



**METRO COUNCIL MEETING**  
Meeting Minutes  
February 18, 2016  
Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber

Councilors Present: Council President Tom Hughes, and Councilors Craig Dirksen, Sam Chase, Shirley Craddick, Kathryn Harrington, and Bob Stacey

Councilors Excused: Councilor Carlotta Collette

Council President Tom Hughes called the regular council meeting to order at 2:03pm.

**1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION**

LeeAnne Ferguson, Portland: Ms. Ferguson provided testimony on Safe Routes to School program funding and urged the Council to invest \$15 million in dedicated funds for the program.

**2. CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion:	Councilor Bob Stacey moved to adopt items on the consent agenda.
Second:	Councilor Shirley Craddick seconded the motion.

Vote:	Council President Hughes, and Councilors Dirksen, Chase, Craddick, Harrington, and Stacey voted in support of the motion. The vote was 6 ayes, the motion passed.
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**3. RESOLUTIONS**

3.1 **Resolution No. 16-4683**, For the Purpose of Accepting the Chief Operating Officer's Recommendation and Eliminating the Remote Elephant Center Set-Aside Fund from the Metro Council's Recommended List of Projects to be Funded by Metro Ballot Measure 26-29

Motion:	Councilor Shirley Craddick moved to approve Resolution 16-4683.
Second:	Councilor Bob Stacey seconded the motion.

Council President Hughes called on Ms. Martha Bennett, Metro's Chief Operating Officer (COO), to provide her recommendation. Ms. Bennett shared a brief project background, noting the following:

- The REC was envisioned at the time that the 2008 Oregon Zoo bond measure passed and that the Metro Council at the time directed staff to explore the feasibility of developing an offsite elephant habitat,
- Since that time, staff has conducted extensive due diligence on the suitability of property, financial projections and operational plans,

- And at the direction of the Metro Council, the analysis was presented to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party panel of reviewers (the REC Task Force) for input and recommendation.

Ms. Bennett invited Mr. Kregg Hanson, Metro's Remote Elephant Center (REC) Task Force Chair, to provide brief comments on behalf of the task force. Mr. Hanson explained that the task force was convened to weigh staff's analysis, ask questions, explore options, and develop a recommendation for the COO. He noted the diverse make-up of the task force, which included those with expertise in research, facilities planning, design, and construction, urban design, law, and business. Mr. Hanson also discussed the process that the task force went through, including: holding task force meetings, individual research assignments, touring Elephant Lands, talking with Oregon Zoo staff, studying the plight of elephants around the world (especially Asian elephants), discussing options for possible locations, studying the Zoo vision for elephants, studying several US elephant remote centers that are struggling, and thoroughly evaluating the extensive analysis completed by Oregon Zoo and Metro staff on a remote site. He stated that the REC Task Force was unanimous in their decision that a REC was not feasible, noting the primary reasons for this decision being that it would place Zoo operations and programs in jeopardy, the project would require a minimum of a \$50 million endowment for construction and ongoing costs (largest to-date by the Oregon Zoo Foundation being \$6 million), and now that Elephant Lands is complete, there is no compelling need to construct a REC as the elephants' space has quadrupled and the new facilities are excellent. Mr. Hanson concluded his comments by adding that there are many things that that Oregon Zoo and the Oregon Zoo Foundation can do, and are doing, in the way of conservation to help elephants around the world.

Ms. Bennett explained that if the Metro Council chooses to adopt this resolution, then staff will work with the Oregon Zoo Bond Citizens' Oversight Committee and with Council to discuss how any funds that had been set aside for a REC will be reallocated, noting that some of the funds were donated by the Oregon Zoo Foundation and that not all were bond funds. She invited Metro staff,

### ***Council Questions***

In response to councilor inquiry, Ms. Bennett and Ms. Heidi Rahn, Metro staff, spoke to the specific language of the bond measure and listed the eight projects specified in the bond (Condors of the Columbia, an upgrade to the penguin water filtration system, a new veterinary medical center, upgrade to the primate habitat, expansion of the rhino habitat, a new education center, a new polar bear habitat, and an expansion of the elephant habitat (now called Elephant Lands). In response to councilor inquiry, Ms. Rahn also clarified that the expansion of the elephant habitat (Elephant Lands) and the major upgrade of the infrastructure of the habitat cost \$57 million (\$3 million of which came from the Oregon Zoo Foundation), out of the \$125 million bond levy. Ms. Rahn also clarified that the \$7.2 million that had been set aside for a REC feasibility study had been set aside by the Metro Council via resolution and that the bond measure itself didn't specify that as a project or an outcome.

Council President Hughes noted that there were members of the public who had filled out testimony cards relating to the resolution and invited them to provide testimony at this time.

Ms. Janet Marcley, Portland: Ms. Marcley spoke in opposition of the resolution and discussed the need for an elephant sanctuary.

Ms. Katherine Barshaw, Portland: Ms. Barshaw spoke in opposition of the resolution and provided materials to support her argument that the public was misled regarding an offsite elephant facility.

Mr. Doug Steves, Portland: Mr. Steves spoke in opposition of the resolution and expressed his opinion that there was a misrepresentation of the use of funds. He requested that funding information should be made more readily available to the public.

Ms. Kimberlee Turner, Vancouver: Ms. Turner spoke in opposition of the resolution and questioned the make-up of the REC Task Force, noting that there should have been a representative from a sanctuary.

Ms. Nancy Shaw, Vancouver: Ms. Shaw spoke in opposition of the resolution and discussed the need for improved elephant health and welfare.

Ms. Janet Conklin, Portland: Ms. Conklin discussed her time working with elephant conservation in South Africa and other sanctuaries in the US, providing materials on one preserve for the Council. She requested that the plan for a REC be put on hold, but that the Council consider building it in the future.

Mr. Derek Conrad, Beaverton: Mr. Conrad, a member of the Oregon Zoo Foundation, spoke in support of the resolution, noting his reasons that the REC should not be built as too high in construction and operating cost, environmental impacts (both waste and impact on water systems), and the new Elephant Lands habitat will provide additional space needed at this time for the herd.

Ms. Nancy Hinnen, Portland: Ms. Hinnen read written testimony from Mr. Robert Maloney in support of the resolution, which focused on the obstacles to the REC project including major impact on waterways, problems with finding suitable locations, & ongoing expense unless the REC was open to the public.

#### ***Council Discussion***

Councilors thanked those who provided testimony and thanked staff, the REC Task Force, and the Oregon Zoo Foundation for their hard work over the years on the feasibility study. Councilors expressed disappointment that the REC wasn't feasible and noted that it had been an exciting idea, but that the focus should now be on the herd and aiding elephant species around the world.

Vote:

Council President Hughes, and Councilors Dirksen, Chase, Craddick, Stacey, and Harrington voted in support of the motion. The vote was 6 ayes, the motion <u>passed</u> .
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#### **4. CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER COMMUNICATION**

Ms. Martha Bennett provided an update on the following events or items: the release of the first discussion draft of the Metro Equity Strategy for a public comment period on Monday, the third Small Business Open House with Multnomah County on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the Chehalem Ridge kickoff event for the master plan project on February 24<sup>th</sup> at Centro Cultural in Cornelius.

#### **5. COUNCILOR COMMUNICATION**

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings or events: the Equitable Housing Program presentation to the Multnomah County Commission, update from the February 18<sup>th</sup> JPACT meeting, the Governor's Transportation Visioning Panel forum on March 14<sup>th</sup> at PDX, upcoming Oregon

Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue, and thank you to the Oregon Zoo Foundation and Metro staff for their hard work on Resolution No. 16-4683.

**6. ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Council President Hughes adjourned the regular meeting at 3:26 p.m. The Metro Council will convene the next regular council meeting on Thursday, March 3, 2016 at 2 p.m. at the Metro Regional Center in the council chamber.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alexandra Eldridge".

Alexandra Eldridge, Regional Engagement & Legislative Coordinator

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF FEB. 18, 2016**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Doc. Date</b>	<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Doc. Number</b>
1.0	Testimony, handout	02/18/2016	Testimony from LeeAnne Fergason	021816c-01
2.1	Minutes	02/4/2016	Council Meeting Minutes from February 4, 2016	021816c-02
3.1	Presentation, Handout	02/18/2016	Comments from REC Task Force Chair Kregg Hanson	021816c-03
3.1	Testimony, handout	02/18/2016	Testimony from Katherine Barshaw	021816c-04
3.1	Testimony, handout	02/18/2016	Testimony from Janet Conklin	021816c-05
3.1	Testimony, handout	02/18/2016	Written testimony from Robert Maloney, Jr.	021816c-06