

**Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
20 March 2025**

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda is available to radio and TV stations, newspapers, and persons requesting notification; was posted in the lobby of Riverbanks' administration building and was uploaded to Riverbanks' webpage.

Attendance Report

Commissioners Present: Bob Davidson, Chip Huggins, Jeff Reeves, Deneen Shockley, Mike Velasco, Alana Williams.

Commissioners Absent: Cliff Bourke.

Staff Present: Tommy Stringfellow, Lochlan Wooten, Christie Vondrak, Ashley Harris, Jessica Austin.

Call to Order

Chairwoman Williams called the meeting to order at 12:30pm.

Reading of the Minutes

The February 20, 2025, Commission Meeting minutes were approved as distributed.

Huggins motioned to approve the minutes, Shockley seconded, m/c unanimous.

Chairwoman's Remarks:

- Congratulations to Riverbanks for making USA Today's Top Ten Best Zoos and Top Ten Best Zoo Membership!

Finance Report:

VP of Finance Ashley Harris provided the following report:

- February Dashboard Report:
 - Through February we are running below anticipated attendance and below the prior year but did exceed budget for the month of February. Expecting this trend to continue as the weather improves.
 - Free Fridays generated attendance slightly over budget and in line with prior year.
 - The difference in Governmental support seen YOY is due to having received \$5M in state funding in FY24 and \$1M in FY25, yielding a \$4M variance, in addition to the timing of Richland County funding this year. The portion of funding that will come through Hospitality tax is granted on a reimbursement basis, so will just come later in the FY, which we anticipated in the budget.
 - There was an interfund capital operating transfer recorded in February to reimburse the Capital Fund from General Fund. This is FY25 capital spend that would not be covered in Society capital support or designated donations earmarked for capital projects.
- February Balance Sheet:
 - Cash balance is invested in the local government investment pool (LGIP) with the State Treasurer's Office. The average interest rate for February was earning 4.56%.

Velasco motioned to approve the financials, Huggins seconded, m/c unanimous.

President & CEO Report:

President & CEO Tommy Stringfellow provided the following report:

- Hosting Richland County Economic Development Committee on March 24th
- Looking forward to hosting the Council of Mayors on April 23rd
- Had a successful lunch with the two new Richland County Council Members

- Saluda Skyride cabin is on display at the main plaza
- Met with Senator Darrell Jackson to solidify support for the Zoo requested State funding. Senator Jackson indicated he would be a yes vote.
- Discussed moving April Commission meeting to virtual format due to spring break.

Executive Session


Huggins motioned to enter executive session, Velasco seconded, m/c unanimous.

- Commissioners and Tommy Stringfellow entered executive session to discuss an issue pursuant to SC Code § 30-4-70(1)(a). No votes were taken during the session.

Huggins motioned to exit executive session, Shockley seconded, m/c unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 19 day of June 2025.

 _____, Secretary