Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission

CROOKED CREEK PARK
WORK SESSION MINUTES

September 23, 2026
6:00PM

Members Attending: Bill Harmon, Michael Cromer, Dr. Gerrick Hampton, Dr. Akil Ross, Laura Huggins

Non-Members Attending: Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf

Mark Smyers provided an update on the ongoing agency audit, noting that fieldwork continues, and the final report is anticipated to be presented at the October Commission meeting. Mr. Smyers announced that Jessie Jackson, Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator, received the 2026 SCRPA Central District Merit Award. He commended Ms. Jackson for this professional achievement; the meeting agenda also includes an Eagle Scout project recognition of Garet Holland for building owl and bat boxes at Saluda Shoals Park. Mr. Smyers stated that Jay Downs would provide a high-level overview of the ongoing master planning process. Mr. Downs will also introduce the project architects, who will present conceptual designs focused on addressing current facility needs alongside future expansion opportunities. Mr. Smyers reviewed key agenda items requiring Commission attention, including a formal request for approval of a change order for the Environmental Education Center Phase I project; the change order modifies the design to accommodate a drainage pipe modification. Mark Smyers shared that staff are requesting Commission adoption of the Master Plans for Crooked Creek Park, Seven Oaks Park, Mungo Park, and district wide playground renovations. Discussion occurred regarding agency funding, grant distribution timelines, and overall financial strategy. Mr. Smyers shared that staff received official notification that the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission (ICRC) has been selected to receive the $1,000,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant. Mr. Smyers emphasized the need for a comprehensive administrative building strategy; staff are currently split between two separate facilities, and preliminary internal discussions have commenced regarding space constraints, ideal location, and projected organizational growth. Mark Smyers stated that design funding for this project has been allocated within the current operating budget. Mr. Smyers reminded the Commission of the Prayer Breakfast on September 24, 2026. Mark Smyers requested, in General Session, an amendment to the September 23, 2026 work session minutes, page 1, paragraph 2, the text referencing "RV/Campground project" should be changed to "Phase II Riverwalk."

There being 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 23, 2026
Crooked Creek Park
7:00PM

Members Attending: Bill Harmon, Michael Cromer, Dr. Gerrick Hampton, Laura Huggins, Dr. Akil Ross

Non-Members Attending: Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf, Jay Downs, Jason White, Adrian Wright, Jennifer Riddle, Garet Holland, Jessie Jackson, Rick Howell, Todd Sease, Adam Flynn, Clay Cannon

Chairman 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 in accordance with Freedom of Information Act requirements.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. AKIL ROSS TO ACCEPT MAY 27, 2026 MINUTES WITH ONE AMENDMENT UNDER WORK SESSION, PAGE 1, REPLACE THE TEXT "RV/CAMPGROUND PROJECT" WITH "PHASE II RIVERWALK" AND ACCEPT THE AUGUST 5, 2026 MINUTES AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY LAURA HUGGINS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

III. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

A. EAGLE Scout Project – Garet Holland
Chairman Harmon presented a certificate of appreciation to Garet Holland in recognition of his Eagle Scout Service project; the project involved the construction of new owl and bat boxes on the east side of Saluda Shoals Park. The Commission thanked Garet for his contributions to Saluda Shoals Park.

B. SCRPA Award Recognition – Jessie Jackson
Chairman Harmon recognized Jessie Jackson for all the work and dedication to the success of the Therapeutic Recreation program. Chairman Harmon also recognized Jessie Jackson for receiving the 2026 SCRPA Central District Merit Award. Jessie Jackson shared that Therapeutic Recreation is programming for individuals with special needs; at ICRC staff focus on providing adaptive opportunities for people of all ages. Mark Smyers commended Ms. Jackson and stated that she is well deserving of the award.

C. Master Plan Update – Jay Downs
Mr. Downs shared the master planning process. Mr. Downs stated that the strategic plan was updated in 2025, which included community and staff input. Jay Downs reported that the master plans encompass both facility and growth improvements. The process

commenced with the formation of committees and the assignment of responsibilities; initial phases include a systematic facility inventory, an audit of existing conditions, assessments of programmatic and technological needs, and a review of access requirements and limitations. Jay Downs shared that public and staff meetings were held and input was received using an interactive software application called Mentimeter. Mr. Downs thanked the IT department for their support in implementing the Mentimeter technology. Jay Downs noted that the next phase involved developing the primary documents and executive summaries, prioritizing realistic ideas, and sharing the findings with the consultants at McMillan, Pazdan, Smith. Jay Downs introduced the consultants, Todd Sease, Adam Flynn, and Clay Cannon; the consultants reviewed the collected information, met with ICRC leadership, and developed conceptual drawings for Crooked Creek Park.

D. CCP Facility Conceptual Drawings – McMillan, Pazdan, Smith Architecture
Todd Sease thanked the Commission for the opportunity to share early ideas of the vision for Crooked Creek Park (CCP). Mr. Sease shared appreciation to staff for their work in preparing and sharing the vision for the CCP facility. Mr. Sease introduced Adam Flynn the project architect, and Clay Cannon, the civil engineer. Adam Flynn and Clay Cannon presented conceptual designs featuring interior renovations, new programmatic layouts, expanded parking, a new gymnasium, exterior architecture, and designated space for future expansion. Commissioner Huggins inquired about the exterior materials for the new addition. Adam Flynn stated that the goal would be to evaluate cost and select materials that would be durable. Discussion occurred regarding parking, local and state zoning requirements, and accessibility. Todd Sease, Adam Flynn, and Clay Cannon thanked the Commission and staff for the opportunity to be a part of the design process.

IV. STAFF REPORTS – were accepted as presented.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Ratification of EEC Phase I Change Order – Grace Construction

Chairman Harmon stated that staff is requesting ratification of a Grace Construction change order in the amount of $6,720 for the EEC Phase I project.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY LAURA HUGGINS TO ACCEPT STAFF'S REQUEST TO APPROVE THE RATIFICATION OF A CHANGE ORDER IN THE AMOUNT OF $6,720 FOR THE EEC PHASE I PROJECT. SECONDED BY MICHAEL CROMER. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

B. Master Plan Adoption – CCP, SOP, Mungo Park, Playground Renovation

Chairman Harmon stated staff is requesting Commission adoption of the Crooked Creek Park, Mungo Park, Seven Oaks Park, and playground renovation master plans.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MICHAEL CROMER TO ACCEPT STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY DR. AKIL ROSS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mark Smyers expressed his appreciation to the Commission for their support and thanked Garet Holland for his completed Eagle Scout project, noting that the new owl and bat boxes are excellent additions to support wildlife at Saluda Shoals Park. Mr. Smyers recognized Jessie Jackson, Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator, as the recipient of the 2026 SCRPA Central District Merit Award, and extended thanks to leadership for taking the time to nominate her. Mr. Smyers expressed enthusiasm regarding the Commission's adoption of the Master Plans, which enable staff to pursue these concepts at a deeper level. Mark Smyers thanked McMillan, Pazdan, Smith Architecture for their presentation and collaboration, as well as Jay Downs, Lori Shaffer, and the committee members for their development efforts.

Reviewing district operations, Mr. Smyers noted a busy transition from summer into fall. Key milestones included the HR team's district-wide rollout of a comprehensive salary study, and strong program attendance featuring 5,050 Summer Safari participants, 2,209 specialty camp participants, and 946 Afternoon Safari youth participants. Mark Smyers stated that fall youth sports participation grew 8% year-over-year, adding 106 families to the programs; the IT department implemented and continues to refine the new access control system at Saluda Shoals Park.

Mr. Smyers highlighted the completion of Phase I of the Dreher Shoals Riverwalk—which kicked off with a fantastic ribbon-cutting event at Dreher Shoals Landing; additionally, Phase I of the Woodlands Center back deck renovation was completed, and the installation of new utility field lights at Seven Oaks Park.

VII. COMMISSION RESPONSE

Commissioner Huggins opened by celebrating Garet Holland’s completed Eagle Scout project, Jessie Jackson’s leadership with the Therapeutic Recreation (TR) program, and staff’s creativity in developing the master plans. Vice Chairman Cromer concurred, sharing his excitement for the master plans and conceptual designs. He congratulated Ms. Jackson on her recent award and enthusiasm, praised the renovation and recent event on the Woodlands Center back deck, and noted that the Riverwalk video would serve as an excellent marketing tool given the positive feedback received from the public. Dr. Akil Ross also thanked Mr. Holland and congratulated Jessie Jackson. Dr. Ross commended Jay Downs for utilizing Mentimeter technology to gather public input and expressed appreciation to Jason Whtie and his team for an 8% increase in athletic participation. Chairman Harmon concluded by thanking staff for their responsiveness to the public and recognized Mr. Holland's EAGLE Scout project. Chairman Harmon also commended the back deck opening and noted that Jessie Jackson serves as a strong testament to achieving extraordinary success.

Mr. Howell commended the collaborative efforts of the Commission, staff, and School District in establishing a comprehensive athletic program that provides sports opportunities for all youth and promotes community pride. Chairman Harmon thanked Mr. Howell for his comments.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

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