



# Memorandum

**TO:** PARKS AND RECREATION  
COMMISSION

**FROM:** Shannon Heimer

**SUBJECT:** HAPPY HOLLOW PARK &  
ZOO UPDATE

**DATE:** January 25, 2019

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Approved

Date

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Accept the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) Happy Hollow Park & Zoo Update highlighting achievements, future project plans and operations.

## **OUTCOME**

This report provides an update and overview of PRNS' 2018 Happy Hollow Park & Zoo (HHPZ) programs, partnerships, creative revenue/funding efforts and sources, and performance metrics. Additionally, this report contains information on upcoming HHPZ activities, programs, and future projects.

## **BACKGROUND**

HHPZ has operated as an amusement park and accredited zoo for close to 60 years. It provides affordable outdoor recreation for all ages with a focus on families with children, connecting people to nature through play. HHPZ is an accredited facility with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), and is dedicated to public education, conservation, quality experiences, maintaining a safe environment, and healthy animal collection.

## **ANALYSIS**

HHPZ has seen record-setting attendance since reopening in 2010 with over 500,000 guests annually. Over \$7.8M in revenue was collected last year, and with a concentrated effort on efficiencies, HHPZ has realized a direct cost recovery rate each year. HHPZ reopened in 2010 after a \$72 million green renovation making HHPZ the first amusement park and zoo to be LEED – Gold level certified. HHPZ's attractions, exhibits and programs have made it San

Jose's premiere conservation center and attraction with many accomplishments and highlights such as:

- Over 150 individual animals, 57 different species, with 16 in an SSP (Species Survival Plan)
- 9 amusement rides, 3 major attractions
- Concessions, catering, retail and membership programs
- Live Animal Education programs onsite and in the community
- Innovative leader in nature play and early childhood development through a Partnership with our non-profit support organization, Happy Hollow Foundation
- AZA accredited institution: more people visit AZA accredited zoos annually, than all professional sports combined
- 12,000 students participated in hands-on, live animal programs
- Over 35,500 Facebook Fans
- Over 39,000 Email Subscribers

The Happy Hollow Foundation (HHF) was also established over 50 years ago to endorse, support, and enhance the operations of HHPZ. Today the Foundation continues to engage individual donors, foundations, corporations, and other local government agencies to help enhance HHPZ. Over the years, the Foundation has made significant contributions towards the development of HHPZ as we know it today. Together, Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services (PRNS) staff and Foundation members work on various capital projects, grant solicitation, donor cultivation and appreciation events, and conservation efforts that all help to further the promotion and mission of HHPZ.

#### HIGHLIGHTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017 - 2018

- Record-setting attendance (500,000+)
- Over 12,000 students participated in education programs
- Over 35,500 Facebook fans
- AZA Quarter Century Award for 25 continuous years of accreditation
- Opening of Alligator Exhibit
- Demonstration of successful Alligator Training Program
- Renovation of Team Kids Peddle Car Ride
- Quarters for Conservation Programs reaches \$120K in funds going to in-situ conservation
- Successful Flood Recovery – buildings repaired, and honey bee apiary reestablished
- Security Upgrade Project in progress including camera systems expansion and perimeter fence improvements
- Completion of updated Master Plan valued at \$110M and includes zoo and facility expansion
- Partnership with San Jose Library to install 5 Story Stations during Spring Into Reading month

- First annual Bee Kind Event celebrating bee conservation, HHPZ's apiary and the implementation of a \$10,000 grant from Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez
- First annual Brew at the Zoo
- Backyard Bayou Summer Show
- First annual Noon Year's Eve Celebration

#### FUTURE PROJECT PLANS FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019

- New Website – coming March 2019
- Pacific Fruit Express Roller Coaster Scene Renovation
- Picnic Basket Restaurant Theme Redesign and Facility Reimagined
- Reestablishment of Puppet and Theater Camps/Workshops
- Story to Script Contest for Elementary Students
- First annual Jaguar Conservation Day
- Backyard Habitat renovation including Bee Waggle Dance Trail developed by Happy Hollow Foundation Youth Board Member
- Conversion of Wallaby exhibit to Multi-Species Exhibit
- Maintenance and upgrades of existing exhibits and night houses
- Maintenance and renovation of 9 attractions and 7 playgrounds
- Evaluate Business Plan in terms of potential price increases in response to increased staffing costs
- Redesign of the Danny the Dragon Trail Scenes
- Planning of 60th anniversary year (2021)
- AZA Accreditation Application due 2021

#### FUTURE PROJECT PLANS 2020 - 2025

- Installation of second Food Concessions Area
- Convert Black & White Lemur Exhibit to New River Otter Exhibit
- Renovate Small Primate Exhibit
- Convert Miner's Maze into Splashground
- Replacement of Kiddie Swing Ride with New Ride
- Celebration of 60th Anniversary
- Identify funding source for Master Plan Expansion

#### **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

Mid-Year revenue and project reports show HHPZ trending slightly higher than last year and it is expected that FY 2018-2019 will be another record year in all areas. Each year HHPZ is able to continue to push past the previous years' records. Future plans focus on maintaining aging infrastructure, rides, attractions and exhibits as well as continuing to meet the needs of guests through innovative events and programs. Every experience at HHPZ directly correlates to the mission of "Connecting People to Nature through Play" and focuses on one of the HHPZ primary principals; education, conservation, play. It is an exciting time at HHPZ with many

challenges and opportunities. 2018 was a strong year of building an effective and highly motivated team. 2019 will see continued success as the HHPZ team continues to expand on its many quality programs and projects.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

This memorandum will be posted on the City's website for the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on Friday, January 25, 2019.

### **CEQA**

Not a Project, Public Project Number PP17-009, Staff Reports, Assessments, Annual Reports, and Information Memos that involve no approvals of any City action.

/s/

Shannon Heimer  
Parks (General) Manager, HHPZ  
Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services

For questions, please contact Justin Long, Deputy Director, at (408) 793-5579.



**HAPPY HOLLOW**  
**PARK & ZOO**  
— SAN JOSE —  
**PARKS, RECREATION & NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES**



WE WELCOMED OUR

**500,000<sup>TH</sup>**

GUEST FOR THE YEAR!

**HAPPY  
HOLLOW**  
PARK & ZOO  
— SAN JOSE —  
PARKS, RECREATION &  
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

## Highlights for 2017-2018:

### Business Operations & Capital Projects

- Record-setting attendance (500,000+)
- Over 12,000 students participated in education programs
- Over 35,500 Facebook fans
- AZA Quarter Century Award for 25 continuous years of accreditation
- Opening of Alligator Exhibit & demonstration of successful alligator training program
- Renovation of Team Kids Peddle Car Ride
- Quarters for Conservation Programs reaches \$120K in funds going to in-situ conservation
- Successful Flood Recovery – buildings repaired and honey bee apiary reestablished
- Security Upgrade Project in progress
- Completion of updated Master Plan valued at \$110M and includes zoo and facility expansion



## Highlights for 2017-2018: Events & Programs

- Partnership with SJ Library to install 5 Story Stations during Spring Into Reading month
- First Beekind event
- First Brew at the Zoo
- Backyard Bayou Summer Show
- First Noon Year's Eve Celebration



## Happy Hollow Foundation Partnership

- New Executive Director, Amy Pizarro
- Board recruitment – 3 new members plus first Youth Board Member
- Sr Safari Program – record year!
- Rendezvous at the Zoo – New Annual Fundraiser – record fundraising year!







## Happy Hollow Leadership Team



Shannon Heimer  
**General Manager**



Kiersten McCormick  
**Assistant General Manager**



PRC AGENDA: 02-06-19  
ITEM: VII. A.

J. Kevin Hertell  
**Zoo Manager**



Charlotte Orr  
**Conservation &  
Communication Manager**



## 2019-2020 Projects

- New Website – coming March 2019
- Pacific Fruit Express Roller Coaster Scene Renovation
- Picnic Basket Restaurant Theme Redesign and Facility Reimagined
- Reestablishment of Puppet and Theater Camps/Workshops
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## 2021-2025 Projects

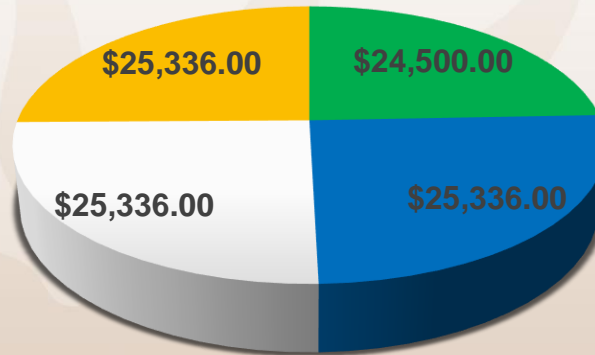
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PRC AGENDA: 02-06-19  
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### Quarters for Conservation Distribution - FY 18-19



- Red Panda Network
- Virunga National Park
- Ruaha Carnivore Project
- Progress for Pollinators

# Questions?



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