



Legislation Text

File #: 20-2332, **Version:** 1

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Quality of Life
AGENDA DATE: December 9, 2020
COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): 7
DEPARTMENT: Park & Recreation Department
EXECUTIVE: John D. Jenkins

SUBJECT

Authorize the Park & Recreation Department to provide interim funding to compensate Dallas Zoo Management to continue operations at the Children's Aquarium located at 1462 First Avenue in Fair Park for a period of six months - Not to exceed \$300,000.00 - Financing: Equity Revitalization Capital Fund

BACKGROUND

The Children's Aquarium in Fair Park, managed by Dallas Zoo Management through a contract with the Park & Recreation Department, opened in 2010 and has hosted an average of 114,000 visitors annually in recent years. The Children's Aquarium was partially funded by the Park & Recreation Department through the Dallas Zoo contract. Due to ongoing losses in operations, which were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Children's Aquarium was to cease operations in FY 2020-21.

Staff is currently working with Fair Park First and the Dallas Zoo on a plan to allow the Children's Aquarium to continue operations for an interim period of up to six months in order to facilitate the transition of the facility to a new operator. The interim funding will be used to maintain the facility and aquatic life currently housed in the aquarium. As a next step, staff will work with Fair Park First to structure an amendment to their contract to add the Children's Aquarium Building, which will allow Fair Park First to negotiate a proposal and agreement with a new potential operator.

The Park and Recreation Board meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2020, so the timing of the item does not allow for Park Board consideration.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (COUNCIL, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS)

On August 12, 2009, City Council authorized a twenty-five-year management agreement with Dallas Zoological Society and Dallas Zoo Management, Inc. for the operation and maintenance of the Dallas Zoo and the Dallas Aquarium at Fair Park by Resolution No. 09-1968.

The Quality of Life, Arts and Culture Committee was briefed regarding this matter on November 16, 2020.

FISCAL INFORMATION

Fund	FY 2021	FY 2022	Future Years
Equity Revitalization Capital Fund	\$300,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00