

Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
20 February 2014

Attendance Report

Commissioners Present: Earl Brown, Bud Tibshrary, Lloyd Liles, Jim Smith, Mary Howard, Phil Bartlett, Jan Stamps

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Satch Krantz, Steve Hatchell, Tommy Stringfellow

Guests Present: Tim Brantley, Sean McNicholas, Eric Loyal, Nick Rado, Laura Caster

Call to Order

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order.

Reading of the Minutes

The January 2014 minutes of the Commission were approved as distributed.

Chairman's Comments

Chairman Brown welcomed those representing SSA to the meeting.

SSA Presentation

Tim Brantley, Sean McNicholas, Eric Loyal, Nick Rado and Laura Caster, all of Service Systems Associates (SSA), appeared before the Commission on the first anniversary of their partnership with Riverbanks. They thanked the Commission and the Zoo and Garden staff for all they have done to make the first year of operation such a success. Following these remarks, the group presented a summary of the first year. Among the highlights of the presentation were:

- Per caps in concession sales increased from \$2.08 to \$3.02, a 45% increase over 2012 (2012 was Aramark's last year of operation). In 2013 concession sales totaled \$2,894,735 compared to \$1,997,171 in 2012.
- Not surprisingly the Kenya Café outpaced all stands with total gross sales of \$911,938, or 33% of all concession sales. The ICEE kiosk in the plaza was second with \$314,061 in gross sales.
- Retail per caps increased from \$1.48 to \$1.86, a 26% increase. Total gross sales increased by \$366,000 over 2012.
- Catering sales increased \$177,000 over 2012 for a total of \$655,219.
- Total sales for 2013 were \$5,337,627.
- The commission paid to Riverbanks was \$1,380,776, a \$274,000 increase (25%) over 2012.

The Commission thanked the SSA representatives for their excellent performance and look forward to a continued successful relationship in the years to come.

Chief Financial Officer's Report

CFO Hatchell reported that in spite of bad weather during the period, the January 2014 statement reflects continued success in most areas. The general fund currently shows a deficit of \$80,505. However, this is somewhat misleading in that at the time of the statement the Society "owed" the Commission \$200,000 in operating contributions, and Richland County was late (compared to 2013) in transmitting approximately \$1 million in operating support.

Cash

- Cash is down \$1,410,707 from last year due in large part to Richland County's late transfer of funds and in the amount due of \$153,532 from the Bond for expenses paid but not yet reimbursed.

Balance Sheet

- The Accounts Receivable balance is 50% less than the same time period last fiscal year due to our agreement with SSA that they manage all catering, including billing for groups.

Revenue

- Earned revenues continue to out-perform both budget and prior year. This is in spite of the fact that we are 22K less in attendance than at this same point last year.
- The variance in funding from Richland County compared to budget is due to the timing on when we anticipated the funds being received and when the funds were actually received.

Expenses

- Overall, departmental expenses are in line with budget and prior year. Total department expenses are slightly more than 4% above last year's total department expenses and 15% under budget as of the end of January.
- Marketing & Public Relations' expenses are drastically under budget due to a timing difference between the budget and when invoices were received.

Hatchell also raised the issue of the 2014 – 2015 Commission audit. He noted that Scott and Company performed the audit for the past six years, the first five of which were under contract. He reminded the Commission that they decided to keep Scott on for an additional year, due to the transition between long-time CFO George Davis and Breta Smith. He suggested that the Commission may wish to consider another one-year engagement due to the departure of Ms. Smith. Tibshrary moved, Howard seconded, m/c unanimous, to engage Scott and Company for an additional year.

Bond Issue Projects Update – Commissioner Stamps asked Krantz to review the status of the various bond issue projects. Krantz noted that a design workshop had been held over the previous two days. A considerable amount of time was devoted to the individual

project budgets. Krantz noted that at this point the overall Zoo-related project budget is in good shape, with some individual projects being slightly under while others are slightly over budget. However, Krantz noted that the children's garden design team is struggling to keep that project in budget. He noted that he has informed the architects that they cannot exceed the projected \$5 million budget.

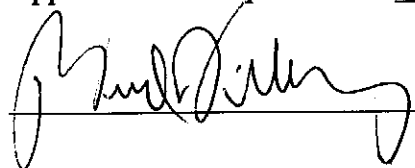
- Parking/Access – Krantz reported that demolition continues on the 400 and 420 Rivermont Drive buildings.
- Zoo Projects (Entry/Sea Lion) – Krantz noted that the seventh architecture planning session on the Zoo projects (parking lot plaza, gift shop, guest services, otter/grizzly and sea lion) was held on February 18 and 19. At that meeting Rogers Builders presented a new cost estimate on the sea lion exhibit based on the Design/Development drawings. The estimate indicated that at this time we are well within the original budget estimate. Zoo staff are now meeting with representatives of Rogers on a bi-weekly basis in preparation for construction, scheduled on or about May 1st.
- CSX Tunnels – We are still awaiting CSX approval.
- Temporary Entrance – The Zoo's public entrance was temporarily relocated to the employee entrance during the week of February 10th. Early indications are that this location will work well.
- Children's Garden – The City of West Columbia zoning board unanimously approved our request for a variance for the elevation of the Children's Garden education building and a sound barrier wall at its meeting on January 21st.
- Kenya Café Renovation – The renovation of the Kenya Café continues on schedule, still with a mid-March completion date.

Chief Executive Officer's Report

- 2015 AZA Mid-Year Meeting – On January 27 and 28 a representative of the AZA Meeting and Membership office visited Columbia for the purpose of touring the Hilton and Hampton Inn, meeting with the CVB staff, touring the convention center, and meeting with the staff of Riverbanks Zoo. This visit was in preparation for the 2015 AZA Mid-Year Meeting. It is anticipated that as many as 800 delegates could attend the meeting.

The undersigned secretary of the Riverbanks Park Commission certifies that the above is a full, true and correct copy of the minutes of a regular meeting of the Commission, duly called and held in the manner provided in the by-laws of the Commission, on 20 February 2014, at which a quorum was present.

Approved and adopted on the ____ day of March, 2014.



Secretary