

Shepherdstown Parks & Recreation Committee

Draft Minutes – August 26, 2025

Attendance: Cheryl Roberts, Chair; Marty Amerikaner, Tobi Moriarty, Adam Thomas; visitors Neal & Jane Super, Jim Auxer, Steve & Harriet Pearson

1. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

- Motion to approve agenda (with additions) passed.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

- Motion to approve June 24 minutes by Tobi, seconded by Adam. Approved unanimously.

4. Visitor Presentation – Wind Phone Proposal

Presenters: Jane and Neal Roton

4.1 Overview

- Proposal to place a “*Wind Phone*” in a Shepherdstown park.
- Wind Phones are unconnected rotary phones, used as reflective spaces for people to “speak” to deceased loved ones.
- No Wind Phones currently exist in West Virginia. They could be a tourist draw

4.2 Initial Request

- Original site: Rumsey Monument Park.
- Declined due to limited space, ongoing projects (WV Swing, memorial benches, Cullison–Rumsey pathway).

4.3 Alternative Locations Discussed

- **Shepherdstown Library/Higbee Area**
 - Contact: Christy Haggerty (Library Director).
 - Concerns: privacy, maintenance, limited ownership (6 feet into wooded area), possible future development.
 - Neal/Jane encouraged to contact Christy directly.
- **Other Options**
 - Riverfront Park (wooded area across footbridge): private and peaceful.
 - Bane-Harris Park: lacks privacy.
 - Devonshire Park: more private, but small.

4.4 Wind Phone Details (provided by donors)

- Includes rotary phone, Wendell Berry poem, plaque, and journal.
- Gifted in memory of Jane’s sister, who passed from ALS (August 2024).
- Brochure provided from *MyWindPhone.org* registry.

4.5 Committee Discussion

- Privacy vs. visibility balance important.
- If library/Rumsey don’t work, referrals may be needed.
- General support for concept; recognized as a meaningful community addition.
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4.6 Next Steps

- Jane/Neal to:
 - Reach out to Christy Haggerty.
 - Visit/evaluate library and alternate trail sites.
 - Committee to:
 - Stay informed and explore alternatives if library site isn't viable.
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5. Park Reports

5.1 Bane-Harris Park

- Recent cleanup completed (grass cutting, weed whacking).
- Pickleball courts actively used; community instructed on setup/storage.
- Basketball courts heavily used until dark.
- Park is being used well overall.

5.2 Cullison Park

- Overall condition good.
- Playground needs weeding; Woody's crew responsible.
- Past practice: committee members weeded manually.
- Concern expressed about avoiding chemical use (e.g., Roundup).
- Mulch source may contribute to weed growth.

5.3 Riverfront Park

- Paths clear after recent flooding swept debris away.
- Park well-used for fishing and kayaking.
- Fallen trees an occasional recurring issue.
- Possible Wind Phone site.

5.4 Rumsey Park

- Stone wall repair completed.
- WV Swing project: approved locally and at county; now with state officials.
- Electrical box issue: missing lock, open but no power detected; needs secure lock for events. Needs to be tested to see if it is functional

5.5 Devonshire Park

- Pickleball court unused this season; residents prefer indoor facility.
 - Equipment box shows no activity.
 - Landscaping maintenance unclear; Public Works to confirm responsibility.
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6. Ongoing Projects & Issues

6.1 Cullison Survey & Safety Issues

- Some metal posts sticking up in parks; Woody's crew to hammer down.

6.2 Cullison Stairway Repairs

- Railings need replacement; original artistic wooden rail not reproducible.
- New railings ordered.
- Responsibility/funding between Parks & Rec and Public Works to be clarified.

6.3 Cullison-Rumsey Pathway

- Discussion ongoing for 2+ years. Goal: accessible, durable connection.
- Options with Public Works labor:

- Asphalt: \$5,000 (accessible, durable, less natural).
- Gravel: \$3,500 (not accessible).
- Mulch: \$3,000 (natural, but muddy and less durable).
- Flexi-Pave and boardwalk options ruled out (too costly).
- Committee approved motion for Marty to continue asphalt plan with Woody.

6.4 Bookmark the Park Program

- Low turnout this year due to weather, scheduling, and low interest.
- Several events canceled.
- Only related activity: bookstore's event at McMurrin Hall.
- Committee may attempt one more season before discontinuing.

6.5 Hurley Donated Property

- Ownership transfer expected to settle by November.
- Planning for new park to begin once finalized.

6.6 Library Park Extension

- Proposed expansion behind Market House/Welcome Center unresolved.
- Currently used for festivals, music, and parking.
- Public Works reviewing as part of green infrastructure planning.
- Mixed committee opinions: community value vs. traffic/parking conflicts.

6.7 Rumsey Park Railing (New Business)

- Partial railing repairs complete; handgrip sections missing.
- Discussion whether railing should extend further down steps.
- Builder (Hank Young) and Public Works to be consulted.
- Chair to follow up between meetings to prevent delays.

7. Signage

7.1 Town Run Watershed Signs

- Request to place informational signs at Riverfront & Rumsey Parks.
- Approved by committee; Cheryl to coordinate with Kay Schultz.
- Signs intended to raise watershed awareness.

8. Community Contributions

- **Bane-Harris Park Fairy Garden**
 - New resident created/maintains a fairy garden (solar lights, beads, crayons).
 - Very popular with children.
 - Committee to send formal thank-you letter.

9. Meeting Business

- Next meeting confirmed for **September 23, 2025** (correction from Sept. 30).
- Meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:
Tobi Moriarty, Member