

Date: October 12, 1995

SUBJECT: VANCOUVER AQUARIUM - CONFIRMING USE OF OTTER DISPLAY

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

With the intended removal of the zoo from Stanley Park, the otter display in the "old seal tank" was dismantled and in May 1994, the Aquarium requested temporary use of the facility until November 1994 for "rescued seals".

In January 1995 the Aquarium again requested use of the otter exhibit area.

"Dr. John Nightingale, Director, Vancouver Aquarium appeared before the Board to request the use of the Otter Display for marine mammal rehabilitation. Dr. Nightingale stated that the Aquarium intends to develop an alternative facility outside the Aquarium grounds but nearby."

The Board passed the following resolution:

THAT the Park Board approve the use of the former sea otter facility in Stanley Park in the lower zoo area for the use of the Vancouver Aquarium in 1995 and that the facility be vacated no later than the end of November 1995.

DISCUSSION

Further to the Board's intention to remove the zoo, staff were prepared to commence demolition in spring 1995. However, concern for the heronry resulted in a postponement of the demolition until fall 1995. In line with the above noted Board resolution, staff have scheduled the demolition contract for November 1995.

The redevelopment plans for the old zoo area and the proposed schedule were reviewed by Dr. Nightingale in early June, 1995. No issues were raised concerning meeting the Board resolution in terms of vacating the old zoo display in November.

Recently, the Aquarium has again requested an extension of the zoo display temporary arrangement for up to an additional five years and, irrespective of this request, wishes to continue with its operation of the facility into 1996, as it has just taken in new seals and no tangible arrangements have been made for a facility to replace the existing zoo display.

.../2Between the herons and the seals there is a narrow window for demolition and landscape re-establishment - November until early March.

Summer work would be highly disruptive to park users and the train ride requires November demolition/restoration of the kangaroo area to provide adequate new electrical power for the Christmas display.

Currently, staff are intending to have demolition completed by the end of the third week in November. Restoration would commence in January.

Postponement of the seal display until January is possible at some financial costs to the Board as a remobilization would be required. The amount will not be known until October 24th.

CONCLUSIONS A further extension of the seal facility makes its description as "temporary" problematic. The Board could choose to make this a more permanent feature of Stanley Park, in which case, staff will revise the restoration plan for the lower zoo area.

Prepared by:

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