in the Chesapeake Bay area taking habitat projects from conception to fruition by designing, building and managing habitat for the dual purposes of improving water quality and increasing the quantity and diversity of habitat in the region.

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

- No report

TR Branch (Therapeutic Recreation)- Rebekah Sutfin, Chair

- No report

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.

- With continued uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, the Awards Committee will be moving the annual Agency Showcase Awards luncheon to a date to be determined in late October/early November, 2021. This is actually something the Awards Committee has been mulling over for some time as feedback we had received from past nominees is that a fall time frame for the event would be much easier to attend. Keep an eye on future Weekly Updates and the MRPA website for more info on the 2021 Showcase luncheon and new awards being added, as well as nominations for the association awards at conference!

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 MRPA Account Summary Balance for November 30 to December 31, 2020 is \$926,200.91 compared to \$905,210.12 for November. This is an increase of \$20,990.79 or 3.32%. Withdrawals in the amount of \$1,450 were made to support personnel. For the quarter, October through December, the account grew from an initial value of \$846,020.78 to \$926,200.91. This is a favorable variance of \$80,180.10 or 9.47%. This is a very good return on MRPA's investment portfolio.

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:

- The Legislative Committee, in addition to the listed duties in the quarterly report, is also tasked with reviewing any proposed bylaw amendment. After the committee has reviewed and made any comments, the proposal is submitted to the board. If the board acts favorably on the proposal, it is presented to the general membership for discussion. The board then modifies the proposal as necessary and submits it to the general membership for a vote. If the membership acts favorably, then the amendment passes.
- The Legislative Committee received a multipart proposal, being treated as one proposed amendment:
 - o to remove the Special Interest Branches from the Board of Directors and placing them on the Executive Council, meaning that the positions transition from voting officers of MRPA to non-voting members of the Executive Council;
 - o to create an Equity Officer position on the Board of Directors, meaning that this position would be an elected, voting officer of MRPA, serving a one-year term; and
 - o to convert the Social Justice, Racial Equity and Inclusion (SJREI) Committee from a Special Committee to a Standing Committee; the SJREI committee was created by the current President and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Directors, and this would convert it to a committee whose chair is appointed by each subsequent President and the committee has a permanent, non-voting role the Executive Council (e.g. like the chairs of the Conference or Education and Training Committees, etc.)
- The Legislative Committee is gearing up for the bills at this year's state legislature. Bills expected relate to artificial surfaces and its disposal (again), park etiquette, non-native species planting, and budgetary concerns that might effect POS funding.

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.

- Development of the MRPA Conference logo, and a TR Branch Meeting Announcement flyer.

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.

- MRPA Membership flyer was created to share information with potential agencies and small businesses.
- Working for the Columbia Association to join MRPA.

- Sharing information with small recreation and parks businesses who can benefit from MRPA services and training.

Professional Certification Board- Chuck Kines, Chair

Approves CEUs for workshops and MRPA Annual Conference educational sessions.

- The PCB reviewed and approved 17 sessions for CEUs between October 1st and December 31st, including seven for GP Red. Robbin Oden is slowly getting up to speed as a new member of the PCB; she came on-board late summer. Moving forward in early 2021 we will be looking for a new PCB member, preferably from the TR Branch. This person will replace Karen Haseley, whose term ends in April 2021. Robbin will become Chair of the PCB in April 2021 during the MRPA Conference, and Chuck will remain on the PCB until the MRPA Conference in April 2022.

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 TRAINING AND EDUCATION: Social Justice, Racial Equity, and Inclusion: Opening a Dialogue – Thursday, November 12, 2020 – 37 registered and attended. Presenters Kori Jones, Sheema Hai, and Rob Green. Polling and Small group breakout sessions provided engaging interaction. Excellent feedback by attendees.
 - o BY-LAWS and POLICY: Reviewed by-laws and equity related policies of all 44 state park and recreation organizations. Reviewing MRPA By-Laws to incorporate equity language, recommending the creation of an Equity Officer who will reside on the board and be a voting member and to make the Social Justice, Racial Equity, and Inclusion a standing committee within MRPA and not a special committee that dissolves following the Nissel administration.
- 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:
 - o Posting about 3 times per week on all socials (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
 - o Advertising: branch meetings, Leadership Institute meeting recaps, #MeetTheTeam series, virtual training opportunities, general membership meetings, holiday posts, PLCs
 - o Editing and uploading each virtual training recording to our YouTube page (we're up to 16 videos on our channel!)
- Finished:
 - o The #ProgramOpenSpace campaign, spotlighting the new PROS video, which got over 400 views on our YouTube page (our most viewed video by far!)
- Highest performing posts of the year:
 - o FACEBOOK
 - Post with highest reach: Program Open Space video launch (6,025 people reached)
 - Post with highest engagement: video of John introducing his presidency & goals (1,028 people engaged)
 - Post with most likes: photos from virtual swearing-in ceremony (73 likes)
 - Post with most comments: video of John introducing his presidency & goals (16 comments)
 - Post with most shares: Program Open Space video (29 shares)
 - o 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)

