

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL ZOO COMMITTEE
OF THE METROPOLITAN SERVICE DISTRICT

March 15, 1990

Council Chamber

Committee Members Present: Jim Gardner (Chair), Ruth McFarland (V. Chair), Tom DeJardin and Mike Ragsdale

Committee Members Absent: David Knowles

Chair Gardner called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

1. Consideration of February 15, 1990 Minutes

Motion: Councilor McFarland moved for approval of the minutes.

Vote: Councilors DeJardin, Gardner and McFarland voted aye. Councilors Knowles and Ragsdale were absent. The vote was unanimous and the minutes were approved.

2. Update on Zoo Ballot Measures Campaign

Sherry Sheng, Zoo Director, said staff had developed brochures, signs, and assembled volunteers for phone banks to request financial support for the Metro Washington Park Zoo. She said the phone bank would be staffed by mostly Zoo staff volunteers. She briefed the Committee on events and fund raisers and discussed the funding they expected to raise from their efforts. She said the campaign was progressing well. Councilor McFarland encouraged Ms. Sheng and staff in their efforts and said it was important to maintain peak effort because funds and volunteers were always needed. Ms. Sheng noted FY88-89 was one of the most successful years ever for the Zoo and most people did not believe the Zoo would not receive the necessary funding. She said it was essential to communicate to the average homeowner what the Zoo levy would cost. Chair Gardner asked if any polling had been done. Ms. Sheng said the last poll was conducted December 1989.

3. Briefing and Discussion of FY90-91 Zoo Program and Project Priorities -- Finish Review of Zoo Divisions (Education Services, Marketing and Visitor Services); Discussion and Worksession to Develop Program Priority Recommendations for FY90-91 Budget Committee

Ms. Sheng noted staff would discuss three major Zoo divisions and give an overview of functions and what staff planned for the next fiscal year.

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Gayle Rathbun, Visitor Services Manager, said the Visitor Services Division's responsibility was to raise 50 percent of the revenue necessary to operate the Zoo. He reviewed on-going programs which included managing gate admissions and operating the train station. He reviewed Admissions which included reception, the switchboard, bus greeters and litter pick-up. He said Admissions would be run similarly to past procedure.

Mr. Rathbun reviewed Food Services. He said the Zoo made \$1.3 million in 1988 from food revenues and expected to make \$2.2 million in 1991 and said the Africafe made a tremendous difference in revenues. He said emphasis would be put on attracting Convention Center groups and staff was developing and would market theme parties.

Mr. Rathbun said when Africa! III was completed it would include "Crossroads Cafe" at which food and gifts would be sold. He said Crossroads would not be open on lower attendance days and noted attendance varied from 8,000 to 100 persons per day. He said an updated cash register system would be installed and through integrated PCs, costs would be tracked on individual food units.

Mr. Rathbun reviewed the Retail & Rental division, noting the gift shop made \$444,000 in 1989, and staff predicted it would make over \$600,000 in 1991. He discussed marketing and ticketing of the railway. He noted before the Zoolights Festival began, the railway was not used in winter. He concluded his review by recalling the security services program would be transferred to the Zoo Administration Department.

Councilor McFarland asked what service bus greeters performed. Mr. Rathbun said they served as coordinators for tours and processed paperwork. Councilor DeJardin asked if staff did analysis of gift shop merchandise. Mr. Rathbun said they did and went to trade shows several times per year. Councilor DeJardin asked if the cash registers contained software. Mr. Rathbun said most of the new models did and staff had looked at software to extrapolate, compare and project data and had included funds to purchase new registers. Chair Gardner asked about FTE changes. Mr. Rathbun said there were minimal FTE increases at hourly pay and said the mid-year adjustment would be larger. Councilor McFarland noted staff's report said FTE increases would be 1.64 FTE.

Jane Hartline, Marketing Manager, reviewed the Marketing Division. She reviewed group sales, tourist marketing, special and regular events, Zoo concerts and the Zoolights Festival, the RainForest opening, media relations, community outreach, on-grounds information/orientation, the Zoo photographer, historic

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files and market research which included gate surveys, opinions and demographics. She reviewed promotion of picnics and potential Convention Center groups.

Ms. Hartline reviewed the Zoo concerts and staff's plans for FY90-91. She reviewed proposed changes including three premium priced concerts in addition to the Friends of the Zoo's Grand Wazoo event. She said there would be regular concerts which would be scheduled later in the evening to mitigate crowd control problems. She noted Zoolights 1989 made \$10,000 more than the 1989 concert series and would get bigger every year.

Ms. Hartline reviewed personnel and said the staff person responsible for travelling events would be put in charge of logistics and there would be a minimal increase in funding. She said there were nine volunteers and without them staff would have to request increased personnel. She noted most Zoo events were underwritten by corporate sponsors which saved funds. Chair Gardner asked if staff coordinated with the Portland/Oregon Visitors Association (P/OVA). Ms. Hartline said they did. Chair Gardner asked about the declining concert attendance. Ms. Hartline noted last summer's weather had been bad and there had been more teen attendance which had caused some problems.

