Minutes - Executive Policy Committee - September 17, 2003

REPORTS

Minute No. 332 Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) Accreditation of the Assiniboine Park Zoo
File PR-7.1.1

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION:

The Executive Policy Committee received the report as information.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Gerbasi,

That the administrative recommendation be concurred and the report be received as information.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On May 21, 2003, the Executive Policy Committee directed the Acting Chief Administrative Officer to provide a report back on whether the governance of the Animal Care Standards at the Assiniboine Park Zoo are meeting the six principles of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums on the use of wild or exotic animals for performance shows or acts.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

RE: CAZA Accreditation of the Assiniboine Park Zoo

FOR SUBMISSION TO: Executive Policy Committee

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED BY: Director, Community Services Department

REPORT DATE: August 8, 2003

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That this report be received as information.

REPORT SUMMARY

Key Issues:

- Assiniboine Park Zoo has been a Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) accredited facility since Canadian accreditations began in 1988.
- Assiniboine Park Zoo follows the CAZA "Position Statement on the use of wild or exotic animals for performance, shows, or acts."
- Assiniboine Park Zoo has not had elephant rides at the zoo since 1991. The last "Elephant Encounters" held in 1998 and again in 2002 were education programs and did not include rides.

Implications of the Recommendation(s):

General implications

X **None**
☐ **For the organization overall &/or for other departments**
☐ **For the community and/or organizations external to the City**
☐ **Involves a multi-year contract**
Comment:

Policy implications:

X **No**
☐ **Yes** **Comment(s):**

Environmental implications:

X **No**
☐ **Yes** **Comment(s):**

Human Resources implications:

X No

☐ **Yes Comment(s):**

Financial implications:

X Within approved current and/or capital budget

☐ **Current and/or capital budget adjustment required**

Comment(s):

REASON FOR THE REPORT:

On May 21, 2003, the Executive Policy Committee directed the Acting Chief Administrative Officer to report back to EPC on whether the governance of the Animal Care Standards at the Assiniboine Park Zoo are meeting the six principles of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums on the use of wild or exotic animals for performance shows or acts.

HISTORY:

On May 21, 2003, Executive Policy Committee heard delegations relating to the proposed Exotic Animal By-Law. The formal position statement of the Canadian Zoo and Aquarium Association (CAZA) on the "use of wild or exotic animals for performance, shows or acts" was presented to EPC as possible guidelines for Assiniboine Park Zoo to use. During the discussion, the following questions were raised:

- Has Assiniboine Park Zoo provided elephant rides for zoo visitors during the elephant encounter programs of 1998 and 2002?
- Is Assiniboine Park Zoo accredited by CAZA?
- Does Assiniboine Park Zoo follow the six points mentioned in the CAZA position statement on the use of wild or exotic animals for performance, shows, or acts?

DISCUSSION:

CAZA Accreditation: The Assiniboine Park Zoo has been an accredited member of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums since the Canadian accreditation program began. Assiniboine Park Zoo was most recently inspected by a CAZA team in the late fall of 2002, and accreditation for Assiniboine Park Zoo was approved by the Board of Directors of CAZA at their spring Board meeting in April 2003. This accreditation covers a five-year period, until 2008. A formal letter and the official accreditation report are expected to be received shortly.

CAZA accreditation verifies that a zoo is a professionally operated facility. Accreditation is not mandatory for zoos in Canada. Assiniboine Park Zoo has always been accredited on a volunteer

basis.

Six Points in the CAZA position statement: The Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums supports the use of wild or exotic animals, for performance, shows or acts only if all of the following conditions are met:

1. *The husbandry and training practices in no way negatively affects the physical health or the behavioral health of the animal subjects.*
2. *The maintenance facilities and husbandry practices for the animal subjects comply with any standards established by legislation and by CAZA.*
3. *The animal subjects are trained and perform only actions or tasks, which are accepted to be a part of their natural behaviour. Natural behaviour might include the display of working tasks performed by animals considered domestic in other parts of the world provided such tasks comply with all the other provisions written here.*
4. *The animal subjects are not trained to or perform tasks which may endanger the animal subject*
5. *Every opportunity is made to appropriately interpret the tasks involved in the act or performance as it relates to the animal's natural behaviour, physiology and anatomy.*
6. *The animals are treated humanely and with the dignity deserving of all animals."*

Assiniboine Park Zoo does adhere to the above six points identified in the CAZA position statement on the use of wild or exotic animals for performance, shows or acts. These points have guided the development for all animal encounter programs at the Zoo since the position statement was approved by CAZA membership in September of 1993.

It should be noted that giving rides on elephants is not necessarily considered a breach of the Code of Ethics of CAZA. Point Number 3 of the position statement allows for a "display of working tasks performed by animals considered to be domestic in other parts of the world ..." Riding Asian elephants would fall into this category, provided the other conditions in the position statement are met. There are a few highly regarded Canadian Zoos, such as African Lion Safari in Ontario, that provide elephant rides, and are CAZA accredited.

Elephant Rides at the Zoo: The Assiniboine Park Zoo has not had elephant rides since 1991. An elephant encounter program was presented in 1998 and again in 2002, however, rides with Limba (an Asian Elephant) were not offered for two reasons:

1) The Elephant Encounter was an educational program. The elephant was used as a symbol for wildlife and habitat conservation. Instead of rides on Limba, Zoo visitors were provided a special experience by allowing them to touch Limba in a controlled setting. By doing talks on elephants, the Zoo was able to present a more meaningful event in line with the education mandate of the Assiniboine Park Zoo.

2) Given the sensitivity of many people to the issue of elephants in captivity, the Zoo wished to be perceived as a facility above reproach. Therefore it was imperative that the elephant be cared for properly and that it only be used for educational purposes. Although Zoo administrators were assured by the elephant owner and trainers that Limba would not be harmed by giving rides, the Zoo chose to only do educational programming that showed the natural adaptations of an elephant.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

This report is for information only. The Departmental Controller has reviewed this report and indicated that there are no associated financial implications.

Financial Impact Statement — Date: August 8, 2003

Project Name: CAZA — **First Year of Program** 2003

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Enter Description Here)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Enter Description Here	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments: This report is for information only. The Departmental Controller has reviewed this report and indicated that there are no associated financial implications.

Manager of Finance & Administration

IN PREPARING THIS REPORT THERE WAS CONSULTATION WITH, AND CONCURRENCY BY:

N/A

THIS REPORT SUBMITTED BY:

Community Services Department
Assiniboine Park Enterprise
Prepared by: Douglas Ross, Zoo Coordinator
File No: