

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL CONVENTION CENTER, ZOO AND VISITOR FACILITIES
COMMITTEE OF THE METROPOLITAN SERVICE DISTRICT

July 18, 1989

Room 440

Committee Members Present: David Knowles (Chair), Tom DeJardin (Vice Chair), Roger Buchanan and George Van Bergen

Committee Members Absent: None

Acting Chair Tom DeJardin called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

1. Zoo Tax Levy Worksession -- Review Updated Zoo Five-Year Financial Plan Data; Continue Master Plan Review

Sherry Sheng, Director of the Metro Washington Park Zoo, distributed "Zoo Master Plan Update" dated July 18, 1989.

Ray Phelps, Director of Finance & Administration, distributed "Responses to Questions on Zoo Five Year Financial Forecast" dated July 18, 1989. Mr. Phelps answered Council staff's questions with regard to the Zoo Five-Year Financial Plan; property tax revenues; increased contingency line transfers; the Zoo's Master Plan in connection with the Five-Year Financial Plan; some of the Zoo's projected Capital Budget items such as the Alaska Exhibit, Research and Propagation Center, and Animals Around Us; and donations and bequests to the Zoo.

Councilor Van Bergen requested a report from the law firm who handled the continuing litigation with a contractor hired to build the Alaskan Tundra Exhibit. He noted it involved a continuing \$5,000 annual capital expense and wanted to know the progress of the case, if any.

Chair Knowles introduced Steven Carpenter, Council Intern; Brian Smith, Executive Management Intern, and Linda Craig, a meeting/planning specialist. Chair Knowles said Ms. Craig wished to work with the Zoo in a volunteer capacity. Chair Knowles explained to those present that the Committee and staff were exploring whether the upcoming serial levy fit into the Zoo's Master Plan.

Ms. Sheng said there were advantages and disadvantages to a master plan. She said those familiar with the Zoo's Master Plan knew all of the Zoo's physical development was plotted to the last detail. She said concepts were developed for exhibits but whether those concepts could be fully realized when funds were available for implementation was a different matter. She said the Master Plan should be tested on a periodic basis.

Ms. Sheng said four elements should be addressed or answered: 1) Is the project concept relevant and best suited for the site, given recent physical development at the Zoo? 2) Does the project present the best balance in providing an exhibit with public appeal and a facility to house and breed endangered species? 3) Does the exhibit enable the zoo to fulfill its education and public information mandate in an effective way?

4) Are there alternatives that more effectively address the above concerns and could they be implemented?

Ms. Sheng said it was important to evaluate each element of the Master Plan. She said conservation was an urgent issue to consider when replanning older exhibits. She said in planning any new exhibits, staff had to test older concepts and see if they provided a reasonable balance in the Zoo's ability to generate attendance and public interest and at the same time allow staff to assist the zoological world to contribute in the breeding and/or housing of endangered species. She said those issues were difficult to predict three or five years into the future.

Ms. Sheng said one of the Master Plan's guiding policy statements dealt with flexibility in assessment of projects and possible reorganization to best meet the needs of the time. She said in the last few years capital projects had followed the Master Plan closely. She said a good example would be the Africa! exhibit which featured the Savannah. Ms. Sheng said staff, after evaluation, realized the geotechnical nature of the site was such that the originally proposed dry "coppi" habitat exhibit would be impossible to implement and staff opted to construct an African rainforest instead. Ms. Sheng said fortunately the budget was sufficient and construction would begin in a month.

Ms. Sheng discussed the proposed Bear Grotto and the best options for that exhibit. She said the Master Plan did not allow for the habitat approach when it originally proposed the bear exhibit. She said the Zoo's General Curator felt a habitat approach created an environment and the semblance of animals in their natural habitat which was preferable to the biogenetic approach of displaying species. She said staff was troubled by the prospect of having a much better facility when there were not sufficient funds to implement such a facility. Ms. Sheng said the East Bear proposal as defined in the Master Plan was very limited.

Ms. Sheng said staff recommended the "Animals Around Us" projects should progress before other projects proposed. She said staff recommended delaying Central Plaza, Cascade Meadow and a proposed visitors services facility. She said staff could do the financial cost estimates on Animals Around Us more accurately than the other projects. She said it was better to do one project and do it well. Ms. Sheng said with regard to the Central Plaza, light rail issues were unknown, but did appear to be progressing. She said if light rail was implemented, a Zoo station could be developed in conjunction with light rail and physical renovations to improve accessibility to the Zoo and the orientation area for visitors could be incorporated. She said staff felt it best to wait on the development of Central Plaza or similar projects until light rail issues were decided.

