



May 6, 2019

Honorable David E. Ryu
Councilmember, Fourth District
200 North Spring Street, Room 425
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Ryu:

Thank you again to you and your staff for meeting with me and other GLAZA representatives on April 16, 2019. From our perspective, the meeting was productive and the GLAZA Board of Trustees was pleased to learn of your commitment to the continuing partnership between GLAZA and the Zoo. The GLAZA Board of Trustees is a committed group of community volunteers who donate substantial amounts of both their time and their personal funds to support and work for the success of the L.A. Zoo. GLAZA complies with the California non-profit corporation laws, and each Trustee owes a fiduciary duty to the organization. We can assure you of GLAZA's total commitment to the mission and support of the Zoo, and we look forward to building a strong working relationship with you and your staff to accomplish this objective.

At our meeting we expressed our enthusiasm to present to Council the proposed concessionaire from our recent RFP process, as well as their exciting plans to improve the concessions offerings at the L.A. Zoo. We also indicated our reluctance to negotiate GLAZA's concessions administration contract with the City prior to looking at renegotiating the totality of our contractual relationship. We asked you to support our proposal to leave GLAZA's current concessions arrangement with the City in place in the short term to provide an opportunity for the City, the Zoo and GLAZA to renegotiate our entire, holistic contractual relationship with the Zoo and City. You commented favorably on this approach, subject to discussions with others.

Shortly before our meeting in the office of the City Administrative Officer on April 30, 2019, we were presented with a revised Amendment No. 6 to the Operating Agreement ("Amendment"). Because the City intends this Amendment to become a permanent part of the renegotiated Operating Agreement, we have serious concerns about the method and amount of GLAZA's compensation. While the new agreement between GLAZA and the concessionaire arising from the RFP process will result in an immediate growth in concessions revenue to the Zoo of hundreds of thousands of dollars, the Amendment penalizes GLAZA by decreasing funds available to GLAZA for other Zoo initiatives and activities in an amount close to one hundred thousand dollars with no potential for current recovery.

Furthermore, this revision was not presented to GLAZA in the spirit of negotiation and partnership we experienced in our meeting with you, but rather as a "take-it-or-leave-it" proposition. It not only changes GLAZA's compensation for concessions administration to a fixed fee from the long-standing percentage of gross revenues, but the proposed fixed fee is in an arbitrary amount not previously discussed in our many prior meetings with City Hall staff.

GLAZA wholeheartedly agrees with the Controller's recommendation that the entire contractual relationship between GLAZA and the City and Zoo be renegotiated to streamline and simplify the obligations and revenue streams. The GLAZA Board of Trustees is gravely concerned that if we rush into this renegotiation process with a single new agreement for only one of our many functional areas we will end up with a similar confusion of contracts that are difficult to understand and explain and result in the appearance of non-transparency.

We request the opportunity for all constituents to sit down together to renegotiate the entire contractual framework between GLAZA and the City at one time. We ask that you support our proposal to leave the current concessions arrangement in place in the short term. We expect that this renegotiation will be done in a spirit of collegiality and respect befitting a long-standing and productive partnership. With that approach, we believe that together we can achieve a streamlined and effective agreement that works in the best interests of all parties and results in committed and strong support for the L.A. Zoo and its mission well into the future.

Respectfully Submitted,



Richard Corgel
Chair, Board of Trustees
Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association

cc: Mayor Eric Garcetti
Council Member Mitch O'Farrell
Council Member Curren D. Price, Jr.
Denise Verret, Zoo Department
Terry Sauer, CAO Office
Jay Shin, CAO Office
Albert Griego, CAO Office
Karen Kalfayan, CLA Office
Cheryl Banares Soriano, CLA Office
Dov Lesel, City Attorney Office
Beth Price, GLAZA Trustee
Richard Lichtenstein, GLAZA Trustee
Dawn Petersen-Amend, GLAZA