

Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
17 September 2015

Attendance Report

Commissioners Present: Phil Bartlett Mary Howard, Lloyd Liles, Alana Williams, Bud Tibshrary, and Jim Smith

Commissioners Absent: Jan Stamps

Staff Present: Satch Krantz, Tommy Stringfellow, Steve Hatchell, Ed Diebold, Tracy Hughes

Special Presentation

Riverbanks' Director of Animal Collections Ed Diebold and Staffing/Training Manager, Tracy Hughes reviewed an exciting new training program developed by the San Diego Zoo Global Academy (SDZGA). The program was originally formed to provide training opportunities for the San Diego Zoo animal care staff. The SDZGA has since expanded to cover most areas of zoo operations and is now offered, as a fee-based service, to the entire zoo and aquarium community.

This year Riverbanks joined the SDZGA. In doing so, Riverbanks staff and volunteers gained access to the SDZGA's rich on-line source of training courses and webinars relevant to all areas of operation. SDZGA has a wide range of curriculum that is available "off the shelf" (i.e., curriculum that has been previously developed by the SDZGA and partners and can be adopted by all partners). This curriculum is presented by recognized subject matter experts in an interactive and engaging format. In addition, Riverbanks has access to the Do It Yourself (DIY) courses, allowing us to develop customized courses in PowerPoint format and upload them to the SDZGA site for Riverbanks staff use.

Importantly, the SDZGA includes a user friendly search function available to all users, as well as documentation and reporting features for site administrators. In short, the SDZGA is an efficient and effective vehicle for staff training and professional development.

Call to Order

Chairman Bartlett called the meeting to order.

Chief Finance Officer's Report

CFO Hatchell reported that the Commission is showing a deficit of \$361,125 for August 2015. This amount is actually a *positive* variance of \$416,000 when compared to budget.

Attendance

- Attendance for the month of August was just over 103,800. This is over the budgeted attendance for the month by 32,000 guests. Of this amount 12,500 was

in paid attendance and 19,000 was from members. We are 38,000 visitors over our budget for the year.

Balance Sheet

- Assets
 - We continue to be in a very positive cash position through August, especially considering we are due reimbursement for bond-related expenses. This amount is shown on the Due from Bond fund line.
- Fund Balances
 - Capital Fund Balance – The \$175,000 is designated for projects that are currently in process for the new fiscal year. These items include:
 - Komodo Exhibit
 - Backup Software (Complete)
 - PaCE Solar Grant (Our portion)
 - Expanded fiber optics for the Garden (needed for Point-of Sale)

Revenue vs Expense

Revenue

- Total Revenue was \$1,786,000, which is \$424,000 over budget. Total Revenue was \$56,000 under August 2014 figures, mainly due to an allocation of Society support contributions in July 2014.
- Admissions revenue through August 2015 was \$284,000 over budget. This is due to the great number of paid attendance in August.
- SSA Commissions through August were over budget (\$63,000) and above last August's amount (\$82,000). Their per-cap amounts are about 15% over last year through August.
- Classes & Programs net revenue is \$10,000 over budget, primarily due to great attendance for our day camps.
- Attractions/Rides net revenues continue to be over budget. The train and ropes course in particular have had great months. Zip line is \$12,000 under budget through August. Stringfellow remarked the shortfall was due to the fact that a number of scheduled tours were interrupted or cancelled due to severe weather and that the new pricing strategy was not as successful as planned. He noted that the staff is currently working on a night-time zip program for the fall.
- Events net revenue (after expenses) was over budget by \$8,000. As mentioned last month, this is due to the purchase of theming supplies in preparation for upcoming events (Boo and Lights).

Expenses

- Administrative expenses through August were \$20,000 over budget. This is due to architectural expenses associated with the design and development of the pedestrian bridge project and an increase in credit card processing fees.
- Marketing/Public Relations expenses were under budget by \$21,000 due to timing of paid advertising.
- Guest Services expenses were over budget for the month by \$30,000. This is mainly due to salaries associated with Public Safety and Grounds, which we are reviewing.

Destination Riverbanks Update

Krantz presented the following report on the Destination Riverbanks projects:

- **Sea Lion** -- Rodgers continues to make tremendous progress on the sea lion exhibit and is on schedule for a February 2016 completion. There are no known issues with the exhibit at this time.
- **Children's Garden** -- This project continues to progress slow and steady. The General Contractor, Tyler Construction, has now changed the completion date to late November. There is one troubling issue with the splash pad. About a month ago cracks began appearing in the large concrete floor of the splash pad. The contractor, Cost of Wisconsin (COW), repaired the first few cracks with an epoxy product. Unfortunately, the cracking has continued and is now to the point where the entire slab looks like a giant spider web. Our architects have been monitoring the situation on a weekly basis and are in regular communication with COW about the issue.
- **CSX Pedestrian Bridge** – Krantz reviewed the status of the bridge project and the challenges faced by Rodgers in identifying and recruiting LSBEs. In any event, Richland County Council approved the contract by a vote of 9 to 2 on the evening of September 8th. Rodgers reports that they will need approximately two months to mobilize plus another 8 months to construct the bridge.

Destination Riverbanks Capital Campaign

Krantz provided a brief update on the status of the Destination Riverbanks capital campaign. He noted that the staff and Society Board members continue to meet with prospective donors.

Chief Operating Officer's Report


- **ZOOfare** – Riverbanks' next fundraiser is scheduled for Friday, September 25 from 7:00-11:00pm. This year will feature food inspired by classic Low Country cuisine. Sponsors include Land Rover Columbia and Colonial Life. We will be trying a mobile bidding service for both the silent and live auction. To-date ticket sales are up 100% over 2014.
- **Thor Weather Alert** – Riverbanks has recently purchased and installed a Thor Weather Alert system. The system will provide our employees with advanced warning alerts related to lightning. This is especially critical with the ropes course and zip line operations. This same system is also used by a number of local recreation districts.

Chief Executive Officer's Report

Krantz did not have a report due his pending departure for the AZA Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City.

The Meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 16th day of October 2015.


_____, Secretary