

**Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
15 February 2024**

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda is available to radio and TV stations, newspapers, and persons requesting notification; was posted in the lobby of Riverbanks' administration building and was uploaded to Riverbanks' webpage.

Attendance Report

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

Commissioners Absent: Mike Velasco

Staff Present: Tommy Stringfellow, Lochlan Wooten, Christie Vondrak, Ashley Harris, Jessica Austin

Guests Present: Theo DuBose, Robert Hobson, Ron Scott

Call to Order

Chairwoman Stamps called the meeting to order at 12:30pm.

Reading of the Minutes

The January 18, 2024 Commission Meeting minutes were approved as distributed.

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

Finance Report:

VP of Finance Ashley Harris provided the following report:

- January Dashboard Report:
 - Attendance is running 29,043 under budgeted year to date.
 - Earned revenue is up \$601,035 over budget due to concession and retail commissions, facility rentals, group admission, and interest income earning over budget. SSA concessions had a record 2023 calendar year, beating the previous standing record by about \$900K. Facility rentals and group admission bookings were excellent in November and December, and logged a record-breaking January.
 - Governmental Support showing \$5M over budget due to one-time, non-recurring state funding for deferred maintenance. The State FY24 Budget was not yet approved when Riverbanks finalized the FY24 General Fund budget.
 - Utility expenditures are running lower than budget primarily due to the garden water bills coming in significantly lower, as a result of a leak repair in the fountain.
- January Balance Sheet:
 - Average earning interest rate in LGIP in January was 5.61%
 - New line item – Due from Bond Fund. \$2M is down payment for Gondolas. The bond cost and proceeds are recorded in a separate fund, so as Riverbanks receives and spends money you will see it reflected there.
 - Fund balances – moved \$4.3M in Unassigned to Operational Reserve (+\$600,000) and Committed Capital (+\$3.7M)

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

Special Presentation:

Theo DuBose with provided the following report:

- Both waiting periods have passed so we are good to go for bond issuance.
- Information requests sent to appropriate county officials.
- Disclosure documents with staff. Expect a mid-March return of information.

Special Presentation:

Robert Hobson with First Tryon Advisors provided the following report:

- Hobson’s group is working with Riverbanks’ bond attorney on the competitive public sale.
- Expecting first round of bond sale in August 2024.

President & CEO Report:

President & CEO Tommy Stringfellow provided the following report:

- Several of us will be attending the AZA mid-year conference in Memphis TN on March 16-20.

Chief Administrative Officer Report:

Chief Administrative Officer Christie Vondrak provided the following report:

- March Commission Meeting will be held at Ndoki Lodge
- Free Fridays - now through February 23rd.
- AAZK Conservation on Tap Saturday February 24th from 5pm to 9pm at Craft and Draft
- Groundhog Day Job Shadowing – had largest attendance to date of zoo kids.
- Working on budgets and competitive pay structures to present for the next fiscal year.


Chief Operating Officer Report:

Chief Operating Officer Lochlan Wooten provided the following report:

- Wooten shared beer can mock-ups from Peak Drift partnership. Doing a blonde ale & seltzer
- Michelle Carter was chosen to paint a fish for public art installation for City of Columbia.
- 50th Anniversary Golden Ticket Program – see [Countdown to 50 Wild Years :: Riverbanks Zoo & Garden](#) for more information
- 50th Anniversary Party on April 25th with staff, Society, Commission, and family.
- Meltwater media monitoring services – received an overall positive report in the last quarter of 2023. Negative sentiment – 0%

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 21 day of March 2024.

 _____, Secretary