

**IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION  
STRATEGIC PLANNING  
TASK FORCE MEETING**

Saluda Shoals Park - River Center

March 9, 2009

6:00pm

Task Force Members Attending: J.B. Brown, Julia Lee, Jimmy Addison, Lynn Willis, Stan Shealy, Nickie Dickson, Gary Reinhart, Lee Parker, George Duke, David Edwards, John Holladay, Glenn King, Cynthia Robinson, Barbara Willm, Danny Brabham, David Wright

Task Force Members Unable to Attend: Steve Gantt

Non-Members Attending: Irene Tyson, Elizabeth Taylor, Eve Mittendorf, Jack Terrell, Jim Wellman, John Cantey, Belinda Rhodes, Jay Downs, Jeanette Wells

At 6:00pm Irene Tyson welcomed guests and asked for a motion to approve minutes.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY JIMMY ADDISON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY DANNY BRABHAM.**

Discussion occurred regarding correction to the minutes. It was concluded the minutes are approved as presented. George Duke communicated that despite what the current financial people say, we cannot count on growth plus CPI forever. Mr. Duke also requested the following comment be added for the record from the February 23, 2009 task force meeting: "Assuming that your taxes/revenues will go up 3% plus CPI is not a good assumption. We are in a major recession; home values are going down; the reassessment in 2010 will reduce the values of houses and we will not get 3% or CPI. You need to be prepared for both sides."

**VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.**

**MEETING SUMMARY: DRAFT, from March 9, 2009 Task Force meeting**

The following is a summary of the discussion during the March 9 Task Force Meeting. Elizabeth Taylor gave a brief history of ICRC funding and appealed to the Task Force to truly consider the market served by the Commission facilities and programs. The operations of Crooked Creek Park, Seven Oaks Park and Saluda Shoals Park are funding through a business model that relies less on tax dollars (42%) and more on user fees, grants and other funding sources (56%). If the ICRC were to limit access to its services, programs and facilities, the funding for operations could be jeopardized. As stated, "You can't put the genie back in the bottle... you can't close the boundaries of the district." Elizabeth asked the Task Force to determine what the community needs in the next ten years. Once this is determined, a strategy will be developed to meet these needs. She asked not to get bogged down in in-district vs. out-of-district.

While the legislation created a district to serve those in the district, the district truly serves the community, regardless of political borders. The financial support from those outside of the district allows the Commission to provide quality programs and facilities. If the borders are closed, the Commission will look different and will have to be funded differently. A comment was made that it may be time to amend the Act that created the ICRC to better reflect the market served.

Elizabeth has had conversations with potential partners (private and public) who are interested in working with the ICRC to serve the market. Talks have begun with the Richland County Recreation Commission and the owners of the Plex – these are positive steps to building strong partnerships. These conversations are happening due to the strategic master planning process.

Danny Brabham defined the Task Force purpose succinctly: to determine *who* we serve, *what* we will provide, and *where* we will do it. It was suggested that Task Force should not determine how to fund the priorities. This is the responsibility of the Commission members.

George Duke questioned whether we should focus on needs or wants. He believes that we don't *need* any of the recommended programs or facilities... we just *want* them. However, J.B. Brown stated that if we *want* to be the kind of community we claim we are through our values, then we *need* these programs and facilities. The Task Force concurred.

The Task Force then began to confirm the following points.

### **Market**

Discussion occurred regarding defining the market to include regional, multi-county and multi-community. The Task Force agreed on the following as the market for Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission:

The Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission serves a regional market in the Midlands of South Carolina through programs that attract participants from the district as well as surrounding towns and counties and special events that attract people from throughout the State.

### **Community Values**

Discussion occurred regarding senior programs. George Duke inquired if ICRC receives federal subsidies for senior meals and is it included in senior programs. Elizabeth Taylor stated, yes - federal subsidies are received and used for senior meals and transportation and is part of the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. George Duke inquired if there are two areas of senior support. Elizabeth Taylor stated, yes, there are recreational services and social support services.

Those who live within the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission and those who participate in its programs cherish a high quality of life as guided through these core community values:

- Safe and accessible recreation
- Health and wellness for all residents with particular focus on youth development and senior programs and services
- Preservation of green space
- Emphasis on the Arts

### **Priority Program Needs and Wants**

George Duke communicated that the survey states only 4% of the people are unsatisfied; why do you need anything more? David Edwards communicated that the task force cannot conclude everything from the survey. Jimmy Addison stated it is only one piece of the information provided; the other sources of information should be considered. Mr. Edwards also stated he did not agree with Mr. Duke's comments; his experience is the current fields are at capacity and users have shared complaints regarding the lack of facilities. Glenn King stated the survey is an indicator where people's interests are. George Duke stated there is 3.9% growth in Chapin and less in Irmo; people are satisfied; where do you go from there? Lee Parker communicated the

facilities are full; you can't get a racquetball court, basketball court, baseball field and if you want to run this agency like a business and you want to make money stop arguing about ifs (growth, etc.) and decide where and what you want to build; that is why the task force is here. Discussion occurred regarding current facility usage, full or near-full facility capacity and the impact on current programs as a result, i.e., team sports - football, soccer, softball, baseball. The Task Force agreed on the following program priorities:

- Team Sports
- Senior Programs
- Aquatics
- Youth Activities
- The Arts

### **Priority Facility Needs and Wants**

Discussion occurred regarding sharing facilities between the schools, Richland Parks and Recreation Commission and Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. The Task Force agreed on the following facility priorities:

- Multi-purpose outdoor fields
- Aquatics Center
- Lower Saluda Greenway and trails throughout the district
- Multi-purpose indoor/outdoor facility: outdoor sports fields (soccer, baseball, softball, football, tennis and other team sports such as lacrosse), gymnasium for indoor sports, fitness center and walking/running track
- Nature's Theatre – outdoor performance venue at Saluda Shoals Park

### **Task Force Assignments**

The Task Force responses to the assignments are due by **Friday, March 20**, to Eve Mittendorf at [emittendorf@icrc.net](mailto:emittendorf@icrc.net). Responses do not have to be long – be as brief as you want, but please share your opinion on each. Assignment 3 is a new one out of the March 9 meeting.

1. Define the user groups and their program needs. (Note: a program is a broad category that can encompass many activities. For example, wellness is a program that has the following activities: aerobics, yoga, Weight Watchers®, water aerobics. Youth competitive sports are a program with baseball, tennis, soccer, and softball.)
  - Seniors
    - Active Seniors
    - Elder Care Services
  - Youth
  - Families
2. Define the different types of parks and benefits: 1) active recreation, 2) neighborhood, 3) trails and green space, and 4) schools.
3. Describe the benefits of the priority facilities: What will the community gain from these facilities? Why should the Commission invest in these facilities? Who will benefit and who are potential partners in building and operating these facilities?

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.