

Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission Work Session Meeting

March 27, 2019
Crooked Creek Park
6:00 PM

Non-Members Attending: Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf

Members Attending: Bill Harmon, Bruce Loveless, Tim Stewart, John Sowards, Gary Boyd

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

Discussion occurred regarding bridges and property lines at Mungo Park. Mr. Smyers shared the evaluation of a used bridge opportunity vs a new bridge; an engineer was hired to investigate the best choice; the engineer recommended a new manufactured structure, which meets all engineering and safety requirements. Mark Smyers also communicated that an RFP was publicized to select an engineer to manage the purchase and installation of two pre-fabricated bridges for Mungo Park.

Mr. Smyers distributed a document with the critical dates for the ParkVision 2020-2030 strategic plan; including a kick-off meeting scheduled on April 9, 2019 for Task Force and Focus Group committee members; the needs assessment survey will run from April 10 – May 9, 2019. Additionally, the marketing department is using various forms of communication including social media, posting at parks, Constant Contact emails, and CCTV. Mark Smyers shared that the three focus groups are scheduled to have three meetings in May and the Task Force meetings are scheduled for June; Clemson University will be facilitating all the meetings as well as the needs assessment survey. The final document for Commission review and approval will be submitted at the September 2019 regularly scheduled Commission meeting. Vice Chairman Loveless recommended that the agency's critics as well friends should be included in the focus and/or task force committees. Recommendations were made to include several citizens, business leaders, school district staff, public safety/Sheriff's department, and representatives from the Irmo and Chapin Mayor's offices. Discussion occurred regarding the focus of the strategic plan on programming areas such as youth development, seniors, and coaches. Chairman Harmon inquired on the current trends and growth on both sides of the district. Mr. Smyers shared that Central Midland Council of Governments will provide growth information; discussion with staff and Clemson University continues regarding trends.

Discussion occurred regarding the Lower Saluda Greenway project and funding opportunities from various public and private entities; funding for feasibility studies were discussed. Mr. Smyers shared that the Greenway project supports the current strategic plan and public request for trails.

Mark Smyers shared an update on the inclusive playground; the construction continues and the estimated timeline for completion is end of July 2019. Discussion occurred regarding timing of bridge installation, property easements, and Commission approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Eve Mittendorf
Recording Secretary
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION

Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission
GENERAL SESSION

March 27, 2019
Crooked Creek Park
7:00 pm

Members Attending

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

Non-Members Attending

Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf, Jay Downs, John Cantey, Jim Wellman, Jason White, Dolly Patton, Marty Bridges

Chairman Harmon called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and 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

Chairman Harmon submitted the January 23, 2019 minutes as presented; there being no objections the minutes were approved.

III. STAFF REPORTS

John Cantey, Recreation Superintendent, shared an update on the Park School Agreement. Mr. Cantey stated he met with school district staff to review the park school agreement; the following changes were made: removal of rental fees for both ICRC and Lexington Richland School District 5, use of school properties for tournaments was added, as well as fitness/walking passes at the community centers for employees and retirees of the school district. Additionally, the Park School Agreement includes annual renewal for up to four years. Commissioner Sowards thanked John Cantey for the renewal and common commitment; the agreement signals a harmonious collaboration between ICRC and Lexington Richland School District 5. Vice Chairman Loveless concurred. Mr. Cantey shared that a tentative business plan has been completed on the Meech House; the afternoon safari added three new sites, which brings the agency up to eight total afterschool sites; four of which were requested by the principals of the schools. John Cantey thanked the afternoon safari coordinator, park directors, front desk staff and afternoon safari staff. Discussion occurred regarding afternoon safari revenues and Commission direction to apply to fund balance. Discussion also occurred regarding needs based programs, the schools, and the qualifications in receiving assistance. Chairman Harmon inquired on the recommendation for the fund balance. Jim Wellman, Finance Director, stated \$1.5M.

Mr. Cantey shared that some of the Seven Oaks Park summer camps are moving to Saluda Shoals Park to create more room for weekly camps; staff are programming over 140 camps in summer safari, therapeutic recreation and extreme teen. John Cantey thanked Ashley Smith for a successful golf tournament; \$18,000 was raised for the Chase Loveless Memorial Scholarship program, which will help approximately 500 kids play in athletic programs. Commission inquired if scholarship dollars can be used for non-athletic participation. John Cantey stated, not at this time. Discussion occurred regarding other resources to assist kids to participate in programs. Commissioner Sowards inquired on the number of baseball participants. John Cantey stated there a dip in baseball numbers. Vice Chairman Loveless inquired on which age group. Mr. Cantey stated mostly 9-10 year olds; kids are moving to travel ball. Discussion occurred regarding travel ball, renting facilities, recreation baseball participation and combating the loss of participation. John Cantey stated that the kids are still in the district, still using agency facilities

and programs, and still playing ball.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Park School Agreement Renewal

Mark Smyers shared that staff is requesting Commission approval on the Park School Agreement as submitted and communicated that the agreement has been reviewed and approved by the School District.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY JOHN SOWARDS TO APPROVE THE PARK SCHOOL AGREEMENT BETWEEN IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION AND LEXINGTON RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT 5 AS OUTLINED AND PRESENTED BY STAFF. SECONDED BY BRUCE LOVELESS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. PARD Grant

