

Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
19 May 2022

Attendance Report

Commissioners Present: Bob Davidson, Deneen Shockley, Mike Velasco, Alana Williams, Jan Stamps, Cliff Bourke, Jeff Reeves

Commissioners Absent:

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

Call to Order

Chairman Davidson called the meeting to order.

Reading of the Minutes

The April 21, 2022 commission minutes were approved as distributed.

The May 3, 2022 commission minutes were approved as distributed.

Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Davidson remarked that he will be unable to attend the June meeting, but that Vice Chair Stamps will preside over the meeting. Davidson remarked that he was very impressed with financials and appreciates the hard work of the Riverbanks staff.

President & CEO Report:

President & CEO Tommy Stringfellow provided the following report:

- Stringfellow reviewed the April financials statement:
 - We continue to work on the search for a VP of Finance.
 - Total membership finished April extremely strong with over 50,000 member households.
 - Total attendance is strong at about 74,000 over budget
 - With attendance tracking up, rides and attractions, events, programs etc. are all doing well.
 - Stamps motioned to approve the financials, Shockley seconded, m/c unanimous
- The Commission's budget committee (Williams and Velasco) met earlier this month to review the proposed FY22-23 budget in detail. Stringfellow shared a brief overview of the budget to the full Commission, and the committee shared additional information from their meeting.
 - Velasco motioned to approve the FY22-23 budget, Williams second, m/c unanimous
- Bond Status- the bond process has been set in motion. The request was hand delivered the first week of May, and now the request is in the hands of the county council members. We will continue to work with the counties on dates and the process. The first reading for Lexington County will be next Tuesday, May 24, time is TBD. The first reading for Richland County will be June 7, time is TBD.

Administrative Officer Report:

Administrative Officer Christie Vondrak provided the following report:

- April was a very busy month! Some highlights from the month include:
 - Celebrated Volunteer Appreciation Week by treating our volunteers in different ways during the week
 - AAZK hosted their Painting with a Purpose fundraiser and was able to donate \$1000 to Oceana.
 - Riverbanks Celebrated its 48th anniversary with cake for staff. We are already in brainstorming mode for how to celebrate our 50th in just a couple of years!
 - The horticulture team hosted their member's only plant sale and it was a great success.
 - Our events team did a wonderful job with Riverbanks Wine Tasting and Riverbanks Run events. We had 76 community volunteers assist with Wine Tasting.
- Covid cases are trending up again. We continue to keep our contact tracing and safety policies and recommendations in place.

Operating Officer Report:

Operating Officer Lochlan Wooten provided the following report:

- Saddened to share the loss of bear Sundance. The team has done an amazing job with his care and the continued care of Butch.
- Patrick the gorilla underwent his annual physical, and the news will share a story on this soon.
- Excited to share that we have two flamingo chicks this year, and they can be seen on exhibit now.
- ARCC continues to progress and is now entering the phase where things are really coming together. The new entrance is visible and looking great. Construction on the new entrance sign will begin soon.
- Riverbanks Zoo and Garden Day on May 4 was a great success. Riverbanks was recognized in both the House and Senate, and McMaster read his proclamation on the State House steps in the afternoon. We welcomed the legislators to Riverbanks in the evening and are hearing very positive feedback regarding their experience.
- Waterfall junction splash pad opened last weekend and will remain open daily until the fall. The new soft play surface has been very well received by those who have experienced it.
- Wine Tasting event was wonderful and very successful.
- The Member's only plant sale was also very successful.
- Riverbanks Run had 505 runners. A highlight was that Kellar Kissam, President of sponsor Dominion Energy, gave a compelling and complimentary welcome speech for the event.
- The Society membership trends continue to excel upwards
- Congaree National Park invited Riverbanks out to Congaree to participate as a conservation partner for the special synchronized fireflies season.

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 16th day of June 2022.

Jan H. Stamps, Vice Chair