



# 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?*

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Thursday, June 11, 2020

7:30 AM Remote meeting: Call +1 (872) 240-3212; Access Code:  
626-170-853

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**Remote meeting: Call +1 (872) 240-3212; Access Code: 626-170-853**

The June 11th Henry Vilas Zoo Commission meeting is being held remotely. The public can access the meeting by calling the number below. Once prompted, enter in the access code and you will be connected to the meeting.

**NOTE: You will be placed on hold until the host joins.**

**Remote meeting: Call +1 (872) 240-3212**

**Access Code: 626-170-853**

**Present** 5 - JONATHAN BECKER, Supervisor CHUCK ERICKSON, TAG EVERS, JEFFREY GUNDERSON, and MICHAEL PETERSEN  
**Excused** 2 - SARAH JUSTUS, and ANNE ROSS

If you would like to speak, please fill out a registration form by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X28LX8Z>

#### A. Call To Order

*Others present: Ronda Schwetz, Joseph Darcangelo, Kristin Moala, Beth Peterson, Johanna Soto, Jess Thompson*

The meeting was called to order by Chuck Erickson at 7:35am

#### B. Consideration of Minutes

1. [2019  
MIN-471](#) Minutes of the 02/04/20 Zoo Commission Meeting

**Attachments:** [Zoo Commission Minutes Feb-2020](#)

A motion was made by ERICKSON, seconded by EVERS, that the Minutes be approved. The motion carried by a voice vote.

### C. Action Items

1. [2020  
RES-096](#) ACCEPTANCE OF TWO GRANTS TO SUPPORT CONSERVATION EDUCATION AT HENRY VILAS ZOO

**Sponsors:** ERICKSON, MILES, GRAY, HATCHER, JOERS, RIPP, RITT and RUSK

**Attachments:** [2020 RES-096](#)  
[2020 RES-096 Fiscal Note](#)

A motion was made by ERICKSON, seconded by EVERS, that the Resolution Requiring 2/3rds Vote be recommended for approval. The motion carried by a voice vote.

### D. Presentations

*None*

### E. Reports to Committee

### Zoo Report

Ronda talked about the preparations happening for the zoo's reopening. No outdoor buildings will be open, we have increased our cleaning protocols, staff will be required to wear face masks and guests will be encouraged to wear them. The only entrance/exit for the zoo will be from Randall Ave. Guests will walk a one way path throughout the grounds. Extra hand sanitizer stations have been installed, signage has gone up, there will be no zookeeper chats. Ronda mentioned that of the 230+ AZA zoos in the country, about 70 have reopened and the zoo has been utilizing best practices from those institutions to help with our reopening.

Ronda invited the commission to come to the zoo on Monday, June 15 for a soft open. The zoo will invite members, people from the surrounding neighborhoods, county staff, and volunteers to come in and test out the new one way path to help identify areas where we can improve.

Ronda mentioned that June and July are the months with the biggest revenue for the zoo so it is fortunate we are going to be able to open in some capacity for part of this busy season.

EVERS asked if there was a limit to the number of guests allowed in the zoo. Ronda explained that the zoo has been working with the city and county to come up with the best way to handle guests since we don't require tickets and don't have software capacity to sell timed entry tickets. There will be staff at each gate and throughout the park to assist with guests. We will be counting all guests entering and have checks once we hit 500 and 800 to ensure proper social distancing is being met. Joseph Darcangelo added that the safety of our guests, staff, and animals has been our focus from the beginning. He added that we are working with Park Rangers for the first two weekends we are open to assist with parking and any lines at the gate.

EVERS asked if the zoo has a public address system and if that will be utilized. Joseph said that the speaker system in the zoo does not have great sound quality and doesn't reach all areas of the zoo, but is a tool we can use in addition to the other systems we have in place.

BECKER asked how the grill and bathrooms were going to look with reopening. Ronda said there would be no indoor seating in the grill. Guests will go in through automatic doors to order inside, but will pick up their food from the outside to go window. The packaging for food has also changed so there are no shared condiments and utensils will be single. Keeping with our mission to focus on sustainability, all packaging will be compostable. Bathroom doors will all be propped open and there are contactless dryers and increased cleaning for all the bathrooms.

ERICKSON asked if the zoo's extended hours were still going to happen this summer. Ronda explained that we do not have the capacity this year so the hours will not change. AZA will be making allowances because of COVID-19.

Beth Petersen added that there is a risk for some of our animals to catch COVID-19. (Primates, big cats, badger, skunk) That risk will affect when certain buildings are able to open in the future. Since we have known cases in big cats at the Bronx Zoo, we are taking extra precautions in those areas and will take a conservative approach with those animals.

*Ronda said that of the zoos that have opened already, there have been no reports of COVID-19 transmission.*

*Ronda introduced Johanna Soto, the new Zoo Manager to the commission.*

**F. Future Meeting Items and Dates**

*None*

**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 BECKER, seconded by GUNDERSON, that the zoo commission be adjourned at 8:29am. The motion carried by unanimously.**

*Respectfully submitted by Kristin Moala*