

Agreement – Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo and Saskatoon Zoo Society

ISSUE

The current agreement, between the City of Saskatoon and the Saskatoon Zoo Society, for services at the Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo has expired and Administration is requesting approval for a new agreement.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services recommend to City Council:

1. That the City of Saskatoon and the Saskatoon Zoo Society enter into a two-year agreement for educational programming services, operation of the Kinsmen Express Train and operation of concession services at the Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo for 2024 and 2025, with the option to renew for an additional two-year term, in accordance with the terms described in this report; and
2. That the City Solicitor be requested to prepare the appropriate agreement and that His Worship the Mayor and the City Clerk be authorized to execute the appropriate agreement under the Corporate Seal.

BACKGROUND

The City of Saskatoon (City) has had a program and services agreement with the Saskatoon Zoo Society (Zoo Society) since 1976 and the current five-year agreement expired on December 31, 2023. The purpose and intent of the past agreement with the Zoo Society was to provide the following services at the Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo (SFFPZ):

- interpretative, educational and environmental programming to the public;
- food and beverage concession services; and
- operating the Kinsmen Express Train.

The Zoo Society has reaffirmed its interest to continue to provide the services outlined above and has agreed, in principle, with the recommendations of this report and the proposed terms of the new agreement. The interpretative, educational and environmental programs provided by the Zoo Society are a requirement that enables the SFFPZ to meet the required accreditation standards under the terms and standards of Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA). Currently, CAZA requires accredited facilities to offer wildlife education programs for species in the collection at appropriate levels based upon budget and/or staff size.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Overview of the Zoo Society's Programs and Services

The Zoo Society continues to drive its strategy of focusing on its core mandates related to interpretative, educational and environmental programming and will continue to support this goal along with the continued operation of the Kinsmen Express Train and the concession at the SFFPZ.

The Zoo Society is a non-profit corporation mainly run through a dedicated group of volunteers that have a significant interest in the continued success of the SFFPZ and its status as the only CAZA accredited facility in the Province of Saskatchewan. The Zoo Society employs a small group of people to handle the day-to-day tasks, and many have returned year after year for seasonal employment. The Zoo Society maintains its commitment to the SFFPZ.

Terms of the Agreement

The negotiated changes to the services agreement between the City and the Zoo Society are highlighted below:

- 1) Agreement Term: The term of this Agreement shall be for two (2) years, commencing January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2025, and subject to the parties reaching agreement on the terms for any renewal, the Agreement may be extended for a further term of two (2) years, if mutually agreed upon by both parties
- 2) Programming Services: The Zoo Society shall deliver programs relative to the SFFPZ that are interpretative, educational and have an environmental focus. The Zoo Society agrees to provide the following minimum programming services to the public:
 - a) 375 programs will be offered in each year of the agreement.
 - b) 20,000 total participants in programming will be the minimum goal.
 - c) 1,500 hours of educational programs will be provided in each year of the agreement.
- 3) The City shall compensate the Zoo Society for providing programming services \$75,600, plus applicable taxes in 2024 and \$77,500, plus applicable taxes in 2025.
- 4) The City will continue to waive any rental fees at the SFFPZ for Zoo Society functions and programs and provide the following in-kind support for its programs:
 - a) classroom spaces at the Learning Centre, including utilities;
 - b) two (2) office spaces;
 - c) storage room located at the Learning Centre, including utilities;
 - d) stationary supplies in the form of paper and use of a photocopier;
 - e) internet access (Wi-Fi) at the administration building;
 - f) custodial support for cleaning of offices and classrooms;
 - g) free access for Zoo Society booked Camp programs;
 - h) free access for Zoo Society Drop-In programs;

- i) an Animal Care Specialist will be provided as support for programs, as required or deemed necessary, by the Zoo Manager; and
 - j) access to other spaces and/or facilities, when deemed appropriate, and subject to availability.
- 5) The Zoo Society shall operate and staff the Kinsmen Express Train service. For the provision of services to operate the Kinsmen Express interpretive train tour at the SFFPZ, the City will compensate the Zoo Society \$15,600, plus applicable taxes for 2024 and \$16,000, plus applicable taxes for 2025. The Kinsmen Express Train service shall be operational from June 1 through to the September Long Weekend, 10:30 am-3:30 pm daily.
- 6) Food Service Concession: The Zoo Society shall continue to operate the food service concession at the SFFPZ. The City will provide the concession space and affixed concession equipment for the Zoo Society to operate the concession and cover the utility costs associated with this space and equipment. All other costs associated with operating the concession are the responsibility of the Zoo Society. Contracting the concession service with the Zoo Society allows them to generate revenue to support their programs and other initiatives within the SFFPZ.

Administration is recommending approval of the new agreement and terms as presented in this report for the continued provision of services by the Zoo Society at the SFFPZ. The new agreement will meet the CAZA requirement for the provision of interpretative, educational and environmental programs at the SFFPZ. The agreement will also guarantee the continued provision of concession services and the operation of the Kinsmen Express Train for visitors to the SFFPZ.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The amounts noted within the report reflect the full cost to the City for the new services agreement between the City and Zoo Society and were included within the approved 2024-2025 Business Plan and Budget. The total cost to the City for the proposed services agreement is \$91,200, plus applicable taxes in 2024 (\$75,600 for programming and \$15,600 for operation of the train) and \$93,500, plus applicable taxes in 2025 (\$77,500 for programming and \$16,000 for operation of the train).

City Council could choose to not approve the proposed new agreement. This would mean the City would need to investigate other options to provide these services at the SFFPZ.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy, environmental, privacy, or CPTED considerations or implications.

Public Notice

Public notice, pursuant to Section 3 of Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy, is not required.

NEXT STEPS

Subject to City Council approval, the City Solicitor will prepare the appropriate agreements between the City and the Zoo Society.

REPORT APPROVAL

Written by: Andrew Roberts, Director of Recreation and Community Development

Approved by: Lynne Lacroix, General Manager, Community Services

SP/2024/RCD/PDCS/Agreement – Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo and Saskatoon Zoo Society/jdw