



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, August 11, 2020

7:30 AM

Remote Meeting: Call 1-646-749-3122 Access Code: 890-332-357

The August 11th 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/CBSQRPP>

Registrations will be accepted until 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting. Staff will then call you into the meeting when the item is before the committee.

A. Call To Order

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

The meeting was called to order by ANNE ROSS at 7:33am.

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

B. Consideration of Minutes

[2020](#)
[MIN-101](#)

Minutes of the 07/072020 Zoo Commission Meeting

Attachments: [Zoo Commission Meeting Minutes 07-Jul-2020](#)

A motion was made by GUNDERSON, seconded by ERICKSON, that the Minutes of the 7.7.2020 Commission meeting be approved. The motion carried by a voice vote.

C. Action Items

None

D. Presentations

None

E. Reports to Committee

Zoo Report - Discussion of budget 2021

SCHWETZ went over the 2021 Zoo budget, noting that it looks very similar to what was talked about at the Commission meeting last month. The only changes were the amount the City of Madison is contributing, which is 20% of the operating budget, and there was an increase in uniform laundry because we have increased staff over the last 2 years.

THOMPSON explained what the Education Team has been doing to alter our fall education programs to meet the needs of the community this year. Because of COVID-19, MMSD is starting the year with 100% virtual learning. Online learning will continue through at least October, and could potentially go into 2021. We have been doing a tremendous amount of work to create a fall school site that will have space for 20 kids on grounds split between two classrooms. All of the spots will be for scholarship students. We have partnered with the Bayview Community Center and will offer spots to families with higher needs. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks will be provided. MSCR is providing training for this program.

EVERS asked how much funding is still needed for this program.

THOMPSON said it costs approximately \$2500-\$3600 per student depending on how long virtual schooling lasts. We have some money left if our scholarship fund that can be used for this, but will still need to do some fundraising.

ROSS asked if there are other programs like this happening around Madison and wanted to know if this would put stress on zoo staff.

THOMPSON said that MSCR has community sites all over Madison they are trying to coordinate. The Zoo is fortunate to have two great educators on staff already who can run each classroom and we will be looking for intern support to help them.

SCHWETZ added that we are working with a marketing firm, AFFIRM, to help us with an outreach effort specifically to raise funds for these scholarships.

DARCANGELO updated the Commission on Zoo Lights. We are using a new vendor this year and they will be creating a whole new experience for guests to enjoy on along our current one way path throughout the Zoo. Last year, Zoo Lights revenue was split 50/50 with the lighting company, and this year we will be renting the lights, not sharing in ticket sales.

ERICKSON asked about how much gross revenue the Zoo is hoping to get this year from Zoo Lights.

DARCANGELO said our projections will hopefully give us between \$200,000 - \$250,000.

SCHWETZ also pointed out that there is some Capital funds left over from the lower restroom renovations that the Zoo will use to install permanent building perimeter lighting we can use year round for events in the future.

DARCANGELO gave an update on our current attendance numbers for this year. Since the Zoo reopened in June, our attendance is down, which was to be expected, but we have been having consistent attendance each day. Since we reopened, the Zoo has had 92,000 guests. We have received \$73,000 from donor tubes this year, and an additional \$27,000 from checks and bequests mailed to us.

SCHWETZ added we also have gotten over \$21,000 in online donations with our We Missed You at the Zoo campaign.

BECKER asked how the Zoo was doing with the membership program.

MOALA said the Zoo has approximately 1,000 members. The majority of memberships were sold at the beginning of the year when we first launched the new models. We are focusing on the We Missed You at the Zoo campaign right now, but plan on advertising memberships at the end of the year again.

ERICKSON asked about the change in revenue from this year compared to last year, noting that it would come up in the budget process.

SCHWETZ said the Zoo is saving money on three unfilled positions right now and with all travel suspended and the Zoo closed for three months, we have only spent about 50% of the operating budget so far.

ROSS would like to see a budget comparison at the next Commission meeting.

ERICKSON added that he would like to see what was spent on advertising and how much in-kind advertising was given to us in the We Missed You at the Zoo campaign.

SCHWETZ gave an update on our new animals. The Zoo just picked up a 1-year old female seal from the Alaska Zoo and a Von der Decken hornbill.

ROSS asked how guests were responding to the Zoo's COVID-19 restrictions.

SCHWETZ said that the feedback has been almost entirely positive. Guests really like the one-way path through the zoo and have commented on how easy it is to maintain proper social distancing and see animals. Volunteers are now greeting all guests when they arrive and that is also being very well received.

ROSS asked about how our conservation efforts have changed because of COVID.

SCHWETZ talked about the various efforts that we are still actively engaged with. The Zoo Run will be held virtually this year and will raise money for Amur tigers, red pandas, and orangutans. The Zoo is still one of the leads in AZA for the Orangutan SAFE (Saving Animals From Extinction) program, our conservation days have all been held virtually this year so a lot of things are still happening, they just look a lot different this year.

F. Future Meeting Items and Dates

The Commission scheduled the next meeting for September 8, 2020 at 7:30am via Zoom.

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 JUSTUS, seconded by ERICKSON, that the Zoo Commission be adjourned at 8:31am. The motion carried by unanimously.

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