


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	20-070	Meeting:	February 24, 2020
	Agenda Item:	26	Roll Call:	20-0343
	Submitted by:	Scott E. Sanders, City Manager		

AGENDA HEADING:

Approval of agreement with the Blank Park Zoo for costs related to the acquisition of furniture and equipment being needed, exclusively as part of the Zooplex project.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approving agreement to contribute \$50,000 for furniture and equipment in support of the Zooplex at the Blank Park Zoo.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$50,000 grant to the Blank Park Zoo

Funding Source: General Fund

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The Zoo has requested \$50,000 from the City of Des Moines in support of the Zooplex Multipurpose Event Center Capital Project. This will be a permanent event space structure, located in the same space the current metal-framed “temporary” structure resides. The current Zooplex is a 10,000 square-foot tent with a metal frame, which is used for vehicle storage, public events such as Night Eyes (largest attended event), Zoo Brew (largest fundraiser), Zoobilation (annual Gala), as well as all corporate rentals and weddings/receptions that have needs for more than 125 people. It is the only large event space, and was intended to be used for no more than five (5) years back in 2005. There is no heat/air conditioning in the current Zooplex and no restroom facilities. The new building will also be 10,000 square feet, with multiple restrooms, bride and groom rooms, complete audio/visual equipment and both heating and air-conditioning.
- The Zooplex will provide the ability to provide year-round education programming, an amenity that would be unique to the southside community and will be completely climate controlled; a safe space for summer camp youth to take shelter during inclement weather conditions; additionally, it will provide the ability to house spectacular traveling exhibits that will otherwise never be available to Central Iowa. The new Zooplex will allow Blank Park Zoo to book large corporate rentals, weddings and receptions, and larger speaker series events with lecture seating.

- The \$50,000 contribution is for furniture and equipment.
- Grant payment conditions include:
 - The Foundation has obtained all necessary building permits from the City for construction of the Zoo Plex Event Center improvements.
 - The Foundation has demonstrated, to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Manager of the City or his designee, that the Foundation has the necessary financing to complete the Zoo Plex Event Center improvements.
 - The Foundation has demonstrated, to the reasonable satisfaction of the City Manager of the City or his designee, that the Foundation has entered into a contract with a reputable contractor for the construction of the Zoo Plex Event Center improvements and has entered into a contract for the purchase of the required furniture and equipment for the Zoo Plex Event Center.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: April 25, 2011

Roll Call Number: [11-0715](#)

Action: Items regarding the A. H. Blank Park Zoo: ([Council Communication No. 11-229](#))

- (F) [Urban](#) Renewal Economic Development Agreement with the Blank Park Zoo Foundation for an \$8,100,000 grant. ([Council Communication No. 11-254](#)) Moved by Coleman to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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