

Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
19 November 2020

Attendance Report

Commissioners Present: Bob Davidson, Alana Williams, Mike Velasco, Deneen Shockley, Jan Stamps (via Zoom)

Commissioners Absent: Mary Howard, Phil Bartlett

Staff Present: Tommy Stringfellow, Christie Vondrak, Lochlan Wooten, Katie Eaton

Guest Presentations

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Commission heard from two guest presentations:

Guest Presentation 1- Mike Clifford and Chris Boshart from GLMV (the design/architecture firm for the Aquarium/Reptile Complex renovation) presented the highlights of the ARC renovation plan, and shared some of the staff insights and discussions from the week's planning meetings. The commission was very complimentary of the staff's hard work and excited for the project.

Guest Presentation 2- Lobbyist Lander Hiott with Parker Poe Consulting shared with the commission the exciting news that Riverbanks was awarded \$1.5M of state funding from SCPRT. Hiott will continue to monitor the funding availability at the federal, state and local levels of government to look for opportunities for Riverbanks.

Call to Order

Chairman Davidson called the meeting to order.

Reading of the Minutes

The October 15, 2020 commission minutes were approved as distributed.

Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Davidson remarked on the passing of former Commissioner, founder, and lifetime supporter of Riverbanks, Mr. Don Barton. Riverbanks is so appreciative of everything that Mr. Barton did for Riverbanks and he will be sorely missed.

President & Chief Executive Officer's Report

President and CEO Tommy Stringfellow provided the following report:

- October Financials:
 - Society household membership are trending up and membership revenue is beginning to improve as well
 - Attendance is still below budget, but also trending up. The 50/50 split of member to non-member attendance is helping generate revenue
 - The \$1.5M from SCPRT will be able to be used to sustain through winter months
 - Richland county has agreed to advance the millage funding if necessary
 - Society has used \$200K of their \$2.1M reserve
 - Velasco motion to accept the financials, Shockley second m/c unanimous

Chief Administrative Officer's Report:

CAO Christie Vondrak provided the following report:

- The ARC renovation plan was shared with staff at the last Town Hall, and it was very well received, and staff are excited.
- We are continuing to celebrate our staff with recognizing milestones, service awards and introducing new staff members virtually our monthly Town Halls
- We will be hosting free staff lunches every Tuesday in December to provide a holiday perk for our staff during a time when we are unable to do our usual holiday festivities
- We are no longer seeing the trend in staff resignations
- Director of Animal Care and Welfare, John Davis has received the "AZA Inspector of the Year" award. It is so well deserved! He will be featured in the December *Connect Magazine*
- We are encouraging our team members to take time off when they can. We will not expire annual leave until December 2021 to give staff the opportunity to use their time that would have expired
- We are taking this time to focus on all facets of safety. Our Safety Manager is working on revamping safety trainings and incorporating them into onboarding training and refreshers for staff.
- Working on doing park walk-throughs to identify any safety or guest experience items to be addressed
- Covid numbers in SC are rising, so we are continuing to remind our staff to follow travel guidelines and prioritize their health and safety to keep themselves, our animals, and their coworkers safe. We currently do not have any positive COVID cases in our staff.
- The society portion of audit is almost complete, and the commission portion is tracking closely behind.

Chief Operating Officer's Report

COO Lochlan Wooten provided the following report:

- Bill the rhino now has exhibit access. He is doing well and looks great on exhibit
- Recently had a successful procedure for giraffe hoof maintenance
- Next month will share conservation committee's small grants
- Boo at the Zoo was very successful and received great feedback
- Hoppy Hour tonight- a handful of changes from the last Hoppy Hour. Each ticket this time includes a free drink ticket
- Lights Before Christmas starts this Saturday. Santa will be here, but will have a socially distance photo opportunity
- Society Gold Circle event has been adjusted to be COVID friendly. It will take place on Thursday December 10th.
- Membership revenue comparison graph shows that revenue is stabilizing and beginning to return to normal, albeit it slightly reduced, patterns.

Velasco motion to adjourn, Williams second, m/c unanimous

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 21 day of January 2021.

 _____, Secretary