

Fresno Chaffee Zoo
894 W. Belmont Avenue
Fresno, CA 93728

Fresno Chaffee Zoo Corporation
SPECIAL Board Meeting
Minutes

Monday, March 23, 2020 1:00 PM
Zoom Video Conferencing <http://zoom.us/j/823893148>
or zoom.com / Join Meeting / enter meeting ID 823 893 148
or by phone: 1-669-900-6833 / enter meeting ID 823 893 148
or Zoom has an app, free to download

This meeting was conducted onsite at the Zoo with consideration of social distancing guidelines and allowing participation via Zoom. Certain public notice requirements under the Brown Act have been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic including postings in areas for those Board members participating via teleconference.

Directors Present

- Mr. Oliver Baines
- Ms. Chelsea Cates
- Mr. Ed Gonzalez, Vice Chair
- Mr. Babatunde Ilori
- Mr. Kyle Kirkland, Chair
- Mr. Rion Morgenstern, Treasurer
- Mr. Ross Parnagian
- Dr. Emy Phillips, Secretary

Directors Absent

- Ms. Julie Vance

Advisors Present

- Mr. Doug Larsen, Legal Counsel
- Mr. Scott Barton, CEO

Zoo Staff Present

- Mr. Greg Amescua (SSA)
- Ms. Alisha Anderson
- Mr. Steven Gonzales-Warkentin
- Ms. Laura Martina
- Mr. Amos Morris
- Ms. Lyn Myers
- Dr. Shannon Nodolf
- Dr. Lily Wachter
- Mr. Dean Watanabe

Item 02: Public Comment

No comments were received.

Item 03: Receive FCZ's Response Plan to Closure Due to Covid-19

Mr. Kirkland updated the Board on the recent COVID-19 pandemic timeline of events including the closure of the Zoo on Sunday, March 15, 2020 pursuant to a request from the City of Fresno, the subsequent Shelter-In-Place order from the Mayor of Fresno and the resultant decision by Zoo management to send non-essential staff persons home, with all staff members paid through March 28, 2020. Mr. Kirkland said he met with the executive team the previous Friday to discuss options on how to maintain a high level of care and well-being for the animals, the health and safety of essential staff members and the security and operation of the facility during the closure. He also expressed the importance of being sensitive to the significant economic disruption the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the community. The Board members agreed that the executive team's priority should be the health and safety of animals and staff and security of the facility and expressed their collective concern over the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the community.

Mr. Barton stated the Zoo intended to reduce headcount to essential staff starting on March 29th with that staff to include core security, animal welfare, facility maintenance and certain members of the executive team. The plan included the elimination of part-time personnel and 10% salary reductions for staff members earning in excess of \$50,000 per year. Mr. Morgenstern expressed his concern that the cuts might not be sufficient should the Zoo be closed for an extended period of time and recommended that the executive team consider a scenario with deeper cuts to staffing and other costs.

Mr. Barton said that the current shelter-in-place directive and area school closures may provide an opportunity for the Zoo to support the community with virtual content like educational presentations, animal webcams and distance learning opportunities. Mr. Barton added that over the last eleven years, the Zoo has reserves set aside for emergency situations that could be used to assist the Zoo during this difficult time and noted that these funds were available to help fund staff salary and wage costs during the closure.

Dr. Wachter presented the Zoo's financial position and cashflow over the estimated period of closure and discussed options to fund projected deficits including using existing surpluses, requesting Measure Z funds and borrowing on the Zoo's existing margin loan. She noted that the Zoo would be able to generate additional availability under its margin loan by transferring money from its Endowment Fund into the General Fund and stated that she had reached out to Mr. Ron Alexander, the Zoo Tax Authority's Coordinator, and confirmed there should be no challenge to funding the balance of the budget for the year.

Dr. Wachter informed the group that the Zoo should be able to cut approximately \$200,000 in other monthly expenses and recommended that the Zoo request additional Measure Z funds for items outside the original budget due to the closure. She also informed the Board that layoffs would result in additional cost to the Zoo, since the Zoo would need to fund a portion of the unemployment expense.

Ms. Martina clarified that the Zoo does not pay into the state unemployment fund and would be required to fund certain unemployment benefits for affected staff members and confirmed that she had been in contact with federal elected officials about proposed federal sick leave legislation.

After a lengthy discussion, the Board asked that Dr. Wachter to update her model to include other cost reductions and agreed to continue the discussion at the regularly scheduled March 26th Board meeting.

The Board then discussed how the Zoo could offer distance learning opportunities to the Fresno community. Mr. Watanabe stated the Zoo's distance learning program could be available to launch soon. Ms. Anderson

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stated that the Zoo had made changes to the Zoo News magazine to include family friendly activities and coloring pages and would launching video segments on social media to showcase the care of the animals.

Mr. Ilori stated that local school systems that have not been impacted as severely by the Covid-19 closures may be able to offer financial support for distance learning content.

Mr. Kirkland thanked the Zoo executive team for their efforts in addressing the Zoo's closure. He stated that the revised closure plan would be an action item at Thursday's Board of Directors meeting.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:39 PM.