

Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission WORK SESSION MINUTES

January 26, 2022
Seven Oaks Park
6:30pm

Members Attending: Bill Harmon, Gary Boyd, Akil Ross, Michael Cromer

Members Absent: Laura Huggins

Non-Members Attending: Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf

Mark Smyers presented an overview of the agenda items as follows:

Mark Smyers shared that agenda item V.D. FY 21/22 budget timetable should read FY 22/23 budget timetable; Mark Baker will present on the 2021 Holiday Lights event. Mr. Smyers also shared that staff are applying for an RTP grant; the focus of the grant is for the trails at Mungo Park. Mark Smyers stated that staff are applying for a PARD grant; staff originally was allocating the 19/20 PARD monies along with Foundation funds for the 50% match for the LWCF grant funds totaling \$250,000 for the renovation of the Saluda Shoals Park splash pad. Mr. Smyers shared that FY 19/20 monies from PARD were at jeopardy of receiving due to delays and a strategic decision was made to direct those FY 19/20 monies towards Melvin Park for improvements at tennis, a water fountain and splash pad renovations. Mark Smyers communicated that the FY 22/23 preliminary budget is presented each year; Lexington County requires a preliminary budget from the agency in February; they are primarily looking for a balanced budget and what is anticipated in taxes. Mr. Smyers stated the agenda includes approval of the budget timeline.

Mark Smyers communicated that the short term bond program was approved at Lexington County Council; the program is an eight year \$6.5M general obligation bond authorization; this is for capital re-investment over the next eight years. Mr. Smyers stated that the auditors are anticipating completion of the audit by February and will present in March; the delay of the audit was due to having a new financial system, unprecedented year due to COVID, and a new Finance Director. Mark Smyers shared that the two bridges at Mungo Park are in; there is still concrete work to be done with the goal to be substantially complete in two weeks.

Mr. Smyers shared an update on the inclusive playground; the anticipated completion date is the end of April; staff will work with Leo's Pride on a ribbon cutting event. Mark Smyers communicated that staff met with the Lexington County Administrator to discuss COVID Relief Funds and what the opportunity may be to access those resources to fund the design and engineering of the greenway; this was a \$1.97M ask; the County Administrator was supportive and recommended submitting a grant for those monies. Mr. Smyers also shared that a premium pay grant was also submitted; Lexington County employees received premium pay monies for the period of January 2020 – March 2021; staff took the same formula used by Lexington County and applied for premium pay monies for ICRC full-time active staff that worked during that same period. Discussion occurred regarding the timing of notification if awarded, communication to staff, and how the distribution would occur.

Commissioner Boyd inquired on the controls that have been put in place at entrance and exit points at Mungo Park. Mark Smyers shared that park rules are posted communicating that the park is open from sun-up to sun-down and the neighbors have been notified to contact the police department to address any issues. Mr. Smyers communicated that staff met with Lexington County police department regarding public parking along Coldstream Drive and some loitering that was occurring.

Mr. Smyers inquired if the Commission wanted staff to continue to mail Commission packages or is it acceptable to receive an email with the Commission package attached; as well as, providing a copy of the package at the Commission meeting; there were no objections to emailing and providing a copy of the Commission package to each Commission member at the meetings.

Chairman Harmon communicated that the agenda includes election of officers; discussion occurred regarding Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary.

Respectfully submitted,
Eve Mittendorf
Recording Secretary
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION

Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission
GENERAL SESSION

January 26, 2022
Seven Oaks Park
7:00pm

Members Attending: Bill Harmon, Gary Boyd, Akil Ross, Michael Cromer

Member Absent: Laura Huggins

Non-Members Attending: Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf, Jay Downs, John Cantey, Mark Baker, Alfred Comfort, Andrea Harris

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 GARY BOYD TO ACCEPT THE OCTOBER 27, 2021 AND JANUARY 19, 2022 MINUTES AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY AKIL ROSS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

III. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MICHAEL CROMER TO APPROVE THE CURRENT SLATE OF OFFICERS REMAIN THE SAME FOR 2022: BILL HARMON – CHAIRMAN, GARY BOYD – VICE CHAIRMAN, AKIL ROSS – SECRETARY. SECONDED BY AKIL ROSS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

IV. STAFF REPORTS

Mark Baker, Saluda Shoals Park Director, presented 2021 Holiday Lights' event results. Mr. Baker communicated that 2021 was a very successful year; the community had no negative comments; total number of cars was 25,963; this is the most vehicles the agency has had outside of the COVID 2020 year; there were 103,733 visitors; the most vehicles in one night was 1484. Mark Baker shared that Holiday Lights generated \$819,637 in total revenue and operating expenses were down; part of the revenue increase came from increasing the per car rate from \$20 to \$25, which included activities. Mr. Baker communicated that Chairman's Lighting was a big success; a lot of positive feedback was given on moving the event to the tennis building on the east side of the park. Mark Baker also communicated that the Lexington County police department shared that the processing of visitors/vehicles into the event made a noticeable difference; there was little to no back-up on St. Andrews. Mr. Baker shared that the design and layout of Holiday Lights changed, which included a larger space for dinosaur land, 5 new RGB displays in the wetland area, staff contracted the

concession with Tin Kan, and added music throughout the entire Environmental Education Center. The contract with Tin Kan resulted in the agency receiving \$24K and the continued partnership with the CATE center resulted in a new dinosaur display. Mark Baker also shared that staff were able to host the Fort Jackson Soldier Layover Program with food and fun; this is a great partnership and a program that everyone enjoys.

