
From: Morris, Amos
Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 5:12 PM
To: Burgelis, Peter; Jodi Gibson
Cc: Wasserman, Sheldon; Sumner, Liz; Masarik, Ethan; Penny Gutekunst; Westphal, Vera; Meyers, Mary Jo
Subject: RE: 23-781
Attachments: County Supervisor Burgelis Response 9-13-23.pdf

In response to the Zoological Society's position to continue fundraising, they are continuing, however, they have asked their donors multiple times to contribute larger gifts specific to Adventure Africa, so they do not believe it is in the best interest of the Zoo to ask again. The Society has indicated many of their key donors are excited for the new vision of the zoo and are looking forward to what new project opportunities are to come. Asking a fourth, fifth or sixth time may jeopardize fundraising in the future. Since this is a Society question, I've asked them to reach out to you for their response.

As for the Rhino Exhibit project, this is the last project to complete the Adventure Africa campaign. It is my understanding the Zoo team estimated the cost of Rhino Exhibit back in 2013 when the master plan was completed. That was 10 years ago. Up through COVID, and now to the present, we have seen considerable jumps in the construction market. After a construction review, our project manager and DAS-A&E believe for each year we delay on building the rhino project, construction costs will increase by \$1.2 million dollars per year. As it is 2023 now, the cost of the project since 2013 has increased to \$22 million which is a \$1.2 million per year increase to today's price. If we delay this work, it will just keep getting more and more expensive by the mentioned \$1.2 million per year. Now that we know this, we need to begin construction as soon as possible to prevent escalation. This is the key reason for asking the county to help get us over the finish line.

Last, I am the Vice Chair of the AZA Accreditation Commission, and during this year's hearings, the commission observed that several zoos were behind on their deferred maintenance resulting in receiving a provisional accreditation. A provisional status puts pressure on the institution to correct their problems within one year or risk losing accreditation. We have several areas throughout the Zoo in the same disrepair. The Pachyderm mall is one of those locations. The Pachyderm exhibits are in severe disrepair and do not meet modern zoological standards. This area was noted on the last accreditation inspection and will be an issue at the inspection in 2024 if not under construction. If we are not moving forward with construction, I will have no other choice but to remove what animals I can and block the viewing of these areas from the public with privacy fencing to reduce this area from being noted on our list of concerns from the accreditation inspectors. Because this area also services our hippo exhibit,

there is a boiler in the basement of that building that will require updating soon and may result in a million-dollar boiler replacement. We plan to update those boilers as part of this construction project if we are allowed to move forward.

I am committed to reducing the 2025 amount through other capital project savings in 2024 and a reduction of scope in the rhino project which I have begun to implement.

I hope this memo answers your questions but if you have additional ones, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Amos D. Morris, Jr.
Zoo Executive Director
Milwaukee County Zoo

From: Burgelis, Peter <Peter.Burgelis@milwaukeecountywi.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 1:25 PM
To: Morris, Amos <Amos.Morris@milwaukeecountywi.gov>; Jodi Gibson <jodig@zoosociety.org>
Cc: Wasserman, Sheldon <Sheldon.Wasserman@milwaukeecountywi.gov>; Sumner, Liz <Liz.Sumner@milwaukeecountywi.gov>; Masarik, Ethan <Ethan.Masarik@milwaukeecountywi.gov>
Subject: 23-781

Director Morris and President Gibson,

In the P&C presentation today it was mentioned that the capital contribution formula for the balance of the Africa project changed from the previous and traditional 1:1 match from the Zoological Society and Milwaukee County taxpayers. Why? Would the society be willing or able to raise or borrow \$5M?

Thanks,

-Peter

Peter Burgelis (*he/him*) | Supervisor District 15
Milwaukee County Board
901 N 9th Street | Milwaukee, WI 53233
Office 414-278-4255 | Direct 414-374-1300 | [website](#)

[Legislative Assistant Ethan Masarik 414-278-5206](#)

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