



BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES

JULY 26, 28, AND 31, 2014

A Special Meeting of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation was held on Saturday, July 26, 2014, at 9:07 am, at the Park Board Office. Subsequently, the meeting reconvened at 6:03pm on Monday, July 28, 2014, and 6:24 pm on Thursday, July 31, 2014.

PRESENT: Commissioner Aaron Jasper, Chair
Commissioner Constance Barnes, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Sarah Blyth
Commissioner Trevor Loke*
Commissioner Niki Sharma

ABSENT: Commissioner John Coupar (Conflict of Interest)
Commissioner Melissa De Genova (Leave of Absence)

GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE: Malcolm Bromley, General Manager
Huub Langeveld, Deputy General Manager
Cheryl Chan, Manager, Administrative Services
Pat Boomhower, Meeting Clerk

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Janice MacKenzie, City Clerk
Rosemary Hagiwara, Deputy City Clerk
Lori Isfeld, Meeting Coordinator
Nicole Ludwig, Meeting Coordinator

* Denotes absence for a portion of the meeting.

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The Chair noted that at the Board meeting on July 21, 2014, Commissioner Coupar declared conflict of interest for this meeting due to his employment, and therefore, he would not be participating in the meeting or the vote.

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MOVED by Commissioner Loke
SECONDED by Commissioner Barnes

THAT, due to the large number of registered speakers, the Board limit speaking time to three minutes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND
BY THE REQUIRED MAJORITY

AGENDA ITEM

1. Review of the Practice of Keeping Captive Cetaceans in Stanley Park

On April 28, 2014, the Board requested information on the Vancouver Aquarium and its current practices relating to cetaceans. The following documents were before the Board for consideration:

- Staff report dated July 23, 2014, entitled "Review of Captive Cetaceans in Stanley Park"
- Consultant's report dated July 23, 2014, entitled "A review of the Vancouver Aquarium's current operations pertaining to cetaceans with comparison to other aquariums"
- Vancouver Aquarium presentation and meeting material, dated July 26, 2014
(*on file - Park Board office*)

(a) Staff Report: Review of Captive Cetaceans in Stanley Park

Malcolm Bromley, General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, provided an overview of the staff report. He introduced Dr. Joseph K. Gaydos, Chief Scientist and Wildlife Veterinarian, University of California Davis Wildlife Health Centre's SeaDoc Society Program, who was commissioned to provide a report on the Vancouver Aquarium's current practices regarding captive cetaceans and how those practices compared to other aquariums.

Dr. Gaydos provided an overview of the report including its scope and methodology, and responded to questions.

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The Board recessed at 10:54 am and reconvened at 11:11 am.

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(b) Vancouver Aquarium Presentation

Presentations were provided regarding work done at the Vancouver Aquarium and its importance to research, conservation, and the rescue and rehabilitation of sick or injured marine animals by the following:

- Margot Spence, Past Chair, Vancouver Aquarium Board of Directors
- Clint Wright, Senior Vice President and Aquarium General Manager, Vancouver Aquarium
- Kris Vehrs, J.D., Executive Director, Association of Zoos and Aquariums
- Dr. David Rosen, Ph.D, Research Associate, Marine Mammal Research Unit, University of British Columbia
- Dr. Heidi Hartley, Ph.D, Director of Environmental Studies, Professor of Psychology, Division of Social Sciences, New College of Florida
- Dr. Martin Haulena, DVM, MSc, Dipl. ACZM, Head Veterinarian, Vancouver Aquarium

- Dr. Shawn R. Noren, Ph.D, Associate Research Scientist, Institute of Marine Science, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Laurene Schiller, MSc, Marine Biologist, Institute of Marine Science, University of British Columbia
- Dr. John Nightingale, Ph.D, President and CEO, Vancouver Aquarium.

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At 12:32 pm, it was

*MOVED by Commissioner Loke
SECONDED by Commissioner Barnes*

THAT the Board recess and reconvene at 1:15 pm.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Board recessed at 12:32 pm and reconvened at 1:28 pm.

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Following the recess, the above-noted Vancouver Aquarium staff and other presenters responded to questions. Subsequently, the Board began hearing from registered speakers.

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On Saturday, July 26, 2014, at 5:20 pm it was

*MOVED by Commissioner Sharma
SECONDED by Commissioner Barnes*

THAT the Board recess and reconvene at 6:00 pm on Monday, July 28, 2014, to continue hearing from registered speakers, beginning with speaker number 49.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Board recessed at 5:20 pm on Saturday, July 26, 2014, and reconvened at 6:03 pm on Monday, July 28, 2014.

