



To: Mary Sheffield
Council President
City of Detroit

From: Dr. Hayley Murphy
Executive Director and CEO
Detroit Zoological Society

Hayley W. Murphy, DVM

Date: March 29, 2023

RE: Detroit Zoological Society (DZS) Budget Hearing Questions, Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Please see the following response to your letter dated March 27, 2023, regarding the Detroit Zoological Society's budget. Feel free to contact me if you need further information.

1. *Please provide your annual budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year.*

The Detroit Zoological Society ("DZS") is on a one year, calendar year cycle for financial and budget purposes. The 2023 budget is the only budget currently available. We will start the 2024 budget preparation cycle in fall 2023.

Please see our 2023 budget at the bottom of this response.

2. *As stated on the Detroit Zoo website, DZS has 261 full-time employees and 30 part-time employees. What is the rate of employee turnover at the DZS? Is the DZS fully staffed? If not, what are the barriers to employment?*

As of February 28, 2023, the DZS has a very low turnover rate of 1%. The DZS currently has 17 full-time positions vacant or on hold, and needs to hire ~90 seasonal staff between now and the end of April. Barriers to employment continue to be rate of pay and scheduling. To help ensure we have the required number of seasonal staff, the DZS holds multiple job fairs each spring and the HR team attends hiring events in the City of Detroit and throughout the region.

3. *DZS has 52,000 member households. What do your member benefits entail? Does DZS require member fees? If so, what is DZS doing to assist low-income families who cannot afford to become members?*

Membership at the Detroit Zoo includes a number of wonderful benefits, including free parking, early event ticket sales, exclusive discounts, and free subscription to our digital magazine. The DZS does not require guests to purchase a membership to come to the zoo, though, as anyone can pay a daily fee. In order to assist low-income families, the DZS employs a dynamic pricing model with tickets as low as \$14 for adults and \$11 for kids and seniors. Both of these prices represent a 40+% discount off of the walk-up gate price. The DZS also provides complimentary tickets to several community partners within the City of Detroit, which are then distributed throughout the region to those in need.

4. *Part of DZS's mission is to inspire your diverse community with engaging, meaningful, memorable experiences and equitable opportunities that encourage appreciation and stewardship of nature. What programs does DZS offer that meets this goal? Please include all future programs that will be put into place.*

The DZS has a number of programs geared towards the appreciation and stewardship of nature. One of those is our Nature Tots program at the Belle Isle Nature Center. This is a program for children ages 2-4 and their caregivers which provides opportunities to experience nature materials, hear stories, take part in arts and crafts, and play outdoors. The Nature Tots program is free, as is daily admission to the Belle Isle Nature Center!

The DZS also has its "A Day at the Zoo" (DATZ) program at the Detroit Zoo, which provides field trips for kids from pre-K to grade 12 who would not otherwise have the means to visit. DATZ includes admission, bus transportation, educational content led by DZS educators, all free of charge.

5. *\$570,000 of Non-Departmental General Fund dollars is recommended for Zoo Operations. What do these zoo operations entail? Considering that this allotment is consistent, please provide an analysis that includes previous, current, and future plans that maximize this funding.*

This funding is specifically provided to cover security and insurance costs at the Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Center, as noted in the agreement between the DZS and the City. Although this allotment has been consistent for many years, the actual cost of security and insurance has continued to increase. We're projected to spend \$2.3 million in 2023 on building & property insurance, building monitoring security systems, fire safety systems, and security staffing, which means the \$570,000 covers 25% of the total cost. The DZS has invested more into security over the past 3 years, not only to keep guests safe as part of the pandemic, but to secure zoo assets given the number of security breaches in zoos and other similar institutions. We expect both insurance and security costs to continue to rise moving forward.

6. *What new initiatives, if any, does the society have to engage Detroiters and youth around careers at the DZS and in zoology in general?*

The DZS is proud to take part in the MDNR Environmental Stewardship Program at the Belle Isle Nature Center, which provides summer internships to Detroit teenagers. We

have had 86 participants in this program over the past 4 years, and many of these interns have gone on to jobs at City of Detroit Parks and at the DZS!

7. *As we continue to transition back to normal, what protocols does DZS have in place to ensure member and public safety?*

As discussed in Question 5, safety and security have been a major priority over the past few years. The DZS has went from 7 full-time security officers in 2019, up to 24 in 2023, due to the need for an increased presence on Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Center grounds. We also contract with White Collar Canine to provide canine security services, which help detect explosives and firearm ammunition. These security measures are critical given many of the incidents we have recently seen across the country.

From an operational standpoint, the DZS now employs a timed ticketing system, which places a specific arrival time on admission. This smooths out the flow of guests coming to the Detroit Zoo at any one time, making it easier for staff to go through proper safety and security protocols upon entrance.

8. *What partnerships does the DZS have to-date that supports the creation of innovative programs and services that contribute to the region's economic vitality?*

The DZS has a number of amazing partners throughout the region, helping to provide not only engaging experiences to guests (which help contribute to the regional economy), but to further our mission throughout the region. Please see a sample of our partnerships below:

- Huron-Clinton Metroparks
- Detroit Public Schools Community District
- Wayne State University
- Downtown Boxing Gym
- Children's Village
- Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program
- Grow Detroit's Young Talent
- Michigan DNR
- Greening of Detroit
- Michigan Department of Environmental, Great Lakes, & Energy
- Autism Alliance of Michigan
- AmeriCorps

Detroit Zoological Society 2023 Board-Approved Operating Budget

Operating Revenues		
Earned Revenue	\$	25,530,000
Contributions		6,100,000
County & City Support		15,070,000
Other		100,000
Total Operating Revenue	\$	46,800,000

Operating Expenses		
Executive Administration		3,266,000
Life Sciences		10,263,000
Education		2,098,000
Operations		17,400,000
Finance		3,362,000
Development		2,218,000
Non-Department		2,693,000
Contingency		1,000,000
Total Operating Expense	\$	42,300,000

Non-Operating Expenses		
Capital Projects	\$	4,500,000
Net Revenue (Expense)	\$	-

CC: Councilmembers
 Donnie Johnson, Associate Budget Director
 Doug Ortiz, Budget Analyst
 Malik Washington, Mayor's Office
 James George, Agency OCFO
 Robert Schumaker, DZS Chief Financial Officer
 Amanda Hanlin, DZS Chief of Staff