

**Riverbanks Park Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**21 October 2021**

**Attendance Report**

Commissioners Present: Bob Davidson, Deneen Shockley, Jan Stamps, Jeff Reeves, Cliff Bourke  
Commissioners Absent: Mike Velasco, Alana Williams  
Staff Present: Tommy Stringfellow, Christie Vondrak, Lochlan Wooten, Jessica Johnson, Katie Eaton

**Call to Order**

Chairman Davidson called the meeting to order.

**Reading of the Minutes**

The September 16, 2021 commission minutes were approved as distributed.

**Chairman's Remarks**

Chairman Davidson remarked numbers in attendance and revenue are looking good and he is looking forward to the fall events at Riverbanks.

**VP of Finance Report**

VP of Finance Jessica Johnson provided the following report:

- Membership and attendance are looking very positive and well ahead of last year.
- Revenues overall are up to 2019 (pre covid) levels. General admissions, parking and concessions are up from over two years ago. Education, events, and facility rentals are down (due to covid). The differences noted from the Counties are due to timing.
- Request for proposals for finance software is out and responses are due back on the 28<sup>th</sup>
- Audit- the auditors would like to present the audit at the next meeting. They will meet in advance with the Commissions' audit committee (Williams and Velasco).
- Stamps motioned to approve the September financials, Shockley seconded, m/c unanimous

**President & CEO Report:**

President & CEO Tommy Stringfellow provided the following report:

- Tomorrow is the AZA Accreditation hearing. It will be held virtually. Stringfellow will update the Commission and staff as we hear the results.
- Bond hearing- Richland and Lexington County Councils have indicated that timing might be favorable for requesting a bond in the coming months. Stringfellow will begin meeting with the bond attorney and will update on next steps for meeting with councils.

**Chief Administrative Officer's Report:**

CAO Christie Vondrak provided the following report:

- Vondrak shared about recent guest speaker, Lori Perkins. Perkins is the Deputy Directory at Birmingham Zoo. She recently gave a guest presentation for all staff on DEAI topics at Riverbanks. Her presentation was the first of what we hope will be many conversations regarding these values at Riverbanks.
- Yesterday we hosted a chili lunch to kick off Boo at the Zoo. We had many fun toppings and it was a great time to reconnect with staff from all departments.
- Yesterday was the first night of Boo at the Zoo. All candy stations at Boo are manned by community volunteers. We are fortunate to have such a supportive community that is willing to donate their time to volunteer with Riverbanks!

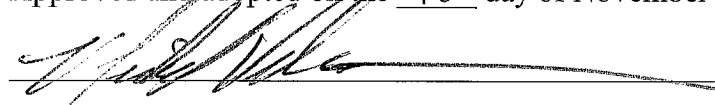
**Chief Operating Officer's Report:**

COO Lochlan Wooten provided the following report:

- Journey the sea turtle was released into the wild as a result of a head starting partnership with SCDNR. We have a new hatchling on site to continue the cycle.
- Animal Division Updates- the covid vaccine has been deployed to about 75% of the animals able to receive it. It has gone very well, but we will continue to monitor the animals and plan to distribute their booster dose in the following weeks.
- This week is Vet Tech Appreciation Week. If you see either of our wonderful vet techs out in the park this week, please be sure to thank them for their hard work and dedication to the animals at Riverbanks!
- Boo at the Zoo started yesterday. We are still operating at a reduced capacity of 2,500 guests per evening.
- Zoofari last month went great (despite the weather). The live auction was wildly successful.
- Hosted two onsite covid vaccine clinics for the community in partnership with DHEC. Between the two vaccine events, over 100 people have gotten their vaccines on site.
- Wooten shared a preview of new web-based app. Will be launching in the park soon. More information to come.
- Membership is tracking well above budget and record at 46,000 households.
- The ARC construction is well underway. Progress updates will be available on our website on the "Hard Hat Updates" page.
- Last week our Conservation Committee welcomed a Conservation Advisory and Action Group and had a strategic planning day. Conservation Committee did a closed RFP for small grant proposals.
- Lexington Medical joined Riverbanks as an official "Health and Wellness Partner." Recently, Prisma Health has joined as a sponsor for Lights Before Christmas.

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 18 day of November 2021.

, Secretary