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On July 26, and 28, 2014, the Board heard from a total of 76 speakers on this matter. Forty-three speakers spoke in support of the Vancouver Aquarium's current operations pertaining to cetaceans. Thirty-one speakers were opposed to keeping captive cetaceans at the Vancouver Aquarium, or expressed concerns regarding the wellbeing of cetaceans in captivity. Two of the speakers spoke neither in support nor in opposition to keeping captive cetaceans at the Vancouver Aquarium, but offered other comments or suggestions.

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The Board recessed at 8:30 pm and reconvened at 8:56 pm on Monday, July 28, 2014.

Subsequently, at approximately 10 pm, it was

*MOVED by Commissioner Sharma
SECONDED by Commissioner Barnes*

THAT the length of the meeting be extended to conclude hearing from registered speakers.

*CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND
BY THE REQUIRED MAJORITY
(Commissioner Loke absent for the vote)*

Following the hearing of speakers, it was

*MOVED by Commissioner Barnes
SECONDED by Commissioner Blyth*

THAT the Board recess and reconvene at 6:00 pm on Thursday, July 31, 2014, for discussion on this matter.

*CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
(Commissioner Loke absent for the vote)*

The Board recessed at 10:20 pm on Monday, July 28, 2014, and reconvened at 6:24 pm on Thursday, July 31, 2014.

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On Thursday, July 31, 2014, it was

MOVED by Commissioner Sharma
SECONDED by Commissioner Barnes

WHEREAS

1. The Vancouver Aquarium is a world-leading aquarium for marine science and conservation, and plays a vital role in the rescue and rehabilitation of marine mammals;
2. In 1996, the Vancouver Aquarium, operated by the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre (the "Society"), became a world leader by becoming the first aquarium to ban the import of wild cetaceans to be kept in captivity;
3. The Vancouver Aquarium exists on public park land under the jurisdiction of the Park Board;

4. In 2006, the Park Board committed to reviewing the Parks Control By-law with respect to cetaceans in captivity in 2015;
5. On April 28, 2014, the Park Board commissioned a third-party report to review the Vancouver Aquarium's current operations pertaining to cetaceans in comparison with other aquariums ("Gaydos Report");
6. The Park Board committed to pursuing an open and public discussion on the future of keeping cetaceans in captivity;
7. The Gaydos Report found that the cetacean program at the Vancouver Aquarium contributes to marine mammal conservation and allows the aquarium to provide a stranding and response program to injured marine mammals;
8. The Gaydos Report identified a need to examine whether the applicable standards and regulations for cetaceans in captivity at the Vancouver Aquarium are sufficient to ensure the well-being of the captive cetaceans;
9. The Gaydos Report identified a need to assure the public that cetaceans held at the Vancouver Aquarium are receiving the highest standard of care;
10. All cetaceans owned by the Society have been deemed non-releasable and therefore would not survive in the wild;
11. The Park Board received emails, public comments, and inquiries from thousands of concerned citizens on all sides of this debate, and all based upon the well-being of the cetaceans at the Vancouver Aquarium; and
12. The Park Board has concerns about the cetacean captive breeding program and whether this program contributes to the Society's mandate.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

- A. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation calls upon the Society to continue its international leadership and work with the Board and other relevant partners to undertake a detailed examination of the applicable animal care standards (including those applied by Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums ("CAZA"), Association of Zoos and Aquariums ("AZA"), and Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums ("AMMPA") and the implications of those standards on the behaviour of captive cetaceans. This study should:
 - i. use all available scientific data to determine if cetacean well-being is possible within the confines of the Vancouver Aquarium's cetacean compounds; and
 - ii. be based upon measurable criteria as determined by scientific experts in the field of cetacean biology and behavioural science.
- B. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation directs staff to establish an Oversight Committee consisting of animal welfare experts, with the mandate to provide public oversight to ensure the well-being of all cetaceans owned by the Society. This Oversight Committee will prepare a bi-annual report to the Park Board on the status and well-being of all cetaceans owned by the Society.

- C. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation directs staff to work with the Society to investigate and, where viable, implement alternatives to cetacean exhibition and continue to research cetacean rehabilitation and release.
- D. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation directs staff to prepare and bring forward for enactment by the Board an amendment to the Parks Control By-law to prohibit the breeding of captive cetaceans in Vancouver parks unless, in each particular instance, the captive cetacean is a threatened species and the Oversight Committee, the Board, and the Society agree that captive breeding is necessary for the survival of such threatened species.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Commissioner Barnes
SECONDED by Commissioner Sharma

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Board adjourned at 6:50 pm on July 31, 2014.

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