

# Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission

## WORK SESSION MINUTES

September 28, 2022  
Crooked Creek Park  
6:30pm

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

Non-Members Attending: Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf

Mr. Smyers shared an update will be presented in General Session on the Saluda Greenway Trail; the update includes announcing that all funding for the greenway trail has been obtained. Mark Smyers stated that the Central Midlands Guide Share Program, which is a Federally funded program responsible for transportation, will fund \$9.5M for phase III of the trail system; ICRC will be a partner in the process for phase III. Mr. Smyers also shared that staff received an EDA grant as well as the additional \$2M; it was originally a grant for \$1.2M. Commissioner Cromer inquired on the total amount for phase I and II. Mr. Smyers stated \$14.7M plus another \$9.5M for phase III. Mark Smyers communicated that staff have been asked to present an update to Lexington County Council in October. Mark Smyers shared that the feasibility study highlights future growth and is a wonderful resource to connect trails in the community. Discussion occurred regarding the rail spur, Mungo Park, Coldstream Drive and a crossing at #6 Hwy.

Mark Smyers presented an overview of the agenda to include the adoption of the annual report; it includes park visits across the agency at approximately 2.2M visits for FY 21/22; this speaks highly of the staff and their efforts during a difficult time. Mr. Smyers communicated that staff presented two policies in May for Commission review: 10.1 and 3.1. Mark Smyers shared that policy is adopted through the Board and procedures are created by staff; additionally, new policies will be presented for Commission review in the work session and then approved at the following board meeting if accepted. Mr. Smyers shared that there are two new policies for Commission review policy BF-5.1 (retention policy) and BF-5.2(Freedom of Information Act policy). Discussion occurred regarding the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) policy, fees and how the public is notified of costs.

Commissioner Huggins inquired if in the future staff could include tennis participation in the annual report. Mark Smyers stated staff can now track tennis participation due to the new location of the courts at Melvin Park. Commissioner Cromer inquired if ICRC had leagues. Mr. Smyers stated yes, including LATA. Commissioner Huggins inquired if the public could access the Melvin Park tennis courts after staff hours. Mr. Smyers stated no; the tennis court facilities do not have the technology and locking devices to accommodate at this time. Discussion occurred regarding future consideration for a smart locking system, technology infrastructure, and the immediacy to access facilities.

Mr. Smyers shared that staff are rebuilding the part-time staffing pool; many students have gone back to school resulting in a part-time staff shortage; the shortage is occurring mostly in the afterschool program. Mark Smyers also shared full-time staff have been flexing positions to cover the part-time shortage; the afterschool program could grow if staffing improved. Mr. Smyers also shared that the afterschool safari director resigned and is moving back to Virginia; management re-evaluated the organizational structure and decided to split the position between two recreation coordinator II staff on each end of the district. Commissioner Cromer inquired who the two new positions report to. Mark Smyers stated each staff member will report to the park director associated with their location on each end of the district. Vice Chairman Boyd inquired if staff are eliminating the FTE director position. Mr. Smyers stated yes, staff are

eliminating the director role and creating two recreation coordinator II positions; one on each end of the district. Commissioner Akil inquired if that cost is a wash. Mr. Smyers stated yes due to eliminating a director level role, two part-time administrative staff and a part-time team lead. Vice Chairman Boyd inquired if the cost of the two new position included the 28%-30% fringe. Eve Mittendorf stated yes.

Mark Smyers shared that a presentation was made to Lexington County Council for State and Local Recovery Act funds; the environmental center renovation conceptual design has been kicked off; Rawls Creek tennis and swim club master plan needs to begin. Commissioner Huggins inquired on how many tennis courts are at Rawls Creek. Mr. Smyers stated eight. Discussion occurred regarding the challenges of the pool and tennis courts; the property as it sits does not meet ADA requirements. Mark Smyers communicated that staff continue to work with the vendor for the splash pad renovation; staff may request a Call Meeting to approve contract modifications due to adding and/or changing features; the modifications do no exceed the \$250K budget.

Mr. Smyers stated that the City of Columbia sewer renovation timeline has extended to March 2023. Chairman Harmon inquired how the project impacts Holiday Lights. Mark Smyers stated that the City of Columbia anticipates working closely with ICRC staff through Holiday Lights.

With no further discussion, the Commission moved into General Session.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eve Mittendorf  
Recording Secretary  
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION

# **Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission GENERAL SESSION**

September 28, 2022  
Crooked Creek Park  
7:00pm

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

Non-Members Attending: Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf, Jay Downs, John Cantey, Alfred Comfort, Jason White

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 AKIL ROSS TO ACCEPT THE MAY 25, 2022, JUNE 3, 2022 AND AUGUST 17, 2022 MINUTES AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MICHAEL CROMER. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

