

STONE MOUNTAIN MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION  
DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEES MEETING  
December 16, 2014

A joint meeting of the Development and Finance Committees of the Stone Mountain Memorial Association was held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 16, 2014, at Evergreen Conference Center, Stone Mountain Park.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Scott Johnson, Chairman Finance Committee  
Greer Johnson, SMMA Vice Chairman  
Dick Childers  
Roy Roberts

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Becky Kelley (by Telephone)  
Joan Thomas

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Ray S. Smith III, Chairman Development Committee  
Perry Tindol

OTHERS PRESENT

Carolyn Meadows, Chairman SMMA  
Mark Williams, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources  
Bill Stephens, C.E.O.  
Gail Durham, Director of Finance  
Bob Cowhig, Director of Planning and Development  
Chuck Kelley, Director of Public Safety  
Duane Studdard, Administration Manager  
Other SMMA Staff

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order.

**Review of Year-to-Date Financial Statements**

Ms. Durham reported that year-to-date revenues through November 30, 2014 were \$9.6 million and better than budget. Total operating expenses were \$6.2 million compared to the budgeted amount of \$6.7 million. The net loss year to date was about \$1.9 million compared to the budgeted loss of about \$3.0 million.

The statement of cash flows reflects net cash provided by operating activities of about \$1.9 million year to date. Investments in capital assets year to date are \$2.9 million. The net decrease in cash through November is \$1.0 million. The cash and investment balance at the end of the period was about \$8.4 million.

## **Proposed Increase in Parking and Skyride Fees**

HFEC has proposed to raise the daily parking fee to \$15 and the Skyride fee to \$10. The annual parking pass would go up to \$50. The daily parking fee was increased in 2009, and the annual parking pass was increased nine years ago, in 2005. The Skyride was last increased in 2007 or seven years ago. The first formal request for an increase in fees was in 2012.

Daily parking fees at comparable attractions are: Six Flags \$20, Callaway Gardens \$18, Lake Lanier Islands \$20 during holidays, and Atlanta Braves \$15.

Mr. Stephens stated that the rent for HFEC will increase January 1, 2015 based on the CPI-U% increase. We anticipate this increase will be 1.5% – 2.0%.

Mr. Johnson stated that the Finance Committee will recommend to the full Board at the afternoon meeting to approve charging up to \$15 per day for parking fees, up to \$50 for an annual parking pass, and up to \$10 for all Skyride tickets. The committee members unanimously agreed to this recommendation.

## **Department of Public Safety**

Chief Kelley stated that there was an article in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* about black versus blue. Stone Mountain Park Police Department was referenced in the article. He explained the allegations by a Campground employee and the investigation that ensued. An Emory professor was interviewed during the investigation and no charges were filed. The case was not pursued. This professor is a frequent contributor to the AJC and wrote the article that was published.

## **Update from the Commissioner**

Commissioner Mark Williams updated the Board on the current activities with Georgia State Parks. Master planning is underway for Fort Yargo State Park. This is a public process and Fort Yargo is one of the most visited parks. Ms. Kelley said they are talking with the Corps of Engineers about some planning and projects at Red Top Mountain as well. The hotels and old 4-H center on Jekyll Island are being renovated and rebuilt. Fort Mac redevelopment plans are moving forward with Mr. Tyler Perry and the McPherson Implementing Local Redevelopment Authority. A project near the coast and another near Helen, Georgia were discussed.

The Commissioner stated that one piece of legislation would be introduced to report deer harvests on a hand-held device. This legislation is expected to pass.

Other legislation concerning the coastal marsh buffer was discussed. The hope is that a 25 foot marsh buffer will be subject to enforcement by law.

The movie industry in Georgia is producing revenue for parks, and Stone Mountain Park is familiar with this growing revenue stream. Ms. Johnson asked if State Parks were given credit in these films. Commissioner Williams stated that these credits were usually placed at the end of the film. Other parks and projects were discussed.

## **Adjourn to Executive Session**

Ms. Thomas made a motion to go into Executive Session and Mr. Childers seconded the motion. The committees unanimously approved the motion and the meeting was

suspended. SMMA staff was dismissed from the meeting. Committee members and Mr. Stephens remained in Executive Session.

After Executive Session the meeting reconvened and was adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Notes taken by

Gail Durham