

**Riverbanks Park Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**18 January 2018**

**Attendance Report**

Commissioners Present: Bud Tibshrary, Alana Williams, Jan Stamps, Mary Howard and Mike Velasco (via conference call)

Commissioners Absent: Phil Bartlett, Bob Davidson

Staff Present: Tommy Stringfellow, Breta Rheney, Katie McCoy

**Call to Order**

Chairwoman Howard called the meeting to order.

**Reading of the Minutes**

The November 2017 minutes were approved as distributed.

Tibshrary moved, Stamps seconded, m/c unanimous

**Chief Finance Officer's Report**

CFO Breta Rheney provided the following report:

- Breta also shared the society financial report

**Attendance**

Attendance for the first half of the fiscal year is 599,896. With a year-to-date budgeted attendance of 586,600 and prior year actual of 615,470, Riverbanks is currently 13,296 visitors ahead of budget and 15,574 behind prior year. Year-to-date attendance for November and December is below:

	<u>YTD November</u>			<u>YTD December</u>		
	<u>2018</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>2017</u>
Admission visits	223,727	190,820	213,161	259,310	239,871	251,688
Membership visits	256,783	243,254	271,340	316,475	306,613	340,702
Other free admission	22,228	31,826	21,216	24,111	40,116	23,080
Total attendance	<u>502,738</u>	<u>465,900</u>	<u>505,717</u>	<u>599,896</u>	<u>586,600</u>	<u>615,470</u>

Although for both months, Riverbanks is running ahead of budget, November showed a slight decline in current to prior year total attendance, with the month of December responsible for the remaining decline from prior year. Both November and December show less member visits than the same time for the prior year. Membership visits comprise 52.9% of total current attendance.

**Revenues**

- Revenues for the first half of this fiscal year are \$6,719,014 and comprise 43% of our annual budgeted revenues. This is in-line with the prior year.
- General admission fees are 41% of the budget variance. Approximately \$47,000 of the admission revenue relates to an admission tax credit allowed by the State. Riverbanks is allowed to keep 38% of admissions tax collected. The State set the percentage from the historical sites comprising 73.5 acres of the park's 194 total acres.
- Rides and Attractions, Classes and Programs, and Events earned a combined total of \$998,870, a 28% increase over the total budget of \$781,621.
- Facility Rental & Group Admission Fees are managed by contracted vendor, Service Systems Associates (SSA). They also set the annual budget. Riverbanks receives 85% of tickets sold by SSA. The commission received for the facility rentals is defined in the SSA contract. A monthly management fee of \$16,250 is paid to SSA. Below are the year-to-date totals:

	Year-To-Date		
	Current	Budget	Prior
Admissions	\$37,895	\$48,917	\$32,101
Commission	193,998	167,480	169,240
Fee paid SSA	(97,500)	(97,500)	(97,500)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$134,393</b>	<b>\$118,897</b>	<b>\$103,841</b>

- Miscellaneous revenue is comprised of the following:

SC PEBA	\$56,099	SCRS credit because of 2% employer increase
Interest	24,476	earnings from LGIP
BOA rebate	15,634	WORKS pcard program - state contract
Billboards	12,665	two signs are rented
Donations	9,127	designated for a specific purpose
RiverAlliance	1,500	\$250 monthly
	<u>\$119,501</u>	

- Governmental support is fixed by the counties; therefore, the budget will match current until the full commitment has been received. The prior year variance should be year-to-year timing differences between collections and remittances for Riverbanks' share.

### Departmental Expenses and Utilities

- Total personnel costs are 64% of total departmental expenses, excluding the utilities. Year-to-date expenses from largest to smallest are comprised of the following:

	YTD Current			YTD Prior		
	Personnel	Other	Total	Personnel	Other	Total
Animal Care	\$1,414,123	\$473,827	\$1,887,950	\$1,356,326	\$455,003	\$1,811,329
Guest Services	1,062,523	170,110	1,232,633	1,004,560	150,969	1,155,529
Administrative	513,203	586,675	1,099,878	570,606	549,256	1,119,862
Facility Management	440,824	614,451	1,055,275	449,765	633,068	1,082,833
Utilities	0	876,977	876,977	0	807,308	807,308
Botanical	425,651	165,814	591,465	380,933	153,658	534,591
Marketing & Public Relations	147,098	297,886	444,984	141,783	190,953	332,736
Education	52,831	3,302	56,133	109,110	6,207	115,317
	<u>\$4,056,253</u>	<u>\$3,189,042</u>	<u>\$7,245,295</u>	<u>\$4,013,083</u>	<u>\$2,946,422</u>	<u>\$6,959,505</u>

- Other operating costs for animal care consists of animal feed totaling \$268,061 and hospital pharmaceuticals, supplies, and lab work totaling \$71,654. These are 72% of the total other expense.
- Some of the administrative operating costs include the following:

IT related expenses	\$265,620	hardware, software, contracted support, phone, internet, copiers
Insurance	120,794	commercial, auto, directors and officers coverage
Contracted services	73,121	outsourced payroll, legal and audit
Credit card fees	62,995	transaction cost associated with processing
Total	<u>\$522,530</u>	

### Chief Operating Officer's Report

COO report was provided by Tommy Stringfellow:

- Hired the new COO, Dave Ruhl. He will attend the Commission meeting next month.
- Lights Before Christmas finished slightly above budgeted attendance and came in over budget in revenue.
- The beverage vendor has transitioned to Coca-Cola from Pepsi. Coke offered \$101,000 per year for 5 years in sponsorship dollars.
- This month begins Free Fridays. They will be offered every Friday in January and February to residents of Richland and Lexington counties.
- Society membership is at just under 40K households. Revenue is up for society. Spring membership mailers will be sent out soon.
- Annual appeal for donations received about \$70,000.
- The percent of members visiting remains at 50%.

### Chief Executive Officer's Report

President and CEO Stringfellow provided the following report:

- IDA report named Riverbanks as #10 on their annual "Worst Zoos for Elephants" listing. The State paper has assigned a new "beat writer" to Riverbanks to visit in person to experience Riverbanks' elephant care and exhibits first hand.

- Riverwalk property lease update - The new riverwalk section is being built along the river behind the zoo. Stringfellow shared a map of the properties that Riverbanks owns and leases. The conflict is that the mill race entrance lies on Riverbanks' property and liability. The contractor is carrying the liability for now. The new riverwalk section is scheduled to open in late July.
- A city sewer pump station is to be built on a piece of land that Riverbanks has deeded over to the city. They will start construction on the pump sometime this spring.
- About 4 years ago, Richland, Lexington, and City of Columbia funded new trams. These trams are now showing age and wear. Tommy would like to propose to order a new tram engine unit in the new fiscal year.
  - Tibshrary moved, Stamps seconded, m/c unanimous to purchase the new tram
- Riverbanks currently has active Species Survival Plan (SSP) recommendations to allow tigers, lions, giraffes, and tapirs to breed.
- Gorilla Kazi has been confirmed pregnant. She is due mid-June to early July.
- Stringfellow shared the current society board directory. There is a new executive board and two new board members.
- Stringfellow shared a document updating his initiatives
- We are wrapping up the discovery phase for elephant exhibit options.

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 15 day of February 2018.

Jan Stamps, Secretary