Ms. Hartline said the jazz concerts would continue and the Zoogross series would become Rhythm and Zoo which GTE had agreed to sponsor for \$15,000. Councilor Ragsdale and Ms. Hartline discussed the proposed premium ticket prices. Councilor Ragsdale said he did not want to alter public perception of the Zoo as an open, grassroots type of facility. Ms. Hartline agreed and said persons surveyed said they would not mind a \$5.00 ticket price. She said persons surveyed at the last Grand Wazoo would like more premium types of events.

David Mask, Educational Services Manager, reviewed the Educational Services Division including graphics, programs, volunteers, the Children's Zoo, and general information provided visitors through displays. He said the Zoo utilized learning situations and tied them to events such as Earth Day. He discussed shows such as Birds of Prey. He said Zoo keeper talks and facilities like the Critter Kitchen were extremely popular with visitors.

Mr. Mask said formal education curriculum development was weak and staff proposed expanded curriculum development. He said staff would identify new audiences and wanted to reach K-2 age groups and classes. He said prior to trips to the Zoo, teachers bought materials provided by the Zoo, reviewed it with their students, and teachers brought their lesson plans to receive the

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Zoo discount. Councilor McFarland asked who staff would have update and develop the curriculum. Mr. Mask said area teachers would be used. He said the State mandated new textbooks be produced and staff hoped to tie themes together and ascertain educators needs. He said the Kongo Ranger Station development would show environmental issues locally and globally.

Mr. Mask said staff would ask for 1 FTE volunteer coordinator to coordinate the larger amount of volunteers, particularly volunteer students. He noted 48,000 volunteer hours were donated in 1989 and staff expected over 50,000 hours in 1991. He noted there would be a .12 FTE increase for winter Insect Zoo care.

Ms. Sheng said staff reports at this meeting concluded all division reports and included work programs, budget requests and additional revenues to balance the budget. She said the budget was assembled with the assumption the Zoo ballot measure May 15 would be successful. She said the overall budget for FY90-91 assumed a smaller fund balance because a lesser amount would be collected FY90-91 than in future years. She noted construction of the RainForest affected work programs and existing staff also.

Chair Gardner asked Ms. Sheng what other Zoo projects could require funding. Ms. Sheng said staff hoped to create a pedestrian corridor with trees and shrubs which should be planted soon to attain full effect in three to five years. She noted the Alaskan Tundra was finished in the mid 80s and had some problems such as improper drainage in the musk ox exhibit which meant during rainy weather the musk ox could not be let out. She said soil drainage and/or grading could have a relatively high cost. She said two wolves dens were unusable because they were unheated and damp and the wolves would not use them. She said if the dens were repaired, it would be a visible improvement to the exhibit because visitors could observe those particular dens. The Committee and staff discussed proposed improvements further. Councilor Ragsdale suggested staff go to commercial nurseries for match/contributions for the pedestrian corridor. He asked whether staff could re-prioritize levy items for the Alaskan Tundra.

Ms. Sheng said the tree planting could be done in phases which would affect costs estimated at \$50,000 for labor and stock. She said funds were left for the wolf exhibit which would be utilized although more funds would be needed for their improvements. Councilor Ragsdale recommended \$75,000 for the pedestrian corridor; \$25,000 absolutely allocated and \$50,000 available on a 50 percent match basis. He said he recommended \$25,000 more than the \$50,000 staff requested because he would prefer to extend the horticultural improvements to other parts of the Zoo.

Judy Munro, Facilities Supervisor, said she would like some of the allocation for temporary staff. Ms. Sheng said she would not recommend permanent FTEs for the effort either. She described the tree types staff hoped to plant and noted there would be contractual requirements.

Motion: Councilor Ragsdale moved, seconded by Councilor McFarland, to recommend the Finance/Budget Committee allocate \$75,000 to the Zoo; \$25,000 outright, and then \$50,000 on a match basis, for the pedestrian corridor/horticultural improvements.

Vote: Councilors DeJardin, Gardner, McFarland and Ragsdale voted aye. Councilor Knowles was absent. The vote was unanimous and the motion passed.

Councilor McFarland noted the Arbor Day Foundation told her she would receive ten trees for her donation and she said she would donate those trees to the Zoo. Chair Gardner approved staff's request. He said the expenditure requested was a modest one which could make an enormous difference to how visitors perceived the Zoo.

4. Strategic Planning Summary -- Review and Discussion of Zoo Strategic Planning

The Committee and staff discussed the Zoo's "Vision Statement." Chair Gardner said the Council should probably adopt it via resolution but said it was still unclear how it related to the Zoo's Masterplan. Ms. Sheng said the work performed was timely in that the Masterplan was updated.

The Committee and staff discussed property acquisition around the Zoo and the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry's plans for their building.

Chair Gardner adjourned the meeting at 5:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paulette Allen

Paulette Allen
Committee Clerk
CZC90.074