

**Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
18 May 2023**

Attendance Report

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

Commissioners Absent: Mike Velasco

Staff Present: Tommy Stringfellow, Lochlan Wooten, Ashley Harris, Katie Eaton

Others Present: Rebecca Best, of Best Consulting

Call to Order

Chairwoman Stamps called the meeting to order.

Reading of the Minutes

The April 20, 2023 Commission Meeting minutes were approved as distributed.

Bourke motioned to approve the minutes, Davidson seconded, m/c unanimous.

Chairman's Remarks

- Thank you to Rebecca Best for attending today.
- Legislative night a few weeks ago was a great success and a wonderful evening.
- Congratulations to Commissioner Cliff Bourke for being a recent recipient of the USC School of Law Compleat Lawyer Award. The award recognizes alumni for outstanding civic service as well as professional achievements. The Commission extends their congratulations and commends Commissioner Bourke on this great achievement!

Executive Session

Stamps motioned to enter Executive Session to discuss a personnel and legal counsel matter. Shockley seconded; m/c unanimous.

Following the executive session, no action was taken.

VP of Finance Report:

VP of Finance Ashley Harris provided the following report:

- Harris reviewed the April financial statements:
 - April was a strong month in terms of revenue and attendance.
 - Average earning interest rate in LGIP in the month of April was 5.1%.
 - Actual General admissions fee revenue has climbed up over budgeted revenue for the first time this fiscal year.
 - Davidson motioned to approve the April financials, Bourke seconded, m/c unanimous.

President & CEO Report:

President & CEO Tommy Stringfellow provided the following report:

- Rebecca Best and Stringfellow shared their update on recent meetings with the county councils. Lexington County is prepared to proceed with the bond, but Best and Stringfellow are continuing to work with Richland County to provide information to each council member for assessment of support.
- Yesterday Stringfellow presented to MBLG. The response was very supportive. They have acknowledged their endorsement of the bond and will be sending letters to Richland and Lexington Council.

- Legislative night was a big success. Looking forward to keeping this an annual event.
- On the State level, the Senate has proposed \$3M for Riverbanks in the state budget. We will know if the governor approves the budget sometime in June.
- Met with the Mongolian ambassador a couple of weeks ago. Enjoyed hosting them.

Chief Operating Officer Report:

Chief Operating Officer Lochlan Wooten provided the following report:

- Meerkat Lily's health is failing. The entire mob is with her in the hospital, and the team is doing all they can for her. We will be sharing her story and progress on social media.
- Tiger Koshka and Lion Zuri are both very aged. Talking through what the future of their exhibits may look like and working on having plans drawn up and available when they are needed.
- Yesterday the Society Board approved their FY24 budget. This included a dues adjustment that would take place in October ahead of partnering with Tianyu. Tianyu is a company that specializes in holiday lights programming and would be a revenue share opportunity. They deliver an exemplary lights experience and would take Riverbanks' Lights program to a new level. More information to come later in the year.
- Midlands Gives took place at the beginning of May. Riverbanks was thrilled to have exceeded our goal. Thank you to all donors.
- Wine Tasting went beautifully. The new events team is doing amazing and the event was very well received and successful.
- Save the date for Brew at the Zoo on August 4th. Tickets will go on sale next month.
- Monday members of the team will be going down to release gopher frogs as part of a head start partnership program with SC DNR.
 - Capital Projects- Wooten shared the process and assessment behind the prioritization of capital project requests. A few of the recently completed projects include: a new education outreach van, the new gorilla climbing structure, new greenhouses, expanded parking area, painting of farm barn, and rehabbed fountain in the garden. Upcoming projects include the Komodo dragon habitat, and renovating the lion/tiger mote situation.

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 15th day of June 2023.

Clifford Bourke, Jr., Secretary