

Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission Work Session Meeting

March 24, 2021
Crooked Creek Park
6:30 PM

Members Attending: Bill Harmon, Gary Boyd, Akil Ross, Tim Stewart, Laura Huggins

Non-Members Attending: Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf

Mr. Smyers shared that Ernie Boughman with Toole Design Group will present the Lower Saluda Greenway Feasibility Study in General Session. Chairman Harmon stated that the presentation is for information only. Mark Smyers stated that any official action to accept would happen in the April 2021 Commission meeting.

Mr. Smyers reviewed the budget amendment. Mark Smyers shared the budget through June 30, 2021; rebuilding the budget began in January; staff worked to build the budget in anticipation of coming out of the COVID period; staff feel this is a very accurate picture for year end. Mr. Smyers shared the budget includes a 3% COL for staff; this increase also helps to keep staff fairly within their salary range and helps the agency competitively retain good staff. Chairman Harmon asked for the Executive Director to share the reduction staff took in 2020. Mr. Smyers communicated that staff took a 20% reduction in hours and pay from late May through October 2020.

Mark Smyers also shared that in June two employees retired; a maintenance supervisor in Chapin and foreman in Irmo; staff did not rehire for the two positions; the budget amendment includes rehiring for the maintenance supervisor and foreman in 2021. Commissioner Stewart communicated that \$1M was lost in rental and afterschool and part-time wages were dropped. Mr. Smyers stated yes; full-time staff are filling part-time positions. Vice Chairman Boyd inquired if the therapeutic recreation (TR) program was impacted. Mark Smyers stated yes; the TR full-time staff member is working part-time doing casework for staff and families. Vice Chairman Boyd inquired on how many full-time staff members are included for re-hire in the amended budget. Mr. Smyers stated two maintenance positions; no full-time TR positions at this time. Commissioner Stewart inquired if there were any other TR resources in the community. Mark Smyers shared that staff see a continued therapeutic recreation need in our community.

Commissioner Ross inquired on the 300% change in the general fund miscellaneous line item. Mr. Smyers communicated that line item included a settlement received from Dominion for \$12K and an insurance settlement liability reimbursement. Commissioner Stewart noted that an amendment of the minutes should be made in General Session to reflect consistency in member status for Laura Huggins. In the January 2021 General Session minutes Laura Huggins is noted as a Non-Member Attending and in the Executive Session minutes she is noted as a Member Attending.

Vice Chairman Boyd inquired if a 3% cost of living (COL) is a typical percent that staff receive. Mr. Smyers stated no; last year staff received no increase; the agency typically does not give a cost of living (COL) raise; a typical year would include a merit opportunity up to 3%.

Mr. Smyers shared the short-term bond resolution; signatures are needed once approved. Discussion occurred regarding cost savings in doing one issuance and the list of capital items the bond would cover. Commissioner Ross inquired if the vehicles were fleet trucks. Mr. Smyers communicated the vehicles would be purchased off State contract.

Mark Smyers shared an update on the PARD grant; this year and next year's PARD grant was intended to be combined as the match for the LWCF project to renovate and improve the splash pad at Saluda Shoals Park. Due to the delays in approving the LWCF; the grant timelines no longer match up; staff is recommending combining the next two upcoming PARD grants as the LWCF match and utilize the most time sensitive PARD for Melvin Park splash pad and tennis improvements. Discussion occurred regarding parking at Melvin Park and park hours at Crooked Creek Park.

Mr. Smyers shared that a presentation on Leo's Landing is scheduled for the April 2021 Commission meeting. Mr. Smyers shared that the Finance Director, Jessica Johnson, will be leaving in April to move to the Zoo. Discussion occurred regarding coverage, requesting the current Finance Director's assistance in the transition and the benefits of an ongoing partnership with another special purpose district (SPD). Mark Smyers gave an update on the parking lot expansion at Crooked Creek Park.

Respectfully submitted,
Eve Mittendorf
Recording Secretary
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION

Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission

GENERAL SESSION

March 24, 2021
Crooked Creek Park
7:00 PM

Members Attending

Bill Harmon, Gary Boyd, Akil Ross, Tim Stewart, Laura Huggins

Non-Members Attending

Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf, Jay Downs, John Cantey, Jessica Johnson, Jason White, Ernie Boughman, Ray Jones

Bill Harmon called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Chairman Harmon delivered the invocation. Guests were welcomed.

