

CA Report 4/13/21

New Columbia Association President/CEO

Following a timeline that began early last fall, the Board selected a new President/CEO to replace Milton Matthews, who will be retiring after seven years serving Columbia. Our new President/CEO, Lakey Boyd, will be joining CA May 1st.

The process began with finding a search firm that had the skills and resources to do an exhaustive, nationwide, and inclusive effort to find candidates with the qualifications, experience and outlook for this demanding position. 82 individuals eventually submitted applications, and our search firm narrowed the list to fifteen for follow-up questionnaires and recorded video interviews. The Board reviewed this material and further narrowed the list to five finalists for live interviews. It was the view of the Board that any of these five were fully qualified for the position, but Ms. Boyd stood out for her energy, enthusiasm and understanding of Columbia's unique history and values.

Early in her tenure, Lakey plans to visit with the village boards to discuss with you her plans and get your input.

CA Reserve Fund Policy

The Board is concerned about future contingencies similar to the Covid pandemic and is determined to create an emergency fund in preparation for such an eventuality.

Discussions have been ongoing on the necessary amount to be set aside, how it would be sequestered and under what circumstances it could be accessed. At this point, \$2 million is tentatively being considered to be committed from the FY21 budget, and a total of about \$12 million is seen as the ultimate amount.

Capital Improvement Plan

Due to the pandemic, the capital budget was greatly reduced and focused solely on safety and maintenance issues. As finances improve, we will return to bigger projects. We recently looked at some numbers that give us an idea of the future outlays in which timelines are stretched out, but those numbers are strictly conjectural and for a long-term planning perspective only.

Meanwhile, we are working with the county to have them take responsibility for pond maintenance, which can save millions of dollars over time for CA.

We are moving away from the current style of wooden play equipment at tot lots to new metal play structures that wear better and last longer.

There is money available for rehab of the neighborhood centers. There are no plans at this time to replace or demolish them.

Due to Covid, the Columbia Gym will not be updated in 2022 as had been planned.

General Plan Update

The County is updating the General Plan through the HoCo By Design project. CA hired consultants to help the Board prepare proposals that would help protect Columbia's unique character in the new plan. These proposals are being shared with the County.

In the meanwhile, the Board reviewed the four suggested General Plan scenarios for potential county development. These have been submitted to the public for comment, and a three-week charette is planned for late April.

Village Reserves

The Board will vote in May on villages keeping their FY2021 reserves. Sentiment on the Board appears to be positive. There is a payment due to the villages for third and final payment from the contingency fund that was closed. The final payment is being sent to the villages in April.

Letter of Support for Senate Bill 144/House Bill 110

The Board approved sending a letter to the Maryland legislature in support of these bills that lower the carbon footprint.

Letter of Support to County Executive for Inner Arbor's Request for a \$230,000 grant for park edging and \$600,000 for stream restoration and the bend in the creek playground project

The Board unanimously approved the letter of support for the requests.

Funding Grants

CA has applied for grants to help fund programs for the before and after school care program. The county has gotten funding for HCPSS, and CA has reached out to be included.

Cybersecurity

The Audit Committee has been reviewing CA's cybersecurity vulnerabilities and working with outside consultants to take corrective action where needed. The full Board also had a presentation by our CIO, Chuck Thompson, on security issues and the training that staff is getting to prevent hackers from gaining unauthorized access.