## **III. STAFF REPORTS**

Mark Smyers shared history and an update on the lower Saluda Greenway Trail; the origin of the idea of a greenway with a park along the river started 40 years ago; a plan was adopted by the COG and was identified in ICRC's masterplan as an unmet need by the public. Mr. Smyers shared that staff completed a feasibility study and a grant submitted to the COG. Mr. Smyers presented the Lower Saluda Greenway Study to include phase I which runs down Bush River Road from #6 Hwy to Saluda Shoals Park, phase II runs from the end of Saluda Shoals Park to Gardendale and phase III runs from Gardendale to I-26. Mark Smyers shared that the estimated budget for the Greenway is \$21.3M; funding sources came from FY 19/20 State funding (\$1.5M), FY 22/23 State funding (\$8M), EDA grant (\$3.2M), CMCOG (\$9.5) and Lexington County (\$1.9M) for a total of \$24M. Mr. Smyers shared that staff is thrilled to be in the position to meet an identified public need in the 2020 strategic plan. Vice Chairman Boyd inquired on the length of time to construct. Mr. Smyers stated it will likely be 2 – 2.5 years. Discussion occurred regarding communication to staff and community, Commission involvement in contracts and design, trail standards, and tracking grant dollars. Commissioner Ross inquired on timing of development of phases. Mark Smyers communicated that phase I and phase II will likely occur at the same time; however, it may be that phase II begins before phase I. Mr. Smyers shared that the EDA requirements will be tracked for phase II. Vice Chairman Boyd inquired if the funding allows to hire someone to assist in tracking grants and development requirements. Mr. Smyers shared that the EDA budget does not lend itself to hire someone; however, the State funding may allow allocating funds for staff. Commissioner Huggins, Commissioner Ross, Commissioner Cromer, and Vice Chairman Boyd shared congratulations. Chairman Harmon thanked Mr. Smyers for his leadership in the community and partnerships with many entities to make this amenity a reality.

## **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. FY 21/22 Annual Report**

Mark Smyers shared that the annual report requires every staff member's input and a year of tracking and measuring the agency's contributions to the community. Mr. Smyers commended the marketing director, Lori Shaffer, for a great job in presenting the information. Chairman Harmon stated that the annual report is an important tool; it summarizes the history and highlights staff's successes. Chairman Harmon also echoed Mr. Smyers comments and requested that Mr. Smyers pass a collective thanks to staff for a job well done.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY LAURA HUGGINS TO ACCEPT STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION ON THE FY21/22 ANNUAL REPORT AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY AKIL ROSS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

### **B. Policy Approval: BF-3.1 and BF-10.1**

Chairman Harmon shared that policy BF-3.1 establishes policy and procedure authority and BF-10.1 states the Mission, Vision, and Values of the agency.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY AKIL ROSS TO ACCEPT STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION FOR POLICY BF-3.1 AND BF-10.1 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY LAURA HUGGINS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

## **V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Smyers thanked the ICRC team for all their efforts through the summer; staff had a very successful summer and is all due to the wonderful team that is developing and hosting programs, maintaining the grounds and facilities, and supporting the functions of the agency. Mr. Smyers shared that staff work very hard and deserve a lot of credit for what they do to help the community thrive.

Mr. Smyers also thanked the Commission for the extra meetings throughout the summer; staff really appreciate your flexibility and support; the meetings help staff to stay on track and provide opportunity to meet the moment.

Mark Smyers shared that senior services oversaw 4,710 meals delivered through the meals on wheels program and 947 meals served through the congregate meal sights; the Senior Trips and Travel program also coordinated two big trips to Martha's Vineyard and Vermont for a total of 121 participants. Mr. Smyers communicated that the summer youth basketball had 380 kids, which equates to 38 teams participating across the district; fall athletics is currently underway and saw an overall growth in total registration; there are 1,587 kids and families enjoying another season on ICRC fields.

Mr. Smyers also shared that summer camps were extremely popular again this year; Summer Safari had 3,102 participants; staff also hosted an additional 170 weekly specialty camps for 2,910 participants. Mark Smyers stated that this has been ICRC's busiest summer for camps ever. Mark Smyers communicated that Saluda Shoals Park also had a great summer; the Paddle and Pint and Sunset on the Shoals program had 228 participants in 9 different offerings; The Backyard Saturday Environmental Education programs hosted 445 participants in three events; staff also had 1,060 boat rentals, 1,547 tube rentals, 4,770 splash bands, and sold 118 Splash Punch Cards. Mr. Smyers shared, Saluda Shoals Park had 65,295 vehicles that entered the park for June, July, and August. Mark Smyers communicated that each one of those numbers represent an impact; this agency and staff are in the people business and the mission is to enhance the quality of life for the

community. Mr. Smyers shared that staff accomplished the mission and that he is very proud of the team.

## **VI. COMMISSION RESPONSE**

Commissioner Huggins congratulated staff on the success of the Lower Saluda Greenway and shared that it is going to be a jewel in the community. Commissioner Ross thanked staff and shared that each effort represents an impact to the end user; the Greenway trail is a long-term view and accomplishment and will result in a huge transformation in the community. Commissioner Ross also thanked Lori Shaffer for the annual report. Vice Chairman Boyd shared that once again Lori Shaffer provided a quality annual report and shared that it has been a privilege to work with the staff and the kids in the community. Vice Chairman Boyd thanked staff for helping to raise young men and women to be a part of the community. Commissioner Cromer stated he continues to be amazed at the number of programs and services staff offer and the impact on the community. Commissioner Cromer shared excitement for the greenway and stated it will be a game changer for the community. Chairman Harmon thanked Gary Boyd for his contributions to the Board over the last five years; his investment in the community and that Vice Chairman Boyd has been an integral part of the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. Chairman Harmon thanked Mark Smyers for his leadership and asked that he pass on to staff his appreciation for what they do and how they impact lives; it is a great time to be a part of the agency.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY AKIL ROSS TO ADJOURN THE GENERAL SESSION.  
SECONDED BY GARY BOYD. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

There being no further business the General Session meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eve Mittendorf  
Recording Secretary  
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION