



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, September 8, 2020

7:30 AM

Remote Call - United States: +1 (872) 240-3212

One-touch: tel:+18722403212,,489441229#

Access Code: 489-441-229

Remote Access: United States: +1 (872) 240-3212

One-touch: tel:+18722403212,,489441229#

Access Code: 489-441-229

Remote Meeting: Call 1-872-240-3212 Access Code: 489-441-229

The September 8, 2020 Zoo Commission Meeting is being held remotely. The public can access the meeting by calling the number above. 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.

If you would like to register to speak, please fill out a registration form by clicking on the following link:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/755GBRW>

A. Call To Order

Others present: Ronda Schwetz, Joseph Darcangelo, Kristin Moala

The meeting was called to order by ANNE ROSS at 7:35am.

Present 7 - JONATHAN BECKER, Supervisor CHUCK ERICKSON, TAG EVERS, JEFFREY GUNDERSON, SARAH JUSTUS, MICHAEL PETERSEN, and ANNE ROSS

B. Consideration of Minutes

[2020
MIN-143](#)

Minutes from the August 11th, 2020 Henry Vilas Zoo Commission Meeting

Attachments: [2020 MIN-143](#)

A motion was made by ERICKSON, seconded by JUSTUS, that the Minutes of the 8.11.2020 Zoo Commission be approved. The motion carried by a voice vote.

C. Action Items

1. [2020 RES-167](#) AWARDING CONTRACT WITH TRADITIONS LLC FOR ZOO LIGHTS AND AMENDING THE OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

Sponsors: ERICKSON, HATCHER, RATCLIFF and RIPP

Attachments: [2020 RES-167](#)
[2020 RES-167 Fiscal Note](#)
[2020 RES-167 CONTRACT #14106](#)

SCHWETZ talked about Resolution 167, the contract for Zoo Lights. In previous years, all Zoo Lights revenue was split with the vendor and that will change with this contract. The vendor will install, maintain, and store lights for a fee and the Zoo will purchase some year-round permanent lighting for building structures. The Zoo will retain all revenue. The contract is for one year with an option to extend four additional years. Based on the proposals received the contract was awarded to a local vendor who has also done lighting at the airport. The vendor will be onsite for the opening weekend of Zoo Lights and will be able to respond to any technical issues within 12 hours.

SCHWETZ explained that a separate Capital budget amendment for \$50,000 to pay for the permanent building perimeter lighting using leftover funds from other zoo projects that were completed under budget, including the Gate 9 replacement and the Aviary roof repairs.

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

D. Presentations

None

E. Reports to Committee

Zoo Report

SCHWETZ gave an update on what the Education department is doing this fall. Due to COVID-19, Madison Metropolitan School District schools are starting the 2020-2021 school year with 100% virtual instead of in-class learning. Many families, especially those in underserved populations, will struggle to keep elementary students engaged and successful in completing virtual learning, as well as receiving meals that would normally be available as part of the in-class school day. Zoo School started on September 8. We partnered with the Bayview Community Center to identify students from and have a total of 20 students split in to two classrooms on grounds getting help with virtual learning. One classroom is utilizing the Glacier Grille and the second classroom is in the Discovery Center. We have two staff members in each classroom. We are using some of the scholarship money the County approved last year and are currently fundraising to cover the rest of the costs.

SCHWETZ said that the County is moving forward with the manager and zookeeper positions that were frozen during the initial COVID closure. The Zoo has already done interviews for the Zoo Manager position and hired a person from Oregon.

SCHWETZ gave an animal update. We were able to acquire a young female harbor seal from the Alaska Zoo. Sammie recently completed her quarantine and has just started getting introduced to our two current seals. The introductions have been going well and we will be making a public announcement about her arrival soon.

In October, we will be sending Nuniq to another zoo so that he can breed. We will get a younger polar bear to replace Nuniq. The SSP recommendation thinks that Berit, our female polar bear, will be a good fit for this new bear. There are only 42 polar bears in U.S. zoos and six different zoos are participating in this current move. The moves ensure genetic diversity

DARCANGELO talked about guest attendance. The Zoo is down about 50% since reopening in June, but guest donations are only down \$10,000.

ERICKSON asked if that figure was strictly about money coming in from donation tubes/boxes and DARCANGELO confirmed that it was donations only, did not include concessions.

DARCANGELO said that our per-guest revenue has increased by almost 30 cents since reopening. The community is really supportive and it shows. He credited our outreach efforts for getting the message out.

SCHWETZ added that the one-way path through the Zoo has been very well received. We have gate greeters welcoming everyone and guests have really responded to that.

BECKER asked about memberships and if they have been impacted by the closure.

MOALA said that the membership program is still going and we currently have almost 400 members. We only started offering memberships in January and have been focusing on getting general donations over memberships to make up for revenue lost during the closure. There will be another membership push at the end of the year and promoted for the holiday giving season.

ERICKSON mentioned that calling memberships the 'Conservation Club' might be

confusing people and suggested we work on the messaging around the new membership model.

DARCANGELO gave an update about Centerplate. While July was a good month for concessions in the Zoo, we have a fee based account with them and there is still a deficit for the year because we were closed for three months and we will owe them money at the end of the year.

EVERS said it doesn't seem reasonable in a COVID year and suggested renegotiating the contract.

DARCANGELO agreed and said we have been talking with them.

ERICKSON asked for a more detailed report about Zoo concessions for the next commission meeting.

ANN asked the commission to send DARCANGELO any questions about their contract before the next meeting so he can get the information together.

SCHWETZ set up the next meeting for Tuesday, October 6 at 7:30am.

F. Future Meeting Items and Dates

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 BECKER, that the Zoo Commission meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:40am.

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