

**IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
PHONE CONFERENCE  
Saluda Shoals Park  
Administration Building  
December 19, 2017  
5:00pm**

Members Participating

John Sowards, Bill Harmon, Tim Stewart, Bruce Loveless, Gary Boyd

Non-Members Participating

Mark Smyers, Sidney Rohrig

Chairman Sowards called the meeting to order at 5:00p.m.

**I. REQUIREMENTS OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

In accordance with the 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.

**II. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY JOHN SOWARDS TO REMAIN IN REGULAR PUBLIC SESSION TO DISCUSS A CONTRACTUAL MATTER. SECONDED BY GARY BOYD. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mark Smyers gave summary of property donation from Mungo family – 118 acres, what was Rawls Creek Golf Course, additional parcel of land with potential future use. Examples of why it would be beneficial: looking forward to Greenway Trail, lies in proposed conceptual design. In addition to land donation, Mungo will contribute \$25,000 a year, for up to five years, to offset expenses. Mungo asks we enter into a good faith agreement with Carolina Wildlife Care to relocate to old clubhouse building at Rawls Creek property. If an agreement is not made, Mungo will donate an additional \$10,000 to demo the building. Mark Smyers states this could be a great opportunity for this community. Additional green space at this property lines up with our Strategic Master Plan. There is potential for connection to the Greenway Trail, this may not be an isolated trail system, could tie in to what we have. Mark Smyers recommends we accept donation.

John Sowards asks details of property, describes it as becoming a linear walking park. Mark Smyers clarifies we do not have funds to maintain property as golf course, nor is that the intent. John Sowards opposed to golf course, accepts it as linear space – only willing to support linear walking, natural habitat, green space. John Sowards states he would never support a golf course.

John Sowards asks about Carolina Wildlife agreement, leasing the building for \$1.00 a year. Carolina Wildlife would be responsible for upkeep. If there is a failure to come to an agreement, Mungo will donate \$10,000 to demolish building. Mark Smyers explains the details of agreement, listed in staff action memo. There is discussion about adding a zero obligation in agreement. John Sowards states that we do not want to the building, we will take the building under the condition that Carolina Wildlife leases it from us, if Carolina Wildlife does not lease it under the terms we agree to, Mungo will donate funds to demolish.

John Sowards talks about a community member asking about the possibility of operating a driving range, would consider leasing area in the future, but it is not a condition of this agreement. Mark Smyers confirms that is an opportunity we can look at, but it is not a condition of this deal, it is a potential way to offset costs with a revenue source. John Sowards asks Bruce Loveless if this conversation matches up with his conversation with Mungo. Bruce Loveless confirms it does.

John Sowards asks for questions/comments from Bill Harmon – feels this is consistent with our mission, wants to note this will be a greenway, we are not obligated with building. Tim Stewart – wants to discuss cart paths; from memory, cart paths are not all connected, may need to look at sidewalk type construction, what type of heavy lifting needs to be done besides landscaping. Other than stated concern, Tim Stewart is comfortable with agreement. John Sowards explains there is no capital expenditure plan for this, asks Mark Smyers if a potential trail system (like Saluda Shoals Park) will be budgeted for in the future, Mark Smyers replies yes. Mark Smyers also responds to Tim Stewart's concern of cart paths that most of the paths are relatively continuous. Tim Stewart asks if there is an obligation to use the \$25,000 annual donation or could it be "banked" and used the following year. John Sowards states this \$25,000 is to offset out of pocket costs, it is an "up-to scenario", if only \$20,000 is needed, that is what Mungo will donate.

Discussion occurs about two bridges that need to be redone that connect the roughly 4.7 miles (unofficial distance, mapped by GIS) of trails. The bridges were washed out and have not been replaced. Mark Smyers contacted a company that quoted \$15,000-\$25,000 with a lot of unknowns, per bridge. Mark Smyers continues that this could be looked at as two separate walking areas, bridges would have to compete with other capital projects down the road; it's not a complete loss of the property if there are no bridges. A question was raised if the \$25,000 could go towards capital expense, Mark Smyers responds that this would not be an option because the funds are for expenses related to maintenance. John Sowards says the bridge expense will be for discussion in the future, but this does not change opinion on accepting. John Sowards asks for comments from Gary Boyd – comfortable with direction, wants to ensure the \$25,000 will take care of the maintenance. Mark Smyers states he believes it will, looking at current mowing contract and applying it to 4.7 miles of trail at donated property, trash pick-up, tree care, our expense for this natural area with minimal maintenance, until we get on the property and see, the \$25,000 would cover, but that does not cover unexpected costs.

Concerns arise about accruing out of pocket expenses. John Sowards asks if the maintenance costs exceed the \$25,000, we could stop and possess this as green space, which is not the preference. There are only 5 years of funds coming from Mungo, then we have to figure out how to pay for this. John Sowards asks about tree maintenance and if the trees have been evaluated. Mark Smyers states there has not been an arborist to evaluate the trees yet, Mark states he saw a few trees that were a cause for concern that need to be taken care of prior to opening this space to the public, there was not a systematic issue with the trees, only isolated problems. Bruce Loveless advises to put tree costs in the deal agreement. John Sowards says the removal of all dead trees should be in the agreement.

There are recommendations to leave the bridges alone for 5 years, after Mungo is no longer giving funds. John Sowards asks who removes the trees in Saluda Shoals Park, Mark Smyers answers that it is dependent on the job, there is a contractor we work with as needed. John Sowards asks Mark Smyers to contact tree contractor and give an estimate for removal to add to agreement. John Sowards agrees the land donation should be accepted under the condition of tree removal, the trees need to be carefully examined. Bruce Loveless agrees the language of tree removal needs to be added to the bill. John Sowards wants to ensure safety of all patrons in our parks.

Mark Smyers received a draft copy for one of the parcels of land, sent to Ward Bradley to begin review, if things progress. John Sowards states the deadline of 12.31.17. John Sowards is comfortable with special warranty deeds, as long as it is coming from Mungo. John Sowards thanks Mark Smyers involving the agency attorney, Ward Bradley.

A MOTION IS MADE BY BILL HARMON TO APPROVE THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO ACCEPT THE MUNGO LAND DONATION (FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE CLUB AT RAWLS CREEK). SECONDED BY TIM STEWART. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

There being no further business, the Commission adjourned the Special Called Meeting at 5:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sidney Rohrig  
Recording Secretary  
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION