
**BUSINESS & RESPONSIVE AGENCY ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES**

MISSION STATEMENT

This Council advises and makes recommendations to the programs and operations of
Metro Parks Tacoma concerning financial management and business practices.

Metro Parks Tacoma
4702 S 19th Street, Tacoma, WA 98405
May 8, 2018

Present: Jen Drake, Don Golden, Noreen Plum,
Absent: Commissioner Baines, Jeff Albers, Su Dowie, Zachary Christen, Johnny Mojica, Dan Powell, Blake Smith
Staff: Erwin Vidallon, Julie Wilfong
Board Liaison: Commissioner Baines
Guest: Whitney DalBalcon; Doug Andreasson
Location: Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, Hellyer Center, 11610 Trek Drive E., Eatonville, WA 98328

SUMMARY

Group participated in a Keeper Tour at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park.

Introduction of Doug Andreasson, applicant for the BRAAC Council.

Whitney DalBalcon presented the council with a presentation of the past and current marketing campaigns for Northwest Trek Wildlife Park and Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m.

MINUTES

No meeting minutes were approved.

**NORTHWEST TREK WILDLIFE PARK & POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIM
MARKETING CAMPAIGN**

Whitney DalBalcon, Marketing & Communications Manager for Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium (PDZA) and Northwest Trek Wildlife Park (NWT) has been with the organization for nine (9) years. Before Metro Parks, she was the Marketing & Communications Manager for the Washington State Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) Program and had worked with the State Legislature.

The primary target audience for the advertising campaigns for both Northwest Trek and Point Defiance Zoo are moms with young children ages 2 to 9, higher income families, with the average family size of 3.5 members, college educated and live in the Puget Sound area of Pierce, King and Thurston counties. Their secondary target are fathers, grandparents, young couples, tourists from outside the Puget Sound area, school groups, brides and corporate groups.

Doug Andreasson asked if the Zoo or Northwest Trek partnered with National Parks? Whitney DalBalcon responded they did not. They have a partnership with Visit Rainier, a destination marketing organization that promotes the Rainier region.

The current advertisements that will be promoted this year were successful the last several years. The advertisements will be freshened up and will focus on emotions and connecting kids with nature.

Each year both PDZA and NWT have done a fair amount of promotion of baby animals. This year NWT have bison calves and the promotion for these new babies will be in full swing. At PDZA, the campaigns emphasize animals not found at Woodland Park Zoo and positions itself as the only zoo and aquarium in the Pacific Northwest. They have learned that walruses, polar bears and sharks are engaging and mesmerizing animals that draw lots of visitors to the park especially on rainy days.

Doug Andreasson asked as part of the advertising process, do they look at the sustainability of animals? Whitney DalBalcon responded, yes, it is part of the communications piece for the advertising. This piece tells the story about how they save animals in the wild, and take extraordinary care of them and hope it will inspire their visitors to take action. This is the core mission of the Zoological & Environmental Education Department (ZEED). They hope to inspire millennials who want to emotionally connect with great and powerful changes they can be apart of.

At NWT, they have had success campaigns that were nature inspired. Some of their successful advertisements were: Moose Calf ad and the Spend the Day in Awe campaigns and the Nature Inspired Playground, which introduced the new Kids' Trek play area in April 2016 and was one of the most successful campaigns done. It brought in many visitors and created a "parking problem", but it was a good problem to have.

For the past three (3) years, both NWT and PDZA were unable to do billboard advertisement campaigns in the City of Tacoma. The City of Tacoma was involved in litigation with Clear Channel the billboard owners due to compliance issues. Due to the non-compliance issues, the City of Tacoma would not place advertisements with Clear Channel and both PDZA and NWT chose to support the city in its decision. However, an agreement was finally reached in 2018 and NWT and PDZA will start doing billboard advertisements around the city again.

NWT and PDZA had many successful smaller event advertisements such as sharks and tigers for PDZA and Slugfest and Hoot'n'Howl at NWT. Hoot'n'Howl has been successful the last two years that parking again has become an issue. As mentioned before baby animals campaigns are popular with the visitors. In 2017, PDZA advertised the Washed Ashore Exhibit, which brought awareness to the plight of plastic in the oceans and was the platform for the "Bring Your Bag" Initiative for the City of Tacoma.

Advertising campaigns can drive attendance, in 2015, there were four (4) clouded leopard cubs born at PDZA and the advertisement campaign began, this played a major factor that boosted attendance during that summer. This was also the year the new Jellyfish Exhibit was displayed in the North Pacific Aquarium.

A question was asked if attendance was effected by the recession in 2008 and Whitney DalBalcon responded at PDZA the Kids Zone Exhibit and play area opened and this drew strong attendance that year. In 2009, ZEED started to feel the effects of the recession and hours of operation were cut back at the Zoo in November, December and January. In addition admissions prices were also increased.

Doug Andreasson asked what does the Zoo do to engage the underserved youth of Tacoma? Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium offers twelve (12) free Tacoma days. These free days are for low income families, seniors and people with disabilities within the City of Tacoma. PDZA and NWT partner with local libraries around the area on a reading program that offers a free ticket to the Zoo for a child and adult chaperone. The Zoo is working with the Metro Parks district office on the Whole Child Access Pass initiative with a goal to have all students within the Tacoma Public Schools signed up for the pass. In addition, the Zoo has a promotion for free admissions to the Zoo for a student and one (1) guardian if they are signed up by the third weekend in June.

PDZA has received a grant from a private donor to partner with an underserved elementary school in south Tacoma for a year-round program on empathy with animals. The Zoo also has an Outreach Program that brings animals to the schools that do not have the money for field trips to engage kids and take action. PDZA is working to do a better job of engaging kids in the mission of the Zoo and one trip to the park may not be enough.

Comment was made that healthy life style and anti-gang messaging could be included in the Zoo messaging campaign. Jen Drake suggested, if there was a donate button for members to donate a membership to a family on their website, she and many other members would contribute.

Doug Andreasson mention, most corporations have a sustainability message, especially in the fishing industry, which is a big deal and this might be a way to partner and earn additional dollars. Many corporations