I. REQUIREMENTS OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

The news media was notified of the meeting; it was posted on the website and a notice and agenda was posted at the park sites one week prior to the meeting.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY TIM STEWART TO AMEND THE JANUARY 27, 2021 MINUTES TO INCLUDE CONSISTENCY IN COMMISSIONER LAURA HUGGINS' ATTENDANCE IN THE GENERAL SESSION AND EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES. COMMISSIONER BOYD SECONDED. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

III. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

A. Lower Saluda Greenway Feasibility Study – Ernie Boughman, Toole Design Group

Mr. Boughman thanked the Commission for the opportunity to present an update of the Lower Saluda Greenway Feasibility Study and shared appreciation for the collaborative relationship with Mark Smyers, the COG, Land Group South, the advisory committee members from Dominion, Shaw, SCDOT, River Alliance and the Federal Highway Administration. Mr. Boughman shared the project approach, which included public engagement, technical analysis, opportunities, constraints, understanding and design. Ernie Boughman communicated that Toole Design Group was very pleased with the public participation; there were 3065 individuals who participated in the process.

Mr. Boughman shared the Greenway alignment with existing bikeway networks, proposed paved trails, boardwalks, bridges, and trail heads; additionally, there were design considerations such as continuity, visually coherent greenway direction, priorities and physical separation between Greenway users and adjacent roadways. Discussion occurred regarding cross sections, 12' trails, boardwalks and bridges. Mr. Boughman shared long-term connector destinations, neighborhood bikeways, shared lanes, shared use paths, bicycle and pedestrian bridges as well as preferred Greenway alignments. Discussion occurred regarding timeline of construction, phases, and cost of project.

IV. STAFF REPORTS

Staff reports were submitted as presented.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. FY 20/21 Budget Amendment

A MOTION WAS MADE BY AKIL ROSS TO ACCEPT THE FY 20/21 GENERAL FUND AND SPECIAL REVENUE FUND BUDGET AMENDMENT AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY GARY BOYD. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. FY 20/21 Short Term Bond Resolution

A MOTION WAS MADE BY AKIL ROSS TO ACCEPT THE AMENDED SHORT TERM BOND ISSUANCE AND LIST AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY TIM STEWART. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. 2020 PARD Grant Application

A MOTION WAS MADE BY AKIL ROSS TO ACCEPT STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION ON THE 2020 PARD GRANT APPLICATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS OF THE MELVIN PARK SPLASH PAD AND TENNIS COURTS. SECONDED BY TIM STEWART. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Smyers thanked Ernie Boughman for presenting the Lower Saluda Greenway Feasibility Study; the Toole Design Group has been a great asset in developing this plan. Mark Smyers shared that the Toole Design Group walked through a very healthy process, this plan will help the agency in moving forward in creating an accomplishable funding strategy, and ultimately to completion of this important project.

Mr. Smyers also thanked Ray Jones, with Parker Poe, for coming to the Commission meeting and being available for questions; the short-term bond issuance program has been a fantastic resource in helping ICRC meet capital needs across the district over the past 4 years.

Mr. Smyers shared that the agency is not out of the woods, but a workable path forward was starting to take shape; the budget amendment that was reviewed and passed tonight is a workable path forward; I feel confident in our current operational scaling to reset our budget to this new plan. Mark Smyers stated that it is not typical to present a budget amendment in March; however, it is an important step for the agency's recovery to regular operations. Mr. Smyers communicated that staff are not back to normal, but there is a regular rhythm and function to the team and the budget amendment will help greatly in equipping staff with the tools and plan to move forward through the remainder of the fiscal year.

Mark Smyers invited the Commission to the Saluda Shoals Foundation annual Shuckin on the Shoals Oyster Roast at Saluda Shoals Park on April 17th; this is one of the primary fundraisers for the Foundation. Mr. Smyers shared that the ICRC athletic team is busy

putting together plans to host the Annual Chase Loveless Athletic Scholarship Golf Tournament on April 23rd, both are great events and staff is excited to be able to offer them once again.

VII. COMMISSION RESPONSE

Chairman Harmon thanked the Executive Director and staff; it is good to see activities, the jazz series at Saluda Shoals Park and the Easter egg hunts for the children across the district. Commissioner Stewart shared appreciation for the feasibility study and presentation; shared appreciation to Mark Smyers and team for all their hard work. Vice Chairman Boyd thanked staff for all their hard work. Commissioner Ross thanked the staff for their quick response to the community and the public during these tough times. Commissioner Ross shared appreciation to Jessica Johnson for her expertise and dedication. Commissioner Ross echoed Mark Smyers comments regarding the importance of the Chase Loveless Memorial Scholarship Fund, which provided over 600 kids last year with the opportunity to play sports; thank you for making this an important part of the agency's mission. Commissioner Huggins thanked Mark Smyers and staff for their dedication and for ensuring things continued to run smoothly; thank you for all you do. Chairman Harmon thanked Jessica Johnson for the transition over to the new financial system, the successful audit, and the budgetary considerations through COVID; we wish you the best.

Respectfully submitted,
Eve Mittendorf
Recording Secretary
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION