

Fresno's Chaffee Zoo Corporation
February 2, 2006
MINUTES

Present

Shari Rainwater
Manuel Ferreira
Cheryl Assemi
Sheri Manning-Cartwright
Sharon Levy

Absent

Tom Templeton

Meeting called to order at 5:36 p.m.

Minutes: Shari Rainwater asked if the board members had reviewed the minutes submitted from previous meetings. Manning-Cartwright made a motion to accept the minutes. Levy seconded the motion. All board members were in favor. Motion carried.

Name of the Zoo: This item had been tabled from the last meeting to give the public opportunity to contact the board with their input on the matter. After some discussion Manuel Ferreira made a motion to call the zoo the Fresno Chaffee Zoo. Assemi seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Motion carried.

CEO Selection Process: Rainwater gave an update on the CEO selection process. Three candidates have been interviewed and the fourth will meet with the board on Sunday, February 5. The board will meet some time after to discuss the candidates and make a final decision. Rainwater asked if any of the public or employees in attendance who had an opportunity to meet the candidates wanted to offer any opinion. None was offered.

Zoo School Development: Assemi shared her proposal for a school field trip program. The program targets all third grade classes within the county with the goal of making the zoo the preferred site for field trips. Nelson Elementary School has agreed to assist with the project and will be sending their third grade classes to the zoo for a test run in May. County superintendent, Pete Mejas, is supportive of the idea and it will be brought forward at the next school superintendent meeting. Assemi hopes to be able to count on community assistance and grants to provide any necessary additional funding. The ultimate goal is to get every child in every third grade class in the county to the zoo during the 2006-2007 school year. If the pilot program is successful, it is possible that other age groups will be incorporated and neighboring counties as well. One citizen in the audience asked if this program is something that would fall under the guidance of the new director. Rainwater stated that this is indeed something that would fall under the guidance of the new Director and, once hired, he or she would be informed of the program.

Membership: Rainwater stated that the ballots went out to dissolve the Zoo Society. She wanted everyone to know that any membership under the "zoo society" will carry over as a membership to the new membership group.

Auxiliaries: No comments or discussion.

Spring Event: Rainwater stated that the zoo is trying to come up with an event, such as taxpayer appreciation day, that will offer a day of free admission to the zoo. Please share any ideas you may have.

Breakfast with the Animals: Jonatha Monetti stated that Breakfast with the Animals is scheduled for Saturday, April 22 from 8:30 to 11:30. It is the kick off event for the season. Everything is donated for the event, with the exception of additional tables, chairs, and portable toilets. Monetti added that 2500 tickets were sold last year. Levy asked if a company can be found that would be willing to donate the additional tables and chairs needed. Monetti stated that, in the past, the companies have offered a discounted rate but not a donation. Monetti asked that if anyone has any leads on vendors willing to donate to please let her know.

City Insurance Coverage of Old Buildings: Discussion was tabled.

Zoo Society and Memberships: Discussed previously under “Memberships”.

Public Comment: An unnamed citizen offered his thoughts on the upcoming changes with the zoo. His fear was that old exhibits would just be left empty while new exhibits were built and utilized. He fears that new exhibits will take precedents over old exhibits that need attention, such as the Rainforest and Maddis Tropical Bird House. Rainwater stated that this would not be the case. She added that most of the old growth and mature trees are surrounding many of the old exhibits and that these areas will be utilized. She also stated that none of us want to see the old zoo that we grew up with disappear, but instead watch it grow and be enhanced. Assemi added that any growth of the zoo needs to be done responsibly. She stated that the zoo can only grow to 39 acres and no one acre is more important than the other.

Manning-Cartwright stated that an item had come to her attention earlier in the day that needed a decision from the board. The item in question was which method the zoo was going to use to pay into the unemployment fund. There were two options available. The organization either pays 3.5% on the first \$7,000.00 earned per employee each year for three years. After that the amount is reassessed and the percentage is adjusted. The other option, since the zoo is now operating as a non profit organization, is to not pay into the fund but instead pay actual costs. Manning-Cartwright pointed out that if the board foresees a large number of employees requiring unemployment compensation, it would be advisable to pay the 3.5%. If the board feels the need for unemployment compensation will be low, they should only pay actual costs. Manning-Cartwright added that a decision would need so that the necessary paperwork could be sent out. Rainwater added that theoretically, if you are a large employer with seasonal employment or foresee a layoff due to closure, than it would be beneficial to pay the 3.5%. If you have a relatively steady workforce than paying actual cost would be appropriate. Levy made a motion to pay actual costs. Assemi seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Motion carried. Rainwater stated that this really was not considered an action item and did not require a board vote, even though one was taken.

Treasurer’s Report: Manning-Cartwright passed out a copy of the Treasurer’s report. The FCZC received \$300,000.00 from the City of Fresno which is _ of the 2006 subsidy. Major expenses for the month were computer software and hardware. The first deposit of Measure Z funds is expected next week.

Bank Account Signatures: Interim Director, Shelley Morrison, will be authorized to sign checks until a new CEO is hired. Rainwater suggested a check limit be set. Manning-Cartwright stated that she had a previous discussion with Morrison in which

they agreed that three blank checks would be left with Morrison for emergency purposes. They also agreed in their discussion that Morrison will not write a check over \$1,000.00 without verbal authorization from a board member. Ferreira asked how many signatures were required on a check. Manning-Cartwright stated only one signature was required.

Expense Reimbursement Policy: Rainwater stated that the reimbursement policy is that anyone requesting a reimbursement must have a receipt. Manning Cartwright made a motion to accept that policy. Assemi seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Motion carried.

401K: Rainwater stated that Randy Buresh was not available to talk about the 401K but that it was in process of completion.

Directing Legal Counsel to Request Determination of Fair Political Practices Commission as to applicability of Political Reform Act: Will be discussed at next meeting.

Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors: Rainwater stated that the board had already agreed to be part of the presentation. Manning-Cartwright added that the Tax Authority had asked if the FCZC had any information they would like to add to the report.

Selection of New Board Members: Rainwater stated that the board had received and reviewed approximately 30 applications for the vacant board positions. Each board member gave their list of favorable applicants and the final pool was narrowed down to 19 finalists. These applicants will be contacted and interviews will be conducted on February 24th, 27th, 28th and March 1st. Each interview will take approximately 30 minutes. Rainwater added that this is Manuel Ferreira's last meeting, therefore that vacancy would need to be filled as well. The deadline for applications for the newest available position will be February 28th. The applicant not chosen for the first three open positions will carry over to the applicant pool for the fourth position. Manning Cartwright added that her term is also up. Levy made a motion to reappoint Manning-Cartwright for a second term. Assemi seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Motion passed.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:52 p.m..

Respectfully submitted by Denise Buckley, Senior Secretary