- o TWITTER
 - Tweet with most re-tweets and likes: Bill Tyler's video clip promoting the #MRPARideForJustice (8 re-tweets, 20 likes, 422 views)
- Current following:
 - o Facebook: 1,071 likes (up from 1,014 likes last quarter)
 - o Instagram: 290 followers (up from 255 followers last quarter)
 - o Twitter: 274 followers (up from 258 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.

- Resource Development is working on a new funding source for MRPA that will be presented at the Board and council meeting in January.



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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 five additional webinars since our last Board & Council Meeting. We have one virtual certification training happening now and one more webinar to be offered in December to round out 2020. We are also working to confirm details for at least two virtual trainings with a Therapeutic Recreation focus for January and February. Registration details to be posted on the MRPA website in the next few weeks. We are constantly searching for talented presenters and training ideas to add to our list of offerings – so please spread the word and let us know if you have any ideas!
 - We've facilitated one additional webinar since our last Board & Council Meeting for a total of 16 virtual learning opportunities in 2020. Throughout 2020 we also offered two virtual certification programs (AFO[which was facilitated in house] and CPSI[which is administered by NPSI]). We have eight additional in-house trainings scheduled between now and March 25th.
 - We were able to kindle a few new flames with regards to our training partnerships as well. Montgomery Parks provided registration information for four trainings – one per month from March through June – and we are actively working with the Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County.
 - Edith Michel recently joined our ranks in the Training and Education Committee. She will be assisting with a review of our evaluation process and ways to track and analyze the data that we have collected so far.
 - Sara Morgan has also stepped up and begun her “onboarding” to become our newest webinar facilitator. We can use plenty of help with this effort, so please let us know if you or someone you know may be interested.
 - As always, registration details for our trainings can be found on the MRPA website – and we are constantly searching for talented presenters and training ideas to add to our list of offerings – so please spread the word and let us know if you have any ideas!
- Online content facilitated to-date
 - Thursday October 22nd, 2020
 - “When Traumatic Events Impact Your Organization: Recovery, Support & Strength”
 - Tuesday October 27th, 2020
 - “The Leader’s Job is Conversational”
 - Tuesday November 10th, 2020
 - “The 10 Leadership Conversations”
 - Tuesday November 10th, Thursday November 12th, Tuesday November 17th, and Thursday November 19th, 2020
 - NRPA Aquatic Facility Operator (AFO) Course
 - Tuesday December 8th, 2020
 - “The Courageous Conversations of Managing Performance”
- Upcoming online content
 - Thursday January 14th, 2021
 - “Just BREATHE: Learning from our Past to Prepare for our Future” – Dr. Mo
 - CEUs Pending
 - Thursday January 21st, 2021
 - “Connecting the Dots for Health” – Jo Burns
 - CEUs Pending
 - Tuesday January 26th, 2021
 - “Sensory Pathways in Parks and Program” – Corey Smith and Catherine Trovato
 - CEUs Pending
 - Thursday February 4th, 2021
 - “Experience Design for the Recreation & Event Professional – Session 1” -Annie Frisoli
 - February 16th, 17th, or 18th 2021
 - Kids in Parks Jasson Uroz - NC Arboretum Jonathan Marchal – Unsure if happening or not at this point
 - Wednesday February 24th, 2021
 - “Don’t You Forget About Me = Inclusion: Are you really IN?”
 - CEUs pending
 - Thursday March 4th, 2021
 - “Experience Design for the Recreation & Event Professional – Session 2” – Annie Frisoli
 - Thursday March 25th, 2020

- “Experience Design for the Recreation & Event Professional – Session 3” – Annie Frisoli
- Montgomery Parks Training Partnership
 - Wednesday March 10th, 2021
 - “Giving Effective Feedback in Personal or Work Situations”
 - Wednesday April 28th, 2021
 - “Staying Engaged and Advancing your Career as a Remote Employee”
 - Wednesday May 5th, 2021
 - “Civility in the Workplace”
 - Wednesday June 23rd, 2021
 - “The Impact of Attitude on Work and Life”
- Registration Statistics to-date
 - Since March we have hosted 16 virtual learning opportunities (webinars and town halls) with a total of 1486 participants from organizations all over the state and beyond.
 - Our current overall registration average: ~93 participants per event.
 - We have seen a slight downtick in average participants per event since March. It is no secret that our registration numbers were through the roof early on. If we see additional lockdown measures put in place and we see another uptick in registration averages - it would suggest that interest in online trainings is loosely correlated with the severity of lockdown measures in place. If we see the same steady decline in participants per event, then there is the possibility of needing to further assess our training programs and their content.
 - That being said, our current average is still something to be proud of. By proactively tracking data and identifying trends in the quantitative statistics behind registration numbers and the qualitative statistics pulled from evaluations – we will continue to position ourselves as an agency that
- Additional Projects on our Radar (mostly unchanged from last report)
 - Creating a Virtual Learning Presentation Application to assist in vetting potential webinar and town-hall speakers
 - Creating In-person Training Guidelines to have in place prior to restarting our in-person sessions
 - Update SOP to include guidelines for virtual learning sessions
 - New roles in the committee that need filled:
 - Online Training Committee – to plan and facilitate future online content- **MOST IMPORTANT VACANCY! We need facilitators!**
 - Park Operations and Management Committee – to plan and facilitate future Park Operations and Management related trainings. Bill Offutt is working on getting this off the ground.
 - Evaluation Coordinator – to help gather, track, and display data from our training evaluations. Edith Michel recently joined to head this effort
 - Training Partnerships
 - 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.
 - As always, HCRP will provide 25 seats for MRPA registration for their sessions.
 - Next T&E committee meeting will be held virtually on March 5th at 10:00AM

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.

- Conference Committee has selected Whova as the virtual/hybrid conference platform, after reviewing several possible vendors and receiving feedback from recent virtual conference attendees. This platform will allow us to provide educational sessions, engage in networking opportunities and visit the virtual exhibit hall. The committee is hard at work, finalizing educational sessions, creating virtual exhibit halls, identifying IT and AV needs, planning socials and preparing to dive into this new conference format.

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.

- The seventh class of the Ritch Stevenson Leadership Institute began Thursday, October 9th at Rockwood Manor. A masked, social distant class of 13 experienced two days full of learning and networking. The group was greeted by MRPA Executive Director, Chuck Montrie and MRPA President, John Nissel. Dr. Maureen Dougherty presented on Leadership in Turbulent Times. The students were privileged to connect with Angie Reese Hawkins as she shared her journey as the first woman of color to lead a major metropolitan YMCA. Friday the students met at Calleva Farms and completed team building tasks and braved the zip line. “Hats Off” to Committee Chair, Todd Johnson and committee members Henry Coppola, Holly Harden, Bryce Jacobson, Sara Morgan and Josh Van Dyken for all their efforts to create a great program. Thanks to Montgomery Parks for hosting.
- The Leadership Institute went virtual this month! The class of 2021 met via ZOOM on Thursday, December 10th, to learn about the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and Professionalism presented by Laura Wetherald. Festive activities such as an ugly sweater contest and holiday trivia brought laughter and cheer. Thanks to The Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro for providing pictures and fun facts so the class could still experience the unique site even in a virtual setting. A huge congratulation goes out to committee members Todd Johnson, Holly Harden, Joshua Van Dyken, Henry Coppola, Bryce Jacobson, and Sara Morgan for pulling off such a wonderful day of virtual programming.

Leadership Institute II- Marybeth Dugan, Chair

- No formal report for this time period; the planning team will be re-convening and meeting again on Wednesday, January 27 to continue to plan LI2 with a roll out target date of Fall 2021.

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