

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE: December 23, 2005

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT: Follow-up report of the January 23, 2004, *Performance Audit of the Dallas Zoo Administration--Report #406*

We conducted this follow-up under the authority of Chapter IX of the City Charter, and according to applicable government auditing standards. We included tests of records and reviews of program guidelines and procedures that we considered necessary in the circumstances. Our objective was to determine whether management had implemented the original audit's recommendations or had taken other acceptable actions to remedy the control weaknesses identified in the original audit report.

The original audit contained five findings with ten recommendations. Management implemented seven of the recommendations, and partially implemented three due to funding constraints.

1. Continued Zoo staffing shortages are reducing the effectiveness of overall Zoo operations.

We recommended that the Director of PKR identify the staffing levels required to meet AWA standards and seek means to adequately satisfy those levels.

We found that management identified the staffing levels required to meet American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) standards and sought money in the 2004-'05, and 2005-'06 budgets for 60 to 70 positions to meet those standards. The items were not approved in the budget process (Partially implemented).

2. The Zoo's computer network and incompatible computers negatively impact administration and operations.

We recommended that the Director of PKR:

- Conduct a computer needs assessment and prioritize these needs. Goal attainment considerations should include funding sources such as the

General Fund, the DZS, governmental or private grants/awards, as well as corporate and private contributions.

We found that management assessed the Zoo's needs, prioritized them, and was able to purchase and lease equipment to begin meeting its goals (Implemented).

- Ensure that the Zoo is provided with an adequate computer networking system that meets program and operating needs, including software upgrades from the City's enterprise software license, additional cable or wireless connections for additional animal care buildings, and a power backup or UPS for the VOIP system.

We found that management sought funding in the 2004-'05 budget for data processing equipment but the items were not approved. Management was able to install a T1 line at the animal hospital to connect with the City network. Connection of other buildings (including the Aquarium at Fair Park) are awaiting SBC action. New computers were leased or purchased and installed (Partially implemented).

3. Recorded animal diets may not be consistent or reliable.

We recommended that the Director of PKR:

- Direct Zoo management to explore the establishment of a separate nutritionist position responsible for ensuring that the correct diet is being provided to each animal by examining diet sheets, performing site visits at appropriate intervals, and performing quality control tests on animal food.

We found that management sought funds in the 2004-'05 budget for a nutritionist position but the item was not approved. Management plans to hire a Commissary manager that has more nutrition expertise (the current manager is about to retire) (Implemented).

- Develop procedures to ensure that each need-to-know person has a copy of the most current diet sheet/diet change sheet and that the verification is documented and signed by responsible individuals.

We found that management developed procedures to ensure that the appropriate staff have copies of the most current diet sheets and the verifications are documented and signed (Implemented).

- Ensure that periodic verification of diet request changes do not exceed the time frame established by the Zoo veterinarian.

We found that management streamlined the diet request changes by allowing the Commissary Manager to accept verbal requests in urgent

situations, then provide the forms within seven work days. The Manager also places revised forms so all staff can see them (Implemented).

- Consult with CIS or an outside systems analyst to determine whether diet change requests may be requested and authorized using a network or e-mail system.

We found that management explored options for providing the Commissary Manager e-mail, but funds have not yet been approved to have SBC run a line to his office. They are currently exploring moving his office to the administration building; but that will mean displacing at least one other person to clear space (Partially implemented).

4. The Zoo commissary procedures on animal food storage are inadequately documented.

We recommended that the Director of PKR:

- Require the commissary manager to develop and document detailed instructions (with diagrams) for receiving, storing, and issuing food for each storeroom in the Zoo commissary. These instructions should be included in the Zoo commissary written policies and procedures and diagrams should be displayed in all of the commissary storerooms.

We found that management revised the diet sheets to make ingredients more clear; developed a first-in, first-out policy for handling food, including display of labels; and diagrams of food stores are posted in each locations (as I observed), as are handling instructions (Implemented).

- Ensure that Zoo management periodically monitors commissary procedures to ensure that steps are being consistently followed in all food storage areas.

We found that management revised the Commissary Keeper's manual for training staff and the Commissary Supervisor oversees their activities to ensure steps are followed (Implemented).

5. The Zoo's purchasing policies and procedures are inadequately documented.

We recommended that the Director of PKR ensure that the specific steps taken by Zoo offices for each type of procurement is documented, approved, distributed to responsible individuals, and updated as needed.

Honorable Mayor and City Council
December 23, 2005
Page 4

*We found that management developed procurement policies and procedures and trained managers and supervisors in February, and included them in a comprehensive manual. They are currently adapting to use Advantage 3 for procurement **(Implemented)**.*

Paul T. Garner
Assistant City Auditor

c: Richard Buickerood, Director of the Dallas Zoo