

Fresno's Chaffee Zoo Corporation

Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes

Thursday, September 8, 2022 at 5:30 PM

12:50 W. Olive Ave, Fresno, CA 93728

Board Members Present

Mr. Oliver Baines
Dr. Ed Gonzalez, Vice Chair
Mr. Babatunde Ilori
Mr. Kyle Kirkland, Chair
Mr. Rion Morgenstern, Treasurer
Mr. Ross Parnagian
Ms. Emilia Reyes
Mr. Ethan Smith
Ms. Julie Vance, Secretary

Board Members Absent

Ms. Wilma Tom Hashimoto

Board Advisors Present

Mr. Jon Forrest Dohlin, Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Doug Larsen, legal counsel Fishman Larsen & Callister
Ms. Patty McLane, Docent President

Guest Speakers Present

Mr. Zachary Winfield - Vice President – Canopy Strategic Partners

Zoo Staff Present

Ms. Nora Crow - Chief Financial Officer
Mr. Steven Gonzales-Warkentin - Chief of Staff
Ms. Caitlin Huff, Interpretive Content Coordinator
Mr. Isiah Knapp, Events Assistant
Ms. Laura Martina, Chief People Officer
Ms. Courtney Ramirez, Director of Marketing
Ms. Stephanie Regevig, Director of Individual Giving
Mr. Terry Skoda, Chief Development Officer

Item 01: Call to Order / Roll Call

Mr. Kirkland called the meeting to order at 5:37 PM. Mr. Gonzales-Warkentin took roll and established that a quorum was present. The Board proceeded with business.

Item 02: Public Comment

Mr. Kirkland asked if any members of the public wished to offer comment on items outside of the evening's agenda. Hearing none, he proceeded to the next item for discussion.

Item 03: Additions to the Agenda

Mr. Kirkland stated that future agendas will include a section for additions to the agenda and asked if anyone had any emergency items that were brought to their attention after the posting of the meeting agenda. He added that any item offered for inclusion on the evening's agenda would be voted on by the Board and if the item received a 2/3 majority vote, it would be added to the agenda. Hearing nothing offered for inclusion, he proceeded to the next item.

Item 04: Approval of Minutes

Mr. Kirkland called the Director's attention to the draft minutes from the June 16, 2022 Board meeting and asked if there were any additions or revisions. With none offered, Ms. Vance made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Mr. Parnagian seconded. Dr. Gonzalez, Mr. Baines and Mr. Ilori abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 05: Receive Chair Report

Mr. Kirkland reported on his time spent at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums Annual Conference held in Baltimore the previous week. He noted that the Fresno Chaffee Zoo is held in high regard by its peers in the industry with several team members participating in AZA workshops and suggested that other board members consider attending future AZA conferences.

Item 06: Receive CEO Report

Mr. Dohlin reported that the Kingdoms of Asia project is slightly behind schedule due to excessive heat inhibiting progress on construction. He stated that the Zoo was anticipating receiving approval to occupy the Zooplex building within a few weeks. Mr. Dohlin also mentioned he had attended the AZA conference, presented at several workshops and reported on the shift in focus in the AZA community from animal welfare to animal well-being. He stated that the Zoo will be requesting an October board meeting due to time sensitive items needing discussion and approval. Finally, Mr. Dohlin thanked everyone for their support with the recently concluded and highly successful Safari Night.

Item 07: Receive Business Plan Presentation

Mr. Morgenstern introduced Mr. Winfield from Canopy Strategic Partners, who had advised the Zoo in the creation of a Business Plan as part of the overall Purpose Plan. Mr. Winfield reported that the Fresno Chaffee Zoo is a well-operated, financially-sound organization enjoying broad community support as evidenced by the recent extension of Measure Z. Mr. Winfield presented projected pricing and attendance numbers and stated that the Business Plan as presented included limited admission price increases for local residents. He added that the next few years in the Zoo's development should be considered to be an investment phase with little immediate return, during which Master Plan projects will be designed, funded, and constructed.

