

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE: January 8, 2016

TO: Theodore Lipscomb Sr., County Board Chairman

FROM: Charles Wikenhauser, Zoo Director

SUBJECT: **Agreement with Ropes Courses, Inc. for the Operation of a CTS Zip Line and Sky Trail Ropes Course**

Request

The Milwaukee County Zoo requests approval to execute a new agreement with Ropes Courses, Inc. DBA Sky Trail Wisconsin, LLC for the operation of a CTS Zip Line and Sky Trail ropes course at the Milwaukee County Zoo.

Background

Milwaukee County Ordinance 56.30 requires that all revenue share agreements for multiple years be reviewed by the appropriate standing committee and approved by the County Board.

In searching for entrepreneurial opportunities to increase revenue, the Milwaukee County Zoo solicited proposals for providing a zip line and ropes course at the Zoo.

The chosen vendor, Ropes Courses, Inc., has been manufacturing, installing and servicing adventure ropes courses, zip lines and climbing structures since 1989. They have developed courses that meet the customer needs by addressing safety, high volumes of participants, scalability, easy training of operators, ability to theme and changeability. Ropes Courses Inc. currently provides their services at the Milwaukee County Zoo.

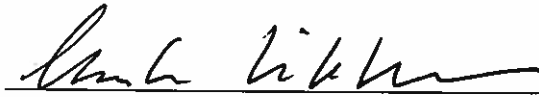
Ropes Courses, Inc. has installed and operated a two-tower zip line structure with two lines. The capacity is 60 participants per hour. The Sky Trail ropes course is built on steel poles and is designed as a double level continuous belay course. The adventure products were installed in the front mall area near the train and carousel rides. These courses will be in operation from Memorial Day through Labor Day and additional weekends in May, September, and October.

Ropes Courses, Inc has many patents in place that address safety and their courses have been service proven with millions of cycles. They also have an excellent safety record. All courses are fully engineered and meet amusement ride standards.

Ropes Courses, Inc. will pay the Zoo at least 20% of gross receipts for a period of three years (2016-2018). At the end of this time period, the Zoo may renew the agreement for two more years, or end its relationship with Ropes Courses, Inc. The 2016 Budget includes \$50,000 in revenues for the County's share of the revenues generated from the adventure products.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Director of the Milwaukee County Zoo be authorized to execute an agreement with Ropes Courses, Inc. for the operation of a CTS Zip Line and Sky Trail ropes course on Zoo grounds for a three-year period (2016-2018) with the option of renewing the agreement for two more years (2019-2020) or ending its relationship with Ropes Courses, Inc.



Charles Wikenhauser
Zoo Director

cc: Chris Abele, County Executive
Raisa Koltun, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Supervisor Gerry Broderick, Chairman, Parks, Energy and Environment Committee
Supervisor Khalif Rainey, Vice Chair, Parks, Energy and Environment Committee
Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr., Co-Chair, Finance, Audit & Personnel Committee
Supervisor Jim Schmitt, Co-Chair, Finance, Audit & Personnel Committee
Supervisor Jason Haas, Vice Chair, Finance, Audit & Personnel Committee
Steven Kreklow, Director of Performance, Strategy & Budget, DAS
Jeremy Lucas, Fiscal & Management Analyst, DAS
Stephen Cady, Director of Research & Policy, Office of the Comptroller
Jessica Janz-McKnight, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller
Allyson Smith, Committee Clerk, Office of the County Clerk
Vera Westphal, Deputy Zoo Director (Admin & Finance)
Sue Rand, Accounting Manager (Zoo)