



Dane County

Minutes - Final Unless Amended by Committee

Henry Vilas Zoo Commission

Consider:

Who benefits? Who is burdened?

Who does not have a voice at the table?

How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?

Tuesday, October 6, 2020

7:30 AM

Virtual Zoom Meeting: See top of agenda for
instructions on how to join the webinar or call in by
phone.

The October 6 Henry Vilas Zoo Commission meeting is being held virtually. The public can access the meeting with the Zoom application or by telephone.

To join the meeting in Zoom, click the following link (after you fill out the form, the meeting link and access information will be emailed to you):

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_M4mpl2FdTZapkGrtIKil6g

This link will be active until the end of the meeting.

To join the meeting by phone, dial-in using one of the following three phone numbers:

1-833-548-0276

1-833-548-0282

1-888-788-0099

When prompted, enter the following Webinar ID: 818 2417 3247

A. Call To Order

Others present: Ronda Schwetz, Joseph Darcangelo, Kristin Moala, Jess Thompson

The meeting was called to order by ANNE ROSS at 7:37am.

Present 5 - Supervisor CHUCK ERICKSON, TAG EVERS, SARAH JUSTUS, MICHAEL PETERSEN, and ANNE ROSS

Excused 2 - JONATHAN BECKER, and JEFFREY GUNDERSON

B. Consideration of Minutes

[2020](#)
[MIN-210](#)

Attachments: [2020 MIN-210](#)

A motion was made by ERICKSON, seconded by JUSTUS, that the minutes from the 9/8/2020 Zoo Commission meeting be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Action Items

none

D. Presentations

none

E. Reports to Committee

FY 2020-21 Budget Report

SCHWETZ went over the 2020-21 zoo budget. County departments were asked to reduce their budget by 2.5% because of lost revenue due to COVID-19. The zoo saved a lot of money by not filling vacant positions, which was possible because our staff really stepped up during the closure. We were also able to save money on utilities because of the conservation efforts we have incorporated into new buildings and construction.

SCHWETZ explained the changes in the City of Madison's contribution towards our operating budget. The city contributes 20% of the cost of the operating budget. The increase in costs to the city for 2021 is \$70,389. This increase in revenue offset the 2.5% requirement from the county.

ROSS asked if vacant positions could impact our AZA standing. SCHWETZ said no, AZA zoos and aquariums across the country have been impacted by COVID this year and we are actually doing better than most zoos. AZA will take COVID challenges in to account moving forward.

DARCANGELO added that the zoo also saved over \$20k by eliminating the paid internship position this year. That decision was made back in March right at the beginning of the shutdown. We also saved money by freezing all travel. The zoo has only used about \$10k of the \$25k allotted.

SCHWETZ talked about how the only other real change to the budget was for laundry service because we were able to hire 4 new staff positions since the hiring freeze ended.

ROSS asked if the County is anticipating more cuts. ERICKSON answered that the County does have a rainy day fund, but so much depends on sales tax revenue.

Zoo Report

SCHWETZ updated the Commission on the status of the zoo's next capital campaign. The Heart of the Zoo campaign is a large scale, long term project that will start with the giraffe/rhino area and then go to the cat exhibits and end at front gate. The capital campaign will be done in phases. The zoo's 2021 capital request for funds included money for RFP to get architectural firm to plan out phases. That is the first step and we can come up with a time frame once we get that information.

ERICKSON asked if this capital campaign would be on the same scale as the Arctic Passage.

SCHWETZ explained that we expect this to be more expensive. The Heart of the Zoo campaign will follow our Master Plan goals. It's not going to happen in 2021, but it will lay the groundwork for our future. We know we will have to do updates in phases.

EVERS asked about what kind of communication is happening with our neighbors as we get ready for future changes. He reiterated the need for the zoo to be good neighbors and would like to see us regularly update them. SCHWETZ answered that we are trying to ramp up our communication with the surrounding neighborhoods. We already sent out an update to them about our plans for celebrating Halloween virtually this year. We are also in the process of creating a quarterly e-newsletter we will send quarterly.

SCHWETZ updated the commission about the zoo's upcoming polar bear moves. Our male polar bear will be moving to the Kansas City Zoo and we will be getting a young male from the Toledo Zoo. The moves are a result of the recommendations from the AZA Species Survival Plan (SSP).

THOMPSON updated the commission about Zoo School. Zoo School is currently in its 4th week. It has been a big adjustment for the education team, but everything is running smoothly. We have 21 students in total. 12 Bayview students, 4 staff kids, and 5 scholarship kids. Approximately 60% are students of color and they are all 1-5th graders. Students do their virtual schooling at the zoo and our staff supports them. Our staff help with technical support and tutoring. The zoo takes over for free days and when there are classes like gym. We also supplement science lessons with onsite animal encounters and conservation projects.

F. Future Meeting Items and Dates

The next commission meeting was scheduled for Nov 10 at 7:30am.

G. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

none

H. Such Other Business as Allowed by Law

none

I. Adjourn

A motion was made by ERICKSON, seconded by EVERS, that the Zoo Commission meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Kristin Moala, pending approval by the Zoo Commission.