



SENIOR  
LEADERSHIP  
TEAM

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President/  
Chief Executive  
Officer

**Susan Krabbe**  
Vice President/  
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Chief Information  
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**Jackie Tuma**  
Director of  
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## June 2019

### *Office of the President/CEO*

Columbia Association would like to thank the community for its expressions of sympathy on the passing of Jane Dembner, Director of Planning and Community Affairs and a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Your memories of Jane and kind words have been received gratefully by her family, friends, and colleagues. Jane played a crucial role in developing and maintaining relationships between CA and various government and civic organizations, and she helped organizations and individuals in the community grow closer together. Her impact on the community is evidenced by your outreach to her family and CA, and all are grateful for your support.

Information on a “celebration of life” service will be shared when plans are finalized.

The President/CEO attended a four-day professional development session entitled “The Strategic Decision-Making Mindset” at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania on 21-24 May. The course, which is designed for senior-level and C-suite executives, explored best practices and behaviors enhancing decision-making skills.

The President/CEO attended the following events in June:

- Welcome Ceremony at Howard County Family Wellness Day on 2 June, at which he gave short remarks;
- Team Presentations and Closing Ceremonies for the Leadership Howard County Leadership Essentials Class of 2019 on 6 June;
- Leadership Howard County’s Annual Dinner, Awards and Graduation Event on 11 June;
- The Long Reach Village Association Board of Directors meeting on 18 June, at which Howard County government officials gave an update on redevelopment of the Long Reach Village Center; and
- The kick-off meeting of the Millennial Advisory Committee on 19 June.

Upcoming events in Columbia include:

- Groundbreaking ceremony for Howard County Veterans Monument and Neighborhood Square – 29 June
- Soulful Symphony with Darin Atwater #soulfulsetlist – 29 June
- The Columbia Orchestra at the Chrysalis – 30 June

#### Update – Meeting with Property Owners from Guilford Industrial Park

On 14 May 2019, staff from CA met with a group of property owners and individuals representing other property owners from the Guilford Industrial Park (“Industrial Park”). The meeting was initiated by CA to discuss the Guilford



## ***Office of the President/CEO (cont'd)***

Industrial Restrictions Deed, Agreement and Declaration (“the Restrictions”), dated 29 March 1972, to which the properties are subject.

By way of background, CA was approached some time ago by a property owner in the Industrial Park and another interested party (not a property owner) expressing concerns that steps are not being taken to enforce the Restrictions, an existing responsibility of Howard Research and Development Corporation (HRD). These two individuals proposed that CA, also an Industrial Park property owner, take over from HRD the responsibility for enforcement of the Restrictions. Such a step would require a modification of the Restrictions.

In advance of the 14 May meeting, CA mailed letters (***please see copy of letter following this Report***) to more than 80 property owners in the Industrial Park inviting them to the meeting.

Bottom line, I found the meeting productive; however, the primary takeaway was that those individuals (property owners and representatives of other property owners) attending the CA meeting on 14 May wanted the opportunity to meet among themselves before exploring next steps, including any of the options outlined in the letter from CA.

## ***Administrative Services***

### **Highlights**

The IT team and our vendor partners completed the transition to our new cloud-based telephone system for all facilities. The next steps will be more learning opportunities for users throughout June, and a communication roll-out of the conferencing and other upgraded features later this summer.

The independent auditors are on-site doing their field work for the FY 2019 financial statement audit. Their audit of the 401(k) plan is essentially complete. The auditors will present their reports at the 23 July 2019 Audit Committee meeting.

Essentially the entire organization is working very hard on the Dayforce implementation, the new cloud-based human resources information system from Ceridian. The project remains on schedule, with the transition to the production environment on 31 May and “first punch” on 10 June. The first pay date is 5 July.

The IT team configured, tested and deployed the touch and HTML clocks, including biometric devices in some places. The initial overview training for managers was completed in early June by the Learning and Organizational Development team. At the same time, we continue on data and set-up testing and more testing, extensive work on roles and security configurations, and challenges with specific work groups such as Camps, School Age Services and Aquatics. The implementation of the recruiting and learning modules will occur later in July.

The project team has been working tirelessly to complete the project and to support their colleagues through implementation.

### **Challenges**

The focus at this point in the Dayforce implementation is on ensuring team members are paid accurately on 5 July. Challenges with set-ups and scheduling in some operations will be addressed after 5 July if necessary. It is absolutely critical for the entire organization to continue to work together and remain focused as we move into the next two weeks of the project.

The Accounting and Human Resources teams are stretched quite thin at this time between the Dayforce implementation project, the independent audits, and the usual increased demands of the summer seasonal activities.

### **Opportunities**

We are very excited about the use of an automated, integrated application for HR, payroll, and related functions.

## ***Sport and Fitness***

### **Highlights**

#### **Golf**

The Maryland State Golf Association (MSGA) 2019 Junior Girls Season Opener was held on 8 June at Hobbit's Glen. The event, which was free of charge, was limited to sixty participants. It was open to all girls between the ages of 7-14, who reside in Maryland and who do not belong to or have access to a private golf club.

The day consisted of five learning stations (driver, irons, chipping, bunkers, & putting) taught by PGA professionals. Rules and etiquette were also discussed throughout the day. Most of the participants had never touched a golf club before or had only done so in a limited fashion. Their first exposure to a facility was Hobbit's Glen.

The Hobbit's Glen PGA Junior League concluded its season with a championship match on 15-16 June that came down to the final hole. Congratulations to Ballesteros for becoming the inaugural Hobbit's Glen PGA Junior League Champions.

#### **Ice Rink**

The Columbia Ice Rink closed for the season on 9 June. Ice will be removed during the shutdown to prevent the build-up of permafrost under the cement floor.

Flooring in all of the locker rooms will be replaced, as part of the next phase of improvements and other upgrades at the Ice Rink.

#### **Tennis**

Columbia Association member Veronica Cuellar and her mixed doubles partner, Stephen Alam, recently won the Maryland High School Tennis State Championships held at Wilde Lake Tennis Club. Veronica is a recent graduate of Marriot's Ridge High School and has been a top player in our youth tennis program held at the Long Reach Tennis Club. Veronica, who will attend Salisbury University in the fall, plans to play on their women's team.

### **Challenges**

Renovations, a new Human Resources Information System (HRIS), and phone system upgrades are keeping the staff extremely busy behind the scenes, while we continue to ensure we are fully serving our members.

### **Opportunities**

Favorable weather at the beginning of the summer season has provided a great start for CA's outdoor facilities. Usage is up in golf, aquatics, tennis and at the SportsPark.

## ***Planning and Community Affairs***

### **Highlights**

The Office of Planning and Community Affairs and Howard County's Office of Transportation partnered for the sixth annual Bicycle and Pedestrian Count program. For a period of two weeks between 1-13 June 2019, 40 volunteers performed counts at nine locations throughout Columbia. This year we added five new count locations to help provide baseline data ahead of planned improvements to the pathway and road network in Columbia.

Volunteers captured demographic and numerical snapshots of pedestrians, bicyclists and other active modes of transportation at key intersections in the pathway system and on-street locations. The data collected will provide CA and Howard County with a better understanding of who travels in these key locations, the impact of past improvements, and identifies future potential investments to improve user comfort.

### **Opportunities**

One of the main challenges with the Bicycle and Pedestrian County program is finding enough volunteers to cover all the count locations and times. Fortunately this year, with the assistance of the Volunteer Center Serving Howard County, we were able to reach out to the local school community and most of our volunteers were school-aged students in need of service hours. Because the count coincided with the last two weeks of school, students could record hours this year. Due to that timing, our recruitment efforts were very successful, and we were able to cover 70 of our planned 90 count times/locations.

## ***Open Space and Facility Services***

### **Community Improvement and Capital Projects**

#### **Highlights**

- Locust Park Basketball and Tennis Court playing surfaces were renovated.
- The Four Foot Trail and April Brook Boardwalks in Kendall Ridge were replaced.
- The Whistling Winds Tot Lot in River Hill was refurbished.
- Exterior improvements at the Columbia Gym are now completed.
- The Supreme Sports Club phase 1A demolition work and construction are complete; and MEP work, interior walls construction, and roofing work are ongoing.
- The Running Brook water journey pad installation is underway and scheduled for completion in mid-July.

- ADA improvements to the Dasher Green outdoor pool have been completed and work to make the Hawthorn wading pool ADA compliant is complete.
- Upgrades to the sprinkler systems at the Maintenance Facility are on-going. Work should be completed, and the sprinkler systems operational, by the end of June.

### **Challenges**

Inclement weather continues to impact work schedules.

## **Energy Management**

### **Highlights**

Planning for solar photovoltaic systems at the Long Reach Tennis Club, Kahler Hall, and Slayton House continued, with installation expected at all three facilities later this summer. An electric vehicle (EV) charging station was installed at The Other Barn, and new LED light fixtures were installed at Hopewell Pool.

### **Opportunities**

Howard County recently announced aggressive energy and climate goals, which may offer potential opportunities for CA to collaborate on sustainability projects. CA is considering a promotional partnership with BGE to increase participation in the company's Quick Home Energy Checkup program for residents.

## **Open Space Operations**

### **Highlights**

CA team members and CA contractors have been working seven days a week on storm-related damage, while maintaining ongoing mowing and open space maintenance schedules. The post-event inspections following Wine in the Woods and the Capital Jazz Festival, both events held in Merriweather Park at Symphony Woods (Park), were much more productive than in prior years, primarily due to better weather and more comprehensive management guidelines for the Park.

### **Challenges**

Meeting community expectations for storm-related clean-up, while continuing to manage ongoing mowing and open space maintenance, is a challenge. To-date, approximately \$225,000 has been spent on storm-related clean-up.

## **Watershed Management and Open Space Enhancements**

### **Highlights**

Staff participated in "Exploring Columbia on Foot" events, adding CA's perspective and news about CA's activities to the dialogue.

Staff also conducted several sessions at the respective offices of the village associations on "Bugs that Bite," including background information on ticks and mosquitoes, and provided tips on combating breeding and preventing bites.

Staff, in conjunction with the Village of River Hill Watershed Advisory Committee and CA Weed Warrior volunteers, conducted an invasive plant pull and native plant planting in the open space area adjacent to the Columbia Gym.

Working with Howard Community College, staff conducted Weed Warrior Volunteer Leader training, preparing new volunteers to help control non-native invasive plants in open space areas.

### **Challenges**

Finding cost effective ways to stabilize our streams and improving the health of our forests.

### **Opportunities**

Staff has awarded a contract to Westland Studies and Solutions Inc. to provide CA with Stream Restoration Mitigation Banking Services. This will involve leveraging organizations with permits that require natural resource restoration who do not have the land to meet the permit requirements and with CA Board approved easements allowing them to fund stream restoration in CA open space.

## ***Community Services***

### **Highlights**

#### **Volunteer Center Serving Howard County**

Engagement Coordinator Renee Kalu developed a social media strategy, which is increasing traffic on the Center's Facebook and Twitter feed through the use of timely tips and topics. There are 1,460 "likes" on Facebook and 3,279 followers on Twitter.

Executive Director Pam Simonson and Renee Kalu attended the Howard County Community Resource Fair at Oakland Mills Middle School on 18 May. They met with more than 100 individuals and shared information on volunteer opportunities.

#### **Columbia Art Center**

Columbia Art Center Galleries hosted a solo photography show entitled "Streets of Baltimore" with recognized photographer Ben Cricchi on 13-23 May. The exhibit featured 83 black and white photographs of scenes and people of Baltimore. More than 40 people attended the reception on 18 May. Mr. Cricchi also presented a gallery talk on 22 May, at which he discussed his photo development process, which entails overexposing the film to create a unique, grainy texture to the pictures.

#### **Youth and Teen Center**

The Youth and Teen Center, in conjunction with the Howard County (HC) Health Department and HC Drug Free, completed a five-week Life Skills Training initiative for 9th and 10th graders. The program covered the value of good health, decision making for health, risk taking and substance abuse, managing stress, and family communication and healthy relationships. Eight teens successfully completed the program, which was a pilot. The program will be repeated in fall 2019.

## **Opportunities**

Columbia Art Center Galleries will host a photography show titled “From Pixels to Print” by the Columbia Photo Artists group through 21 June. The show, which features nine artists and 55 photographs, will be complemented by a sculpture show titled “Dancing to the Kiln Gods” by sculptor Greg Holmes. The sculpture show includes 40 ceramic vases and bowls with mixed media surface designs.

The Youth and Teen Center, together with the Howard County Police Department, will host its annual Community Chess Day on 21 June to culminate the CheckMates Chess Club Season. County Executive Calvin Ball and Howard County Chief of Police Lisa Myers are confirmed to attend.

## ***Communications and Marketing***

### **Highlights**

Communications & Marketing (C&M) planned and hosted one of its signature community events in early June — KidsDay! The event drew more than 3,500 participants, nearly double last year’s attendance. The event was well-promoted via Facebook and included new attractions this year: a rock climbing wall and swing ride. Many CA team members were on hand to share the many programs and services offered by CA to the families that attended.

Team members also dedicated time to communicating and supporting the Supreme Sports Club renovations. Emails, digital signs, a dedicated landing page, and newsletters have helped get the word out on the renovations, benefits, impacts, and alternative options in advance of the construction, which started at the end of May.

From a digital marketing front, the new lead landing pages for Fitness, Golf, and Haven on the Lake are up and running. The Fitness landing pages have seen an increase in leads from submissions in May. The respective new landing pages for Golf and Haven on the Lake launched after Fitness, so more time is needed to assess the impact of those additions.

In June, we will be testing a new targeted email vendor. We ran an email through lists from The Baltimore Sun focused on Outdoor Pools/Play memberships that did well, receiving a 21% open rate and more than 1,600 clicks on the links in the emails – both well above industry and national averages. We continue to test and optimize new email vendors to determine if efficiencies can be gained.

Digital lead growth in memberships continues to increase year over year, with more than 200% growth in May 2019 compared to May 2018. Overall traffic to landing pages grew an average of 144%, with significant growth on the pages for Golf (more than 400%) from Google ads and organic search.

In our ongoing efforts to become more environmentally friendly and digitally savvy, as well as to increase engagement with our communications, the C&M team has developed its first digitally interactive annual report. A summary of the report will be mailed with annual charge letters in early July and within it will be directions to a link for the full report online.

### **Challenges**

The building of pages into a new navigation for the redeveloped website is going well. There are many facets and considerations with the implementation. A lot of detailed reviews and time will be needed to test the website over the course of several weeks to ensure navigation is working, links are functioning, content is correct, etc. This will be a “heavy lift” on a small team within CA, as well as with our two agencies helping us prepare for this launch.

### ***CA in the News***

Recent coverage in the media included a spotlight on CA on the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) website; mentions of KidsDay and the Lakefront Summer Festival on the Certifikid website and Chesapeake Family Life Magazine’s website; and mentions of the Lakefront Summer Festival in the Baltimore Sun and Columbia Flier.

### ***Thought of the Month***

*“To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires courage.”*

Ralph Waldo Emerson  
American Essayist