

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING THE ) RESOLUTION NO. 06-3659  
OREGON ZOO FUTURE VISION COMMITTEE )  
) Introduced by Metro Councilor Brian  
Newman

WHEREAS, a public zoo located in Portland’s Washington Park has operated continuously since 1887, which makes the Oregon Zoo the oldest zoo west of the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon Zoo is now the most popular paid attraction in the State of Oregon with over 1.3 million visitors annually, an operating budget of \$22.7 million, and a staff of 148 full-time employees and several hundred temporary seasonal employees; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon Zoo was regionalized in 1976 and is owned and operated on behalf of the citizens of the region by Metro and governed by the Metro Council; and

WHEREAS, the zoo is strongly supported by the community through the Oregon Zoo Foundation which has over 40,000 household members and an active and engaged board made up of business and community leaders; and

WHEREAS, voters have supported the zoo by approving property tax levies and general obligation bonds on seven separate occasions since 1954, most recently in 1996 with the approval of the Great Northwest exhibits; and

WHEREAS, the zoo’s living collection includes over 1,880 animals representing 270 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates, including 83 species listed as either endangered or threatened; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon Zoo’s mission is "Inspiring our community to create a better future for wildlife," which represents the zoo’s commitment to conservation and environmental education; and

WHEREAS, the zoo industry and exhibits have changed significantly over the past decade, but the current master plan that guides improvements and programming at the Oregon Zoo was written in 1990 and is no longer considered a relevant guide to the future of the zoo; and


WHEREAS, the current fiscal model of the zoo is unsustainable, and despite increases in attendance and revenue, Metro has had to reduce staff and expenses at the zoo due to the significant growth of wages, benefits and utility costs; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Council and the Oregon Zoo Foundation Board held a joint meeting on August 1, 2005 to discuss these trends and jointly agreed that a long-range planning effort was necessary to explore the future of the zoo and resolve master planning, programming, and operating challenges;

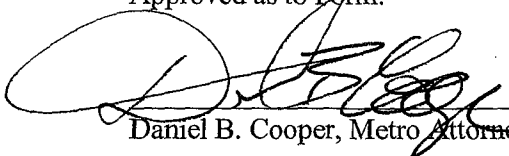
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE METRO COUNCIL THAT,

1. The Metro Council hereby establishes the Oregon Zoo Future Vision Committee to recommend updates to the zoo's master plan, changes to the zoo's conservation and environmental education programs, and operating reforms to address the zoo's systemic fiscal challenges;
2. The Council President has nominated and the Metro Council hereby appoints the committee co-chairs, members, and ex-officio members as set forth in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein;
3. The Oregon Zoo Future Vision Committee shall meet approximately monthly for 15 months between now and June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007 to fulfill the committee charge as set forth in Exhibit B attached hereto and incorporated herein, with administrative, technical and research support from Metro staff at the Oregon Zoo, Metro Council Office, Office of Metro Attorney, Office of the Chief Operating Officer, and Finance and Administrative Services Department, as needed.
4. The committee co-chairs shall present to the Metro Council and the Oregon Zoo Foundation Board the committee's recommendations by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 13<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2006

  
David Bragdon, Council President

Approved as to Form:

  
Daniel B. Cooper, Metro Attorney

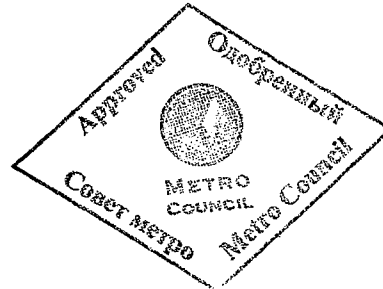


Exhibit A  
Resolution 06-3659

The Oregon Zoo Future Vision Committee is being asked to serve on a short-term basis, beginning in mid April and concluding by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007, meeting periodically to make recommendations to update the zoo's master plan, change the zoo's conservation and environmental education programs and operating reforms to address the zoo's systemic fiscal challenges. Metro staff will serve as technical and administrative support to the committee and provide background information.

The following individuals have been identified as committee members. They are:

**Co-Chairs:**

Brian Newman (co-chair)	Metro Councilor
Penny Serrurier (co-chair)	Oregon Zoo Foundation Board President

**Metro/Oregon Zoo Foundation Members:**

David Bragdon	Metro Council President
Robert Liberty	Metro Councilor
Bruce Berning	Oregon Zoo Foundation Board Member
D. Carter MacNichol	Oregon Zoo Foundation Board Member
Donna Morrow	Oregon Zoo Foundation Board Member
C. Kregg Hanson	Oregon Zoo Foundation Board Member

**Citizen Members:**

Sandra McDonough	Portland Business Alliance Director
John Inskeep	IFC Foundation
George Passadore	Wells Fargo Northwest, Former Chief Executive Officer
Walt Pollock	Portland General Electric, Former Vice President

**Ex-officio members:**

Tony Vecchio	Oregon Zoo Director
Jeff Miller	MERC General Manager
Michael Jordan	Metro Chief Operating Officer

Exhibit B  
Resolution 06-3659

**Committee Charge**

The Oregon Zoo Future Vision Committee is charged with crafting recommendations on strengthening and improving the Oregon Zoo consistent with its conservation and environmental education mission. The Committee will be asked to advise the Metro Council and the Oregon Zoo Foundation on the following questions:

- *What should the Oregon Zoo be like in 10 years?*
- *How should the institution change to incorporate public tastes, interests and needs?*
- *How can the zoo better achieve its mission of “inspiring our community to create a better future for wildlife”?*
- *What changes need to be made in the Oregon Zoo’s master plan, programming, and operations to ensure its success and stability in the future?*

Related to those questions, the Oregon Zoo Future Vision Committee will make recommendations on the following:

1. An update of the Oregon Zoo’s master plan to guide physical improvements and new exhibits at the zoo for the next decade. Specifically, the master plan must be designed to be fiscally and environmentally sustainable and responsive to input from OZF members, zoo patrons and the general public. The zoo should continue to inspire and entertain visitors in ways that are consistent with its conservation and environmental education mission. The plan will include a realistic phasing and financing strategy for implementation and operations. Financing strategies could include operating levies, general obligation or revenue bonds, federal and state grants, private fundraising from foundations, businesses and individuals, new enterprise activities, and other financing mechanisms.
2. Changes and improvements to the Oregon Zoo’s conservation and environmental education programming. This may include expanding and/or creating new program activities while reducing and/or eliminating others, as well as identifying new partnerships and financing strategies to fund program activities.
3. A new operations plan and business model to stabilize the Oregon Zoo’s day-to-day maintenance and operations in light of challenging fiscal trends. The committee will look at reducing costs and increasing revenue in order to stabilize the zoo’s finances and should include recommendations on how to make the zoo operations more entrepreneurial in nature.

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 06-3659 FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING THE OREGON ZOO FUTURE VISION COMMITTEE**

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Date: March 20, 2006

Prepared by: Amelia Porterfield

## **BACKGROUND**

The Oregon Zoo's mission is "Inspiring our community to create a better future for wildlife," which represents the zoo's commitment to conservation and environmental education. The zoo has been an industry leader in these activities.

The zoo industry and exhibits have changed significantly over the past decade, but the current master plan that guides improvements and programming at the Oregon Zoo was written in 1990 and is no longer considered a relevant guide to the future of the zoo.

Additionally, the Zoo has recently seen the need for a new operating model that incorporates the physical site planning with operational needs, revenue and expenses. There is a recognized need for the Zoo to operate in a businesslike, entrepreneurial and innovative manner while maintaining the rigorous standards required by the public agency. The current fiscal model of the zoo is unsustainable, and despite increases in attendance and revenue, Metro has had to reduce staff and expenses at the zoo due to the significant growth of labor and utility costs.

In recognition of these factors, the Metro Council and the Oregon Zoo Foundation Board held a joint meeting on August 1, 2005 to discuss these trends and jointly agreed that a long-range planning effort was necessary to explore the future of the zoo and resolve master planning, programming, and operating challenges.

## **ANALYSIS/INFORMATION**

### **1. Known Opposition:**

There is no known opposition.

### **2. Legal Antecedents:**

Metro Code Chapter 2.19, regarding advisory committees, requires that any official task force be created by the council and appointments be made by the Council President subject to confirmation by the council.

### **3. Anticipated Effects:**

The committee will make recommendations as to updates to the zoo's master plan, changes to the zoo's conservation and environmental education programs, and operating reforms to address the zoo's systemic fiscal challenges.

### **4. Budget Impacts:**

The Council President's proposed 06-07 budget includes \$250,000 for Master Plan work. It is anticipated that there will also be some staff time spent on research and technical support in the Metro Council Office, the Office of the Chief Operating Officer (council intern) and the Oregon Zoo in the remainder of this fiscal year and in 06-07.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Staff recommends the Chief Operating Officer approve Resolution No. 06-3659.