

MOTION

TO CITY CLERK FOR PLACEMENT ON NEXT
REGULAR COUNCIL AGENDA TO BE POSTED #54

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Zoo was forced to close its operations to the public for a total of 236 days during Fiscal Years 2019-20 and 2020-21, resulting in an estimated \$16 million revenue loss, a 59.32% earned revenue loss for the period from March 1, 2020, through May 31, 2021, in comparison to the previous pre-COVID-19 year of March 1, 2019, through May 31, 2020. This required a \$16.8 million General Fund subsidy to offset revenue shortfalls and support the Zoo's operating budget during the closure, as well as during limited capacity operations.

On October 1, 2021, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) opened the application process for the Endangered Species COVID-19 Relief (ESCR) grant. Under a cooperative agreement between AZA and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) through the American Rescue Plan Act, there has been \$30,000,000 made available in federal funding to agencies for the care of captive species listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, rescued and confiscated wildlife, and Federal Trust species. This funding provides reimbursements to eligible facilities that cared for endangered and threatened species and rescued and confiscated wildlife and that experienced earned revenue losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The total maximum funding request per facility is \$1 million.

Due to the highly competitive nature of this grant program and small application window, on November 1, 2021, the Department of the Zoo submitted its application to the AZA on behalf of the City of Los Angeles. The Zoo was subsequently awarded a maximum grant of \$1 million on November 21, 2022, and the funds were received and deposited in the Zoo Enterprise Trust Fund on December 20, 2022.

The Department of the Zoo now requests authority to retroactively accept the \$1 million ESCR grant award and authorize a transfer of the grant funds to the Reserve Fund in order to reimburse the General Fund for its appropriation to the Zoo in Fiscal Years 2019-20 and 2020-21.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. Authorize the General Manager of the Los Angeles Zoo, or designee, to retroactively apply for the Endangered Species COVID-19 Relief Grant;
2. Authorize the General Manager of the Los Angeles Zoo, or designee, to accept the Endangered Species COVID-19 Relief Grant award in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the qualifying time period for reimbursement expenses of March 1, 2020 through May 31, 2021 and submit any other necessary agreements and documents relative to the

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implementation of this program, subject to the review and approval of the City Attorney as to form and legality;

3. Authorize the Controller to set up a grants receivable account and appropriate \$1,000,000 in the Zoo Enterprise Trust Fund No. 40E/87, Appropriation Account to be determined, for the disbursement of the Endangered Species COVID-19 Relief Grant funding;

4. Transfer \$1,000,000 from the Zoo Enterprise Trust Fund No. 40E/87, Appropriation Account to be determined, to the Reserve Fund, to reimburse funding provided during the pandemic in 2019-20 and 2020-21; and

5. Authorize the General Manager of the Los Angeles Zoo, or designee, to prepare Controller instructions and/or make technical adjustments that may be required to implement the actions approved by the Mayor and Council on this matter, subject to the approval of the City Administrative Officer and authorize the Controller to implement these instructions.

PRESENTED BY:



NITHYA RAMAN
Councilmember, 4th District

SECONDED BY:



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