Mark Smyers stated that the PARD grant is for a new digital sign board in Chapin; there is a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Town of Chapin and ICRC to fund and support a joint agreement and usage of the electronic sign board.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY JOHN SOWARDS TO APPROVE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION ON THE PARD GRANT; THE GRANT INCLUDES A \$6400 MATCH. SECONDED BY BRUCE LOVELESS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. Easement – CCP Emergency Access

Mark Smyers shared that Great Southern Homes has granted an easement to provide emergency access to Crooked Creek Park; the funding for the emergency access is budgeted and needs to be executed this fiscal year.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY JOHN SOWARDS TO ACCEPT STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION ON AN EASEMENT FOR EMERGENCY ACCESS AT CROOKED CREEK PARK. SECONDED BY BRUCE LOVELESS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mark Smyers shared that the Daddy Daughter Date Nights were huge successes again this year. This year's events were themed after a Paris starry night and 805 participants attended district wide.

March was a big month for the Performing Arts. Children's Theater performed Disney's Beauty and the Beast Jr. and over 4 performances had over 1,400 people in attendance. The Carolina Actors with Special Talents (also known as CAST), performed a very funny ICRC original called "Race to be Rich" on two nights at the Harbison Theater. In all, there were 79 actors on stage for the two productions. Mr. Smyers shared appreciation to the Harbison Theater for donating the space for the two CAST performances.

Mark Smyers stated there were two major fundraising efforts since the last Commission meeting: the first was the Shuckin' on the Shoals Festival, put on by the Saluda Shoals Foundation; the event transitioned to the East side of Saluda Shoals Park at the Tennis Center, and overlooked the construction progress of the Inclusive Playground. A race and relay was added, as well as some adaptations to make it more family friendly. The weather did not cooperate, but the 250 people in attendance didn't seem to mind and still enjoyed the experience. The second event was The Chase Loveless Memorial Scholarship Annual Golf Tournament held on March 15th. Mr. Smyers thanked Commissioner Loveless and the staff for all their efforts in pulling this event

together again; this year's tournament brought in approximately \$18,000 to the Scholarship fund; it means a lot to the agency to be able to provide the scholarship program as a means to remove any financial barrier that could prevent a child from the experience of playing sports.

Mr. Smyers also shared that in the Administrative Services side of the house, the IT Department is busily leading a team through the upgrade a new recreational software, PerfectMind. The team has worked hard to manage this transition and is currently looking at a go-live date in July. This software will be a substantial upgrade, and should provide many efficiency's to our current processes that will aid us in meeting the demands of our patrons in the future. Also in the Administrative Services Branch, the marketing department went through the process of rebuilding our website last year. Since its kick off in July and through December, we have seen over 380,000 hits to our digital footprint overall. If this continues, our virtual destination will begin to rival the patronage of our actual destinations. Additionally, the new analytics provides the ability to review and analyze data to help maximize the agency's online presence.

Mark Smyers communicated that staff will be kicking off the strategic planning process, called ParkVision 2020-2030 in the month of April, and the entire process will run through June. Mr. Smyers stated that he was excited about starting and working through this process with the community; the intent will be to present and adopt a final plan at the September Commission meeting.

In addition, Mr. Smyers recognized the excellence of ICRC's team; at the South Carolina Recreation and Parks Association conference this past November, ICRC was selected and recognized as the recipient of the 2018 Programming Excellence Award for Populations over 30,000. The program that was submitted was the Summer Adventure Squad, which was a partnership between the Lexington County Sheriff's Department, Riverland Hills Baptist Church, and ICRC, with the financial support of the Saluda Shoals Foundation. Through this partnership, staff was able to program several different outdoor recreational activity days last summer for many kids in our community at Saluda Shoals Park. Mark Smyers also shared that for many of the participants, they had not had these types of experiences before and thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to learn new skills and experience nature in a new way.

Lastly, I want to recognize Commissioner Sowards for receiving the Order of the Palmetto Award. The Order of the Palmetto is the state's highest civilian honor awarded to citizens of South Carolina for extraordinary lifetime service and achievements of national or statewide significance. Mr. Smyers congratulated Commissioner Sowards and thanked him for his leadership and service to the community.

VI. COMMISSION RESPONSE

Commissioner Sowards thanked John Cantey for his report and the recognition of the importance of the relationships in the community and thanked Vice Chairman Loveless for initiating and broadening a robust scholarship program. Vice Chairman Loveless echoed Commissioner Sowards remarks and thanked Ashley Smith for all his hard work on the golf tournament. Commissioner Stewart thanked staff for a successful golf tournament and congratulated Commissioner Sowards on receiving the Order of the Palmetto. Chairman Boyd thanked the volunteers at the Seven Oaks Park baseball games. Chairman Harmon thanked Marty Bridges for attending the Commission meeting; thanked John Cantey for his staff report; congratulated Commissioner Sowards and shared his appreciation for Commissioner Sowards' guidance. Chairman Harmon also thanked Mark Smyers for his continued work in building community relationships and agency success.

There being no further business, the Commission adjourned the General Session at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Eve Mittendorf, Recording Secretary
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION