

**Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
21 November 2019**

Attendance Report

Commissioners Present: Bud Tibshrary, Bob Davidson, Jan Stamps, Mary Howard, Phil Bartlett, Alana Williams, Mike Velasco

Commissioners Absent:

Staff Present: Tommy Stringfellow, Katie Eaton, Breta Rheney

Guest Presentation

Michael Slapnik and Terri Wilson from Scott and Company reviewed the audit for fiscal year 2018-2019. They extended their thanks to CFO Breta Rheney and her team for all their help and support throughout the audit process. The auditors were happy to report they found no issues and provided an unmodified opinion. They met with the audit committees from both the Society Board and the Riverbanks Park Commission in early November to do an in-depth review of both audits.

Call to Order

Chairman Tibshrary called the meeting to order.

Commissioner Williams motioned to approve the audit for the Richland-Lexington Riverbanks Parks District for the fiscal year ending June 2019, Velasco seconded, m/c unanimous.

Reading of the Minutes

The October 17, 2019 commission minutes were approved as distributed.

Howard motioned to approve, Davidson seconded, m/c unanimous.

Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Tibshrary welcomed the honorable Allison Terracio, a Richland County Council member, to the meeting. He also thanked the auditors and Riverbanks staff for their efforts in completing this year's audit.

Financial Report

Chief Financial Officer Rheney shared the following monthly financial report:

Attendance

Budgeted attendance for the month of October was 120,500; actual attendance was 104,789, down 15,711 visitors. Year to date we are up to budgeted attendance by 8,569. The unusual amount of rainy days and closing on a prime Saturday during Boo at the Zoo contributed to the soft attendance. Membership sales are still holding strong, resulting in membership visits tracking ahead of projected visits. Paid attendance represented 41%, membership visits represented 55%, and free represented 4% of the total.

Revenue

Year to date budgeted gross revenue through October was \$5,859,000, actual revenue was \$6,376,569, resulting in a \$517,569 increase compared to budget. Revenue increases were found across the board with success of the new exhibits and programs such as the Farm Experience, Dino exhibit, new pre-school and adult garden programs, facility rentals, and online/gate ticket purchases.

Expenses

Gross year to date through October budgeted expenses were \$6,623,000; actual expenses were \$5,973,211, resulting in \$649,789 savings compared to budget.

Primary contributors to the savings are due to accruals, timing of invoices, savings in open or unfilled positions, and reduced staffing expenses during bad weather days.

Society

Annual budgeted membership households is 38,000; Year to date actual membership is 41,322. Actual membership revenue through October was \$1,401,931, compared to budget of \$1,250,000, resulting in an increase of \$190,921 in Society membership revenues for the month. Society memberships sales are strong due to the value of unlimited visits, the Farm Experience, free admission to Lights, and discounted ticket incentive for the Dinosaur Experience.

Stamps motioned to approve the October financials, Davidson seconded, m/c unanimous.

Chief Executive Officer's Report

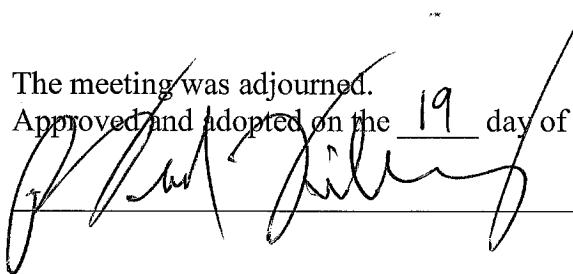
President and CEO Tommy Stringfellow provided the following report:

- Stringfellow shared a WIS news report on Riverbanks elephant transfer process. This week Tuesday Belle joined two other female elephants at the Milwaukee Zoo. They arrived safely and all seems to be going well with her transition to her new home. Belle was accompanied by 3 Riverbanks staff to ensure the transition went well.
- Riverbanks Gives Back Program- This program was created as a perk for full-time staff to spend a day volunteering in the community, at a charity of their choice, that gives back to the community and means something to them.
- Lights Before Christmas starts this Saturday. There will be a new operating schedule for Lights this year. Lights will be closed on select nights- most Monday and Tuesday evenings. Also new for Lights is the Buy One, Get One (BOGO) promotion each Wednesday to honor military, college students, first responders, and teachers.
- Gold Circle holiday party is on December 5.
- Riverbanks is nominated by USA Today for best zoo lights. Voting is open until December 13.
- MBLG Community Project- Riverbanks is participating in a gateway beautification program. Richland, Lexington, City of Columbia and various corporations have focused on improving the experience of entry into Columbia. This group contacted Riverbanks and its horticulture experts to work with city landscapers and plant with a purpose, so that there is also a conservation message tied into planting these areas.

- Capital Request- Stringfellow referred to the capital list in the audit. There is a critical need right now for replacing the ARC roof. An engineer surveyed and gave the repair estimate. Stringfellow requested \$250,000 to make the repairs.
 - Davidson motioned to approve the funds to make the repair, Velasco seconded, m/c unanimous.
- Master Plan- The book is here. In the next month we will start to share more details with employees. It's a 10-15 year snapshot of what the zoo could be with the right roadmap. Next steps are funding. We will begin meeting with the counties and city to introduce the plan over the next 6 months to a year.
- Timeline Update- Parking fees will be initiated in January. Rhino exhibit will be finished in the summer.

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 19 day of December 2019.


_____, Chair