Chair Knowles asked what staff planned to do with the funds from the \$1.3 million dollar levy. Ms. Sheng said staff had two options. The first was

to save the money until staff had a clear concept on implementation of the Bear Grotto. She said the second option was to renovate the Children's Zoo. She understood Council staff's concern that it was necessary to check with the General Counsel to ascertain if that was a legal option for those funds. She said staff felt these were policy decisions and staff's overall concern was with the quality of projects done.

Don Carlson, Council Administrator, said fund expenditures could possibly be limited to ballot title only. The Committee and staff discussed serial levy issues further. Councilor Van Bergen requested a transcript of Ms. Sheng's testimony on the Zoo's Master Plan and said her testimony was extremely helpful. He agreed the Master Plan had become defunct but said it did serve an important purpose at one time. Chair Knowles concurred with Councilor Van Bergen and said a formal policy change should be made. He said a resolution should be drafted which adopted changes in the Master Plan's priorities. Chair Knowles requested this topic be scheduled again as an agenda item for discussion purposes. Mr. Phelps said if the Master Plan changed, the Five-Year Financial Plan would need revision.

2. Portland/Oregon Visitor's Association, FY88-89 Year-End Marketing & Sales Report

Chris Stone, P/OVA, said a great deal of interest was generated by the Oregon Convention Center (OCC). He said P/OVA opened a new office in Washington, D. C., last September and said Kim Lord was in charge of that office. Mr. Stone briefly discussed the proposed Headquarters Hotel. Councilor Van Bergen expressed concern about coordination on that project with the Portland Development Commission (PDC). Mr. Stone discussed promotion and distributed "1989/'89 - July 1 - June 30 Year End Marketing and Sales Report Oregon Convention Center." Mr. Stone discussed MBE/WBE requirements and said a minority person had been hired and other MBE/WBE requirements fulfilled. He said they were trying to increase minority opportunities in the hospitality industry.

Councilor Buchanan asked why a P/OVA office in Washington, D. C., was necessary. Mr. Stone explained 35 to 40 percent of all associations had headquarters in Washington, D. C. He said if they did not have actual offices, they had some kind of affiliation. Councilor DeJardin asked if the cost of setting up such an office was justified. Mr. Stone said it was and that the contacts and bookings received covered overhead operating costs.

3. Convention Center Construction Report - Staff Update

Chair Knowles said this item had been removed from the agenda and would be rescheduled.

4. Consideration of Resolution No. 89-1115, Ratifying a Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Consolidation of Regional Convention, Trade, Spectator and Performing Arts Facilities Presently Owned and Operated by the City of Portland and the Metropolitan Service District

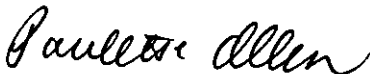
Chair Knowles said Agenda Item No. 4 was intended for discussion only at this meeting. He said it would be rescheduled for the Committee meeting August 1, 1989, as an action item. Ms. Marlitt said Council staff would submit their analysis at the end of the week.

Ms. Marlitt asked Neil McFarlane, Management Analyst, the status of the consolidation funding study. Mr. Phelps noted Public Financial Management, formerly Government Finance Associates, would complete the study by mid-September. Chair Knowles asked what the financial implications were in the long run. Mr. Carlson said the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would transfer all City Exposition-Recreation Commission (ERC) operations with the ERC reserve fund dedicated to City facilities, to management under the Metro ERC which currently oversees the Oregon Convention Center. Councilor Van Bergen asked how the Metro ERC's \$900,000 funding of the Portland Oregon Visitor's Association contract tied in to consolidation. Mr. Carlson said the \$900,000 was raised through the hotel/motel tax levied in Multnomah County and that those funds were dedicated to the Convention Center.

Mr. Phelps said there would be financing needs when various components were pulled together. He did not know the magnitude of the consolidation financing, but said it would be a bifurcated system and would come before the Committee shortly. The Committee and staff discussed the issues further.

Chair Knowles adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Paulette Allen
Committee Clerk
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