

City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Monday, April 15, 2019

Regular Meeting

Item Public Inp1

Council to receive a presentation from The Riverside Discovery Center.

Staff Contact: Nathan Johnson, City Manager

City Council Updates-2019

-Exhibit sponsors are being sold to create an annual revenue stream.

We have various price ranges for sponsors and 24 exhibits and features available. Once all exhibits are sold, it will result in \$29,000 in annual income. We currently have \$21,000 worth of sponsorships filled and are actively working to fill the remaining spots.

-Sustaining partner program being rebuilt for an additional revenue stream. These individuals or businesses commit to an ongoing annual contribution. Currently we have commitments for \$12,000 annually from sustaining partners.

-From exhibit sponsors, sustaining partners and other donations, we have raised \$53,225 to our general fund since the beginning of calendar year 2019.

-In addition, RDC board members voted unanimously in favor of annual board contributions and are now responsible for \$1,000 in annual support. We currently have 15 board members for a combined contribution of \$15,000 annually.

-New chimp group coming spring of 2019.

Received outside funds earmarked for chimpanzee life improvements. This building will be much more usable in the wintertime because of the renovations. 5 new chimps will come in the spring and lead to a big surge in attendance.

-Admission rates are being raised in the spring of 2019

Current rates: Adult \$8, Child \$5, Toddler \$3, senior \$5.50

New rates: Adult \$9.50, Child \$6.50, Toddler \$3.50, senior \$6.50

-Membership rates went up at the base level and were adjusted at other levels to encourage upgrading, at the beginning of February 2019

Previous rates: Family \$70, Supporting \$161, Contributor \$268, Benefactor \$535, Gift of Discovery \$1070

New rates: Family \$85, Supporting \$140, Contributor \$275, Benefactor \$500, Gift of Discovery \$1000

-The RDC is pursuing new membership programs with large employers in the area to increase member numbers. These will be tailored to fit each company or organization. We have 3 large employers we are currently working with on this program. We have also partnered with Oregon Trail Community Foundation for a spring membership drive the whole month of April.

-New concessions sales starting in summer of 2019.

These will be focused on food items made off grounds and/or prepackaged food items that will not expire quickly.

-The RDC currently has a bank loan of \$185,000 with Platte Valley Bank. This loan comes about as a pre-existing loan of \$87,166.13 was combined with a new loan of \$97,833.87. Essentially this came about because we had several revenue sources sunset during our transition period where Anthony was taking the reins of the organization and we did not see the full impact right away. We have since cut back on more expenses, including changing some positions to part-time and of course, all of the revenue generating efforts mentioned earlier. These cuts will stay in place even as new revenues continue to grow. We have also put more fail-safes in place to prevent this from happening again.

-Wildlife World(in Gering) update: RDC has begun implementing plan to move all of its property, including taxidermy mounts, out of Wildlife World in an effort to divest ourselves of that building and save money. All mounts will be moved to storage or be on display at the zoo. We are planning on this happening this calendar year, but still firming up that timeline. The big question mark right now is the Baluchithere. All attempts to move or replicate this piece have proved fruitless. Expert inspection has shown that due to age, it would fall apart upon any attempt to move it. We are pursuing a solution for this element to allow us to be completely done with the building and return it to the City of Gering for their use, as they desire.

-Bear exhibit update: We are currently at approximately \$188,000 in raised/committed funds towards the total estimated need of \$606,000. Our most recent contribution was for \$20,000 from the City of Gering keno fund. We have outstanding requests out that combined equal \$435,000.

-Some of the categories in which the zoo spends money locally include but are not limited to:

- \$40,000+ spent annually on animal feed at businesses in Scottsbluff.
- \$25,000+ spent annually on contract services that include vet care, accounting, pest control, IT services, etc. in Scottsbluff.
- \$15,000 average annually spent on water utility to City of Scottsbluff.
- \$12,000 average annually spent on maintenance supplies and equipment at businesses in Scottsbluff.

-The RDC is formally requesting a contract for \$400,000 for a period of 5 years, from the City of Scottsbluff, beginning September of 2020 for general operations. We believe this amount will help maintain financial stability for the zoo as the RDC seeks to make it more financially independent over time.