

**Riverbanks Park Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
18 August 2022**

**Attendance Report**

**Commissioners Present:** Deneen Shockley, Mike Velasco, Alana Williams, Jan Stamps, Cliff Bourke, Jeff Reeves, Bob Davidson

**Commissioners Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Tommy Stringfellow, Lochlan Wooten, Christie Vondrak, Katie Eaton

**Others Present:** Nate Ennis, SSA General Manager

**Call to Order**

Chair Stamps called the meeting to order.

**Reading of the Minutes**

The July 21, 2022 Commission Meeting minutes were approved as distributed.

Velasco motioned to approve the minutes, Bourke seconded, m/c unanimous.

**Chairman's Remarks**

Chairwoman Stamps remarked that it was so nice to have former Commissioner and longtime support of Riverbanks, Bud Tibshrary here to join the Commission for lunch prior to the meeting. Tibshrary's term as Commissioner ended during Covid19 lockdowns, so it was a pleasure to finally be able to recognize him for his dedicated service to Riverbanks.

**President & CEO Report:**

President & CEO Tommy Stringfellow provided the following report:

- Financial review:
  - Total membership is up to budget with over 45,000 households.
  - Paid daily visits are slightly down, likely due to the hot and rainy July and ARCC exhibit and splash pad closures.
  - Total attendance is up about 12,000
  - Bourke motioned to approve the financials, Davidson seconded, m/c unanimous.
- Stringfellow continues to work with the county councils on the potential of the bond request in the future.
- Stringfellow met with Mayor Rickenmann and the River Alliance along with our legal representation to assemble a recommendation for leasing of land for potential city parking for the River Walk.
- Lander Hiott continues to research and work on avenues for further funding from State sources.
- AZA conferences are back in person. This year the conference will be located in Baltimore, Maryland during the last week of August. A few Riverbanks staff will be in attendance.

**Administrative Officer Report:**

Administrative Officer Christie Vondrak provided the following report:

- Vondrak shared some upcoming reminders and updates:
  - Riverbanks Zoo Night with the Fireflies- August 19
  - AAZK Bowling for Rhinos- August 28
  - Zoofari- September 23
- We continue to find ways to frequently treat our staff. Recently had Chick-Fil-A boxed lunches for staff, and also had an ice cream truck visit on a hot afternoon to treat our hardworking teams.

- Brew at the Zoo had 90 volunteers pouring beer last night. We are so appreciative of all of our staff and community volunteers that donate their time to making these events a success.
- Wanted to highlight two team members who recently hit huge milestones of 45 years of service. Congratulations to Dave Neller-moe; Commissary Manager and Joe Christofoli; Facilities Project Manager for this very impressive achievement!

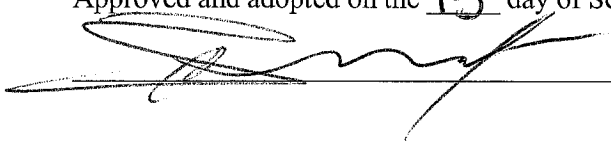
**Operating Officer Report:**

Operating Officer Lochlan Wooten provided the following report:

- Wooten shared the now viral Tik Tok video of gorilla Cenzoo sliding through his indoor exhibit. This fun video was shared around social media and made it to several news outlets.
- Brand new website will be launching in about 12 days. The site will feature a new and improved look and e-ticketing store.
- The ARCC is coming along beautifully. Currently looking at a November opening.
- The greenhouse renovation project is well underway. They have been demolished, and construction on the new ones has begun.
- Brew at the Zoo did very well. The event did sell out and was well attended. Brew is the single largest fundraiser of the year.
- Wooten shared a graph of the Conservation Circle Trends. The Conservation Circle includes membership values of \$275 or up. We have seen over the last couple of years that the trends of this level of membership are increasing.
- Riverbanks rhinos will be participating in a study by wearing an ankle bracelet that will track their steps, BMI, utilization of the exhibit space, and more to improve care and exhibit design and how this can translate to protecting rhinos in the wild. We are excited to participate in this collaborative conservation effort.
- Wooten shared a draft of a potential service award plaque wall that would feature individuals' dedication to Riverbanks. Specific criteria for qualification to the wall is still under discussion.

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 15 day of September 2022.

 \_\_\_\_\_, Secretary