Commissioner Ross commended Mark Baker and staff on a great job and inquired if staff noticed people from out-of-town. Mark Baker replied yes; people are driving 2-3 hours consistently; mostly from Georgia and North Carolina. Chairman Harmon stated that the improvements of the displays, the layout, and the programming of the event get better each year; the community appreciates what staff have done to avoid traffic problems on St. Andrews. Chairman Harmon thanked staff for what they do to make this event special and for providing the troops an outlet during the holiday season. Michael Cromer shared appreciation to staff. Vice Chairman Boyd thanked staff for all their hard work.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. FY 22/23 RTP Grant Approval

Mark Smyers shared that the RTP grant requires a \$25K match.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY AKIL ROSS TO APPROVE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION TO APPLY FOR THE FY 22/23 RTP GRANT; THIS REQUIRES A \$25K MATCH TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FY 22/23 BUDGET. SECONDED BY MICHAEL CROMER.

Vice Chairman Boyd inquired if the \$25K obligated the agency budgetarily. Chairman Harmon stated the obligation is contingent upon receiving the grant.

VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

B. FY 21/22 PARD Grant Approval

Mark Smyers shared that the PARD grant will be identified as a 21/22 grant for \$74K; a 25% match is required totaling \$18,651.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY GARY BOYD TO APPROVE THE FY 21/22 PARD GRANT. SECONDED BY MICHAEL CROMER. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

C. PRELIMINARY FY 22/23 BUDGET FOR LEXINGTON COUNTY

Mark Smyers shared that the preliminary budget to Lexington County includes the tax budget or Fund 10 budget, which is the portion of the budget the agency is required to provide to Lexington County. Chairman Harmon communicated that the preliminary budget represents a balanced budget and a 4.85% increase.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MICHAEL CROMER TO ACCEPT THE PRELIMINARY FY 22/23 BUDGET AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY AKIL ROSS.

Commissioner Ross inquired on the revenue side of the budget there is a 15% increase, except for local taxes; how does that equate to a total revenue of 4.8%. Mark Smyers

shared it is a weighted average; taxes are collected and associated with the mileage; some line items are as small as \$90.00 which may be a 15% increase from previous year, but a small dollar value.

VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

D. FY 22/23 – BUDGET TIMETABLE

A MOTION WAS MADE BY AKIL ROSS TO APPROVE THE FY 22/23 BUDGET TIMETABLE. SECONDED BY GARY BOYD. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Smyers thanked Mark Baker for the Holiday Lights presentation; the team has done exceptionally well to meet the moment, and very much appreciated. Mark Smyers shared that Holiday Lights is a big deal and has a tremendous impact on the agency and community; staff made a lot of new adjustments. Mr. Smyers shared appreciation to the rangers, Mike Hudson, the maintenance team, and everyone else that was involved in Holiday Lights success; staff deserve a big thank you and job well done.

Mark Smyers communicated that the agency and staff are still traversing through the COVID-19 environment; staff in most situations, have been able to navigate and have a reasonably good handle on; the one area that continues to plague the agency is a shortage in staffing, particularly in part-time roles. Mr. Smyers shared that the lack of available part-time staff is having a significant impact on delivering services in typical fashion. Mark Smyers communicated that full-time staff have stepped up and continue to fill many of the gaps; it will be imperative, looking forward into 2022 that staff continue to find great people to fill these roles.

Mr. Smyers thanked the Commission for all its support in getting the short-term bond program funded once again; the program has become a key component to ICRC's success, and it will have a significant impact over the next 8 years. Mr. Smyers also stated that short-term bond program provides the opportunity to continue to pursue the high standard of quality the ICRC community has come to expect.

VII. COMMISSION RESPONSE

Commissioner Ross thanked Mark Baker for the Holiday Lights presentation and thanked staff for the partnership with the school district and the CATE center. Vice Chairman Boyd thanked Mark Baker for the presentation and shared that the community has had a lot of great things to say about the Holiday Lights event. Vice Chairman Boyd thanked John Cantey for his leadership throughout the community. Commissioner Cromer shared that this was his first meeting, and he is eager to learn; the Saluda Shoals Foundation volunteered at Holiday Lights and enjoyed the experience. Commissioner Cromer communicated that ICRC is always exciting and appreciate all that the staff do to make Holiday Lights happen. Chairman Harmon shared that staff are a blessing and proud to be a part of the organization. Chairman Harmon communicated that the Commission would move into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

The Commission moved into Executive Session at 8:15pm.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY AKIL ROSS TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR APPROXIMATELY 60 MINUTES PURSUANT TO SECTION 30-4-70(A)(1) OF THE CODE OF LAWS FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING PERSONNEL MATTERS. SECONDED BY GARY BOYD. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

The Commission returned to General Session at 9:15pm.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY AKIL ROSS TO APPROVE THE SELECTED EMPLOYMENT ITEM DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION. SECONDED BY GARY BOYD. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

There being no further business the General Session meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Eve Mittendorf
Recording Secretary
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION

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EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING

January 26, 2022

Seven Oaks Park

8:16pm

Members Attending: Bill Harmon, Gary Boyd, Akil Ross, Michael Cromer

Members Absent: Laura Huggins

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MICHAEL CROMER TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION.
SECONDED BY GARY BOYD. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

The Commission returned to General Session at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Akil Ross

IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION