

Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission WORK SESSION MINUTES

January 24, 2024
Seven Oaks Park
6:00pm

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

Non-Members Attending: Mark Smyers, Eve Mittendorf

Mark Smyers presented an overview of agenda items to include Election of Officers and a Holiday Light's presentation. Mark Smyers stated for Commission approval is a bid award for the Melvin Park racquet court expansion; the bids came in high at \$364K. Mr. Smyers shared the current budget includes \$250K with PARD funding; there is \$115K in short term bond funds and the opportunity for two USTA grants for approximately \$50K. Discussion occurred regarding approving the award for the Melvin Park racquet court expansion and ratifying the USTA grants when awarded. Commissioner Ross inquired what caused the difference between the budgeted amount and the bid amount. Mark Smyers replied each line item was incrementally higher. Commissioner Ross inquired if there are any contingency funds. Mark Smyers stated there are contingency funds in the operating budget; these types of projects come out of the capital funds. Discussion occurred regarding pickleball, expanding tennis, and gate access controls. Commissioner Huggins asked if there is a timeframe for completing the new racquetball courts. Mr. Smyers stated not at this time.

Mr. Smyers shared the budget year timeline; February 7th is when the preliminary budget is due to Lexington County. Mark Smyers also shared for Commission approval multiple grant ratifications: Land Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) is for phase 1 of the Environmental Education Center, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is for a deck at the Environmental Education Center and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant is for the Mungo Park trails. Vice Chairman Cromer inquired if monies were allocated for the deck. Mr. Smyers stated yes, there are monies already budgeted for the grant match; the RTP grant has a \$25K match for a total of \$100K. Mr. Smyers communicated that the Love Foundation donated \$30K to Leo's Pride; in turn Leo's Pride donated the monies to ICRC; staff is looking at renovating the therapeutic recreational space at Seven Oaks Park. Mr. Smyers shared that staff will be hosting a Midlands Business Group to begin the conversation for a new branding of the Greenway trail; this group includes Lexington County, City of Columbia, City of West Columbia, Cayce, Richland County and the Executive Director and Chairman of ICRC.

Mr. Smyers reviewed Business Function Policies, BF6.16 - BF6.30. The Commission submitted corrections and recommended revisions to policies BF6.16 – BF6.30. Discussion occurred regarding tabling policies BF6.18 – BF6.22 in General Session for further review. Commissioner Huggins recommended staff submit in the March regularly scheduled meeting the five tabled policies as well as five additional new policies for Commission review and approval.

Respectfully submitted,
Eve Mittendorf
Recording Secretary
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION

**Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission
GENERAL SESSION**

January 24, 2024
Seven Oaks Park

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

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

Bill Harmon called the meeting to order at 7:31pm. 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 MICHAEL CROMER TO ACCEPT THE OCTOBER 24, 2023 AND JANUARY 10, 2024 MINUTES AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY DR. AKIL ROSS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

III. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A MOTION WAS MADE BY LAURA HUGGINS TO ELECT BILL HARMON AS CHAIRMAN, MICHAEL CROMER AS VICE CHAIRMAN AND DR. AKIL ROSS AS SECRETARY FOR 2024. SECONDED BY DR. GERRICK HAMPTON. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

IV. STAFF REPORTS – Lindsay Hudson, Saluda Shoals Park Director

Lindsay Hudson presented an update on the 2023 Holiday Lights event. Ms. Hudson stated that Holiday Lights is the showcase event for Saluda Shoals Park. Ms. Hudson also shared that it is a long process, and every staff member participates in making it better each year; in 2023 approximately 27,000 cars and 110,000 visitors came through Holiday Lights; activity revenue was \$92,128, total revenue generated \$949,000 and the operating expense equaled \$211,000. Lindsay Hudson shared that the total net for the Holiday Lights event was approximately \$700,000. Lindsay Hudson communicated that there were 914 participants in the Sleighbell Trot and the Stroll included 2,061 pre-registered participants. Ms. Hudson also shared that staff hosted 200 Fort Jackson soldiers and families for Holiday Lights; the soldiers were fed, came through the lights, and enjoyed the activities.

Lindsay Hudson shared additions and changes to the Holiday Lights event to include a new ticketing system in which 5000 tickets were sold online, the CATE Center students created and installed a new carousel display; Michelin reserved the River Center for a staff Christmas party and purchased 1920 Holiday Lights tickets for their employees to enjoy. Ms. Hudson also shared that this was the first year that full-time staff did not have to work the Holiday Lights event; there were enough part-time staff to cover all the positions.

Commissioner Cromer commended the staff on a fantastic job on a great event and for creating other income streams. Chairman Harmon thanked Ms. Hudson for the presentation and for all staff do in making this a great event.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Bid Award – Melvin Park Racquet Court Expansion

A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. AKIL ROSS TO AWARD MELVIN PARK RACQUET COURT EXPANSION BID TO GRACE CONSTRUCTION AND TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO USE THE UNDESIGNATED BOND MONIES TO COVER THE ADDITIONAL COSTS OF THE PROJECT. SECONDED BY LAURA HUGGINS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

B. Policy Approval: BF6.16 – BF6.30

A MOTION WAS MADE BY LAURA HUGGINS TO APPROVE WITH GRAMMATICAL CHANGES POLICIES BF6.16, BF6.17, BF6.23 - BF6.30. SECONDED BY MICHAEL CROMER. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

A SECOND MOTION WAS MADE BY LAURA HUGGINS TO TABLE APPROVAL OF POLICIES BF6.18 - BF6.22 UNTIL THE MARCH 2024 COMMISSION MEETING. SECONDED BY MICHAEL CROMER. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

A THIRD MOTION WAS MADE BY LAURA HUGGINS TO REVISE THE SCHEDULE OF POLICY REVIEW IN THE MARCH 2024 MEETING TO COVER POLICIES BF6.31 – BF6.35. SECONDED BY DR. AKIL ROSS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

C. FY 24/25 Budget Timetable

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MICHAEL CROMER TO APPROVE THE FY 24/25 BUDGET TIMETABLE AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY DR. AKIL ROSS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

D. Preliminary FY 24/25 Budget for Lexington County Council

A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. AKIL ROSS TO APPROVE THE PRELIMINARY FY 24/25 BUDGET FOR LEXINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL. SECONDED BY DR. GERRICK HAMPTON. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

E. LWCF Grant Ratification

A MOTION WAS MADE BY LAURA HUGGINS TO RATIFY APPROVAL OF THE LWCF GRANT APPLICATION AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY DR. AKIL ROSS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

F. RTP Grant Ratification

A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. AKIL ROSS TO RATIFY APPROVAL FOR THE RTP GRANT APPLICATION AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MICHAEL CROMER. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

G. CDBG Grant Ratification

A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. GERRICK HAMPTON TO RATIFY APPROVAL FOR THE CDBG GRANT APPLICATION AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MICHAEL CROMER. MOTION APPROVED BY MICHAEL CROMER, LAURA HUGGINS, DR. GERRICK HAMPTON. DR. AKIL ROSS ABSTAINED. MOTION PASSED.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Smyers thanked Lindsay Hudson for the Holiday Lights on the River presentation; the team did an exceptional job hosting this year's event. Mark Smyers shared that Mike Hudson and the maintenance

team also deserve a lot of praise for doing a fantastic job setting up the show; Holiday Lights plays a vital role in generating a significant amount of the resources needed to operate the park year-round as well as play a vital role in the community. Mr. Smyers stated that between the rangers, the Holiday Lights Committee, the maintenance team, and everyone else that is involved, a big thank you and job well done is deserved.

Mark Smyers shared appreciation to the Commission for working through policies with staff; it is a lot of work and can be very technical. Mr. Smyers thanked the Commission for their support with the Melvin Park racquet court expansion; this project is very important to staff and customers, and it will hopefully help with the growth at Melvin and in the Midlands.

Mr. Smyers shared that staff had the opportunity to get in front of the community and unpack the greenway project; staff met with five different HOA groups that are close in proximity to the greenway's footprint. Mark Smyers stated that there were a lot of questions about how it will operate, what it will look like, and how it will impact traffic; the overall sense was a lot of excitement. Mr. Smyers shared that staff are getting closer in the design process, but still have a lot of work to do.

VII. COMMISSION RESPONSE

Vice Chairman Cromer commended Lindsay Hudson and team for doing a great job and for a fantastic Holiday Lights year. Vice Chairman Cromer thanked Mark Smyers for the work on the Greenway trail and thanked Eve Mittendorf for the work on the policies. Dr. Hampton commended Lindsay Hudson on a wonderful job with Holiday Lights and stated that the Fort Jackson night is a great event. Dr. Hampton thanked Mark Smyers and the team on the policies; the updated policies are going to be beneficial to staff. Dr. Ross thanked Lindsay Hudson for putting the presentation together; it captured the numbers and programs, and staff continue to re-invent and increase participation even with competition. Dr. Ross asked that Ms. Hudson share with staff the Commissions' appreciation and service. Commissioner Huggins communicated that the Holiday Lights numbers this year were impressive. Commissioner Huggins also thanked Lindsay Hudson and team for serving the military and making a special night for the soldiers. Commissioner Huggins acknowledged and shared excitement regarding the Greenway project. Chairman Harmon shared appreciation for staff's contribution to the community and for brining others around the vision. Chairman Harmon also thanked Eve Mittendorf and staff for doing important work around policies and shared appreciation to Lindsay Hudson for her presentation and leadership.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY LAURA HUGGINS TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS. SECONDED BY MICHAEL CROMER. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Eve Mittendorf
Recording Secretary
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION

**IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING**

January 24, 2024
Seven Oaks Park

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

The Executive Session was called to order by Bill Harmon at 7:50pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Items related to personnel matters were discussed; no action was taken during the Executive Session.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. AKIL ROSS TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION. SECONDED BY LAURA HUGGINS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

PUBLIC SESSION: No action was taken.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MICHAEL CROMER TO ADJOURN PUBLIC SESSION. SECONDED BY DR. AKIL ROSS. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Akil Ross
Recording Secretary
IRMO CHAPIN RECREATION COMMISSION