Mr. Baines voiced his concern over providing a discount to counties other than Fresno County, the county that provides the underlying revenue from Measure Z. After some discussion, Board members

generally agreed that Fresno County residents should benefit from a discounted entrance fee. Dr. Gonzalez asked about plans to address parking limitations; Mr. Dohlin stated that parking would be addressed with a new parking structure and improved entrance and that the Zoo was discussing the parking issues with the City of Fresno.

Item 08: Approve Finance Committee Report

Mr. Morgenstern then reviewed the Year-to-Date Financial Report and the capital construction contingency items. He stated that both were reviewed at length during the Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday, September 6, 2022 and added that the Finance Committee recommended approval of these items.

After discussion, Mr. Baines made a motion to approve the Finance Committee's report and Mr. Morgenstern seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 09: Approve Presentation Strategy to Zoo Authority

Mr. Dohlin reminded the Committee that the construction of the African River Project is not part of the Zoo's immediate construction plans given priorities in the Master Plan, including improvements to existing exhibits, parking and the new Zoo entrance. Ms. Crow stated that Measure Z funds had been earmarked for African River and given the reconsideration of priorities, the Zoo would like to request the release of the \$2.5 million of Measure Z funds intended for African River construction for use on those other priorities.

Mr. Baines stated that the completion of African Adventure with the African River had been proposed as part of the previous Measure Z renewal. He stated that he sat on the Zoo Authority Board at the time and would prefer to abstain from voting on this item.

Dr. Gonzalez stated that he felt exhibits including large animals like hippopotamus (part of the proposed African River) were important attractions for the Zoo and that he opposed the dismissal of the African River project at the present time.

Mr. Dohlin stated that he would like to give Mr. Baines and Dr. Gonzalez an overview of the Master Plan since they were not able to attend the June meeting where it was presented to other Board members. He said the revised Master Plan addressed more urgent needs in the Zoo's plans and included an increased focus on the Zoo's conservation mission.

After discussion, Ms. Vance made a motion to approve the Zoo to request the release by the Zoo Authority of earmarked funds for the construction of the African River project and Mr. Morgenstern seconded. Dr. Gonzalez opposed. Mr. Baines abstained from voting. The motion passed 7-1.

Item 10: Approve Conservation Building Construction Costs

Mr. Dohlin stated that the Conservation Building project was submitted to various contractors for bid with one response, By Durham. Mr. Dohlin stated that the total cost of the project would be \$2,545,105.79. He added that the Zoo has received a grant from the US Fish & Wildlife Service for

\$520,546 and one from the US Bureau of Reclamation for \$248,749. With those two grants, Mr. Dohlin stated that Zoo would need \$1,775,810.79 from Measure Z Funds.

After discussion, Mr. Baines made a motion to approve the Zoo to request Measure Z funds for the construction of the Conservation Building project of \$1,775,810.79 and Mr. Parnagian seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 11: Receive Marketing Report

Mr. Skoda and Ms. Huff provided the Board an overview of the marketing strategies used throughout the year to promote attendance and awareness of the Zoo. Mr. Skoda stated that the Zoo would be producing a new interactive newsletter which members would receive via email. He also stated that the Zoo is focusing on growing its social media presence.

Item 12: Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9 For a Discussion Regarding Non-Human Rights Project, Inc. v. Fresno's Chaffee Zoo Corporation Case# 22CECG02471

At 8:09 PM, Mr. Kirkland announced that pursuant to Government Code 54956.6, the Board would now enter closed session to discuss the Non-Human Rights Project, Inc. v. Fresno's Chaffee Zoo Corporation Case# 22CECG2471. The public was asked to leave the meeting and the Board met in private.

At approximately 8:29 PM, the Board returned from closed session.

Item 13: Approve Next Meeting Date

Mr. Dohlin requested that the Board meet in October to consider time sensitive items. The Board agreed to meet on October 12, 2022.

Item 14: Directors Comments

Mr. Smith stated that he had the opportunity to take his family on a Behind-the-Scenes Adventure at the Zoo and was impressed with the experience. He complimented the team and suggested others on the Board take advantage of the opportunity.

With no further business to consider, Mr. Kirkland adjourned the meeting at 8:36 PM.