

Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
17 October 2013

Attendance Report

Commissioners Present: Earl Brown, Bud Tibshrary, Phil Bartlett, Jan Stamps, Lloyd Liles, Mary Howard

Commissioners Absent: Jim Smith (traveling out-of-state)

Staff Present: Satch Krantz, Kathryn Masewicz, Tommy Stringfellow

Guests Present: Michael Slapnik

Call to Order

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order.

Reading of the Minutes

The September 2013 minutes of the Commission were approved as distributed.

Chairman's Comments

Chairman Brown thanked the Commissioners for their continued dedication to Riverbanks Zoo and Garden.

Chief Finance Officer's Report

- 2012 – 2013 Audit – Michael Slapnik, representing the Commission's auditors, Scott and Company, presented the 2012/2013 Commission audit. It was noted that Commissioners Smith and Tibshrary had previously reviewed the audit. Slapnik reviewed the key components of the audit in detail and noted that the Commission's books were in excellent order and that in the opinion of Scott and Company the financial statements referred to in the audit, present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the discretely presented component unit, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the District. The Commission commended Mr. Slapnik as well as Accounting Supervisor Kathryn Masewicz for their hard work. Tibshrary moved, Howard seconded, m/c unanimous, to accept the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013 as presented.
- September 2013 Financial Statement – Due to Commissioner Smith's absence and the vacancy in the Zoo's Chief Finance Officer position, Riverbanks' Accounting Supervisor Kathryn Masewicz presented the September financial statement. She reported that the current fiscal year budget is running ahead of planned and actual in most areas. Although we have very good budget variances, we also have good actual variances from the prior fiscal year. The budget currently shows a surplus

of \$604,092 in the first three months of the fiscal year. However, there are nine months remaining in the fiscal year.

Revenue

- Earned revenues continue to out-perform both budget and prior year.

Expenses

- Overall, departmental expenses are in line with budget and prior year.
- Facility Management continues to assume unexpected expenses due to problems with the birdhouse HVAC system. These expenses may need to be reassigned to the Capital Projects Fund.
- Utilities are over budget and over prior year due to problems with the river water system. These problems are due mostly to the heavy summer rains.

Capital Projects (Non-Bond)

- The current Capital Budget is \$527,941. Additions to the Capital Budget from the previous month were for the replacement of 8 ticket booth and 3 token booth POS stations. The balance sheet reflects an assignment of the Unassigned Fund Balance for the Capital Budget. This amount will be adjusted throughout the year as additional projects are added.
- The cost to remove the underground gas tank and relocate it and the diesel tank has not been defined.

Capital Projects – Bond

- Bond Costs incurred through September was \$6,400,375 and are as follows:
 - Purchase of Rivermont Properties - \$2,663,580
 - IT Network Upgrades - \$89,907
 - Sea Lion Exhibit - \$302,935
 - New Entrances - \$99,444
 - Children's Garden - \$20,177
 - Rivermont Parking Lot - \$10,233
 - Other Bond Costs - \$3,214,099 (There was some discussion about the details of this line item. Masewicz left the room and prepared a detailed report to the satisfaction of the Commission.)

Bond Issue Projects Update – Commissioner Stamps asked Krantz to review the status of the various bond issue projects.

- **Parking/Access** – Krantz reported that plans to relocate most of the Zoo's administrative and support functions into the 500 Rivermont building are being revisited. Given the overall poor condition of the various mechanical systems in the building as well as other issues, it may be that the original plan to keep the front, two-story portion of the 400 Rivermont building is the best option. Plans are also well underway to relocate the Zoo entrance to the employee/service entrance (Gate 8) in February.
- **Zoo Projects** – Krantz reviewed the status of the new entrance, grizzly/otter and sea lion exhibits. A planning session was held on October 15-16, 2013 with the

design and construction team to specifically address these three projects. Three members of the Commission attended part of the session. In general, the entrance, grizzly/otter and sea lion exhibits are on schedule and, at this time, are slightly over budget. However, the cost estimate provided by Rogers was based on schematic designs. Those designs have since been revised and a new cost estimate will soon be available.

- CSX Tunnels – Since the last meeting of the Commission, schematic plans for the three tunnels have been submitted to CSX. CSX responded with a list of additional questions motivated by the fact that they view this section of the track as “hot,” meaning that between 3 and 5 *scheduled* trains pass each day. In addition to the scheduled trains, there are several additional unscheduled trains each day. Once these questions are answered, a conference call will be arranged between all interested parties.

Penny Sales Tax – Krantz noted that he mailed the Commission’s official request for funds through the Richland County Transportation Penny Sales Tax on October 2nd. As requested by the County’s transportation director, the request outlined the need for the funds as well as matters related to funding. He noted that he was disappointed to learn that it will be next summer before the first round of projects is ranked. Krantz also noted that he met on Monday with Natalie Britt, another member of the Transportation Penny Advisory Committee.

- Children’s Garden – Work continues to progress on the children’s garden project. Project architects are primarily concentrating on DHEC requirements related to the interactive stream. This is a major issue and will impact the final cost of the project.

Chief Operating Officer’s Report

- Boo at the Zoo – Stringfellow reported that the 2013 Boo at the Zoo promotion will begin tomorrow night. He brought up a live view of the Boo at the Zoo page on the Zoo’s website and reviewed the online sales policy.

Chief Executive Officer’s Report

- River Alliance Meeting – Mike Dawson and John McArthur, executive director and chair of the board of the River Alliance, recently met with Mayor Steve Benjamin to discuss the status of the Zoo portion of the Three Rivers Greenway. Apparently little progress was made in that meeting with respect to the City’s view of this project as a priority.
- Philip Mullen Loan – Krantz was pleased to report that one of the Zoo’s longest-serving volunteers, Phillip Mullen, recently made an indefinite loan of a work of art to the Botanical Garden Visitor’s Center. Mullen is a retired USC art professor and an accomplished artist. His works are collectible and can be found all over the world. The painting is quite large and fills an entire wall in the Visitor’s Center foyer.
- Patrick the Gorilla – Krantz reported that Patrick the gorilla arrived safely at Riverbanks from the Dallas Zoo on Friday, October 4th. Patrick is a 24-year-old male gorilla that was hand-raised at the Bronx Zoo and as a result has had difficulty interacting with other gorillas. Due to a press release issued by the

Dallas Zoo four weeks ago, the story of Patrick's socialization became an international media sensation.

Executive Session

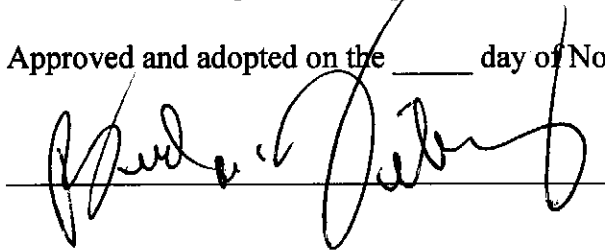
The Commission went into Executive Session to review one contractual and one personnel matter.

Following Executive Session, Tibshrary moved, Bartlett seconded, m/c unanimous to accept the proposal of SSA to manage the Commission's group sales function. This would be implemented by a reduction in force of the Commission's two sales' employees, but implementation is contingent on those employees' acceptance of the plan.

The meeting was adjourned.

The undersigned secretary of the Riverbanks Park Commission certifies that the above is a full, true and correct copy of the minutes of a regular meeting of the Commission, duly called and held in the manner provided in the by-laws of the Commission, on 17 October 2013, at which a quorum was present.

Approved and adopted on the _____ day of November, 2013.


Secretary