

**Riverbanks Park Commission
Meeting Minutes
21 August 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: Cliff Bourke, Bob Davidson, Chip Huggins, Jeff Reeves, Deneen Shockley, Mike Velasco, Alana Williams.

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

Call to Order

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

Reading of the Minutes

The June 19, 2025, Commission Meeting minutes were approved as distributed.

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

Chairwoman's Remarks:

- Welcomed Tommy back from Botswana
- Received great feedback from Brew at the Zoo
- Saluda Skyride VIP preview is next week – hope to see everyone there.

President & CEO Report:

President & CEO Tommy Stringfellow provided the following report:

- Had a good turnout from county councils from Brew at the Zoo
- Lt. Governor Pamela Evette joined DJ Daniel for a visit. They had a great time.
- Hosted Joe Wilson's group on their annual bus tour

Finance Report:

Chief Administrative Officer Christie Vondrak provided the following report:

- July Dashboard Report:
 - Attendance was slightly down due to an extremely hot July, but per caps were up
 - Expenditures aligned to offset the lower than anticipated revenue.
- July Balance Sheet:
 - LGIP's average interest rate for July was 4.5%
 - Currently closing out fiscal year. Reconciliation of a few line items will take place over the next two months.
- July Statement of Revenues and Expenses:
 - Rides and attractions revenue is down, however there is a price increase that will go into effect on September 1
 - Classes and programs revenue is down due to birdhouse closure and new sea lion acclimation period. We should see that pick up soon.
 - Department expenditures were low to offset slower revenues.

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

Chief Administrative Officer Report:

Chief Administrative Officer Christie Vondrak provided the following report:

- Dates and Reminders
 - August 27 – Saluda Skyride Staff & Family Preview 5:30pm -7pm
 - August 28 – Saluda Skyride VIP Preview 6pm – 8pm
 - August 31 – Axe Throws for Rhinos
 - September 11 – Town Hall 1:30pm – 2:30pm Discovery Theatre
 - September 14 – Sean Kenney’s Nature Connects
 - September 15-19 – AZA Annual Conference
 - September 25 – Commission Meeting
 - September 26 – ZOOofari
- July Town Hall recap

Chief Operating Officer Report:

Chief Operating Officer Lochlan Wooten provided the following report:

- Getting a new giraffe, Kamari, from Memphis Zoo in October
- Two young male lions will arrive before the end of the year
- Tiny Trailblazers is open and doing well
- Saluda Skyride construction update
- Sean Kinney Lego Nature Connects opening mid-September
- Reverse the Red NGO partnership overview
- Membership trajectory is trending up
- Brew at the Zoo recap
- Walkthrough of Bridge to the Wild renderings that will be featured at VIP Skyride Preview

The meeting was adjourned.

Approved and adopted on the 25 day of September 2025.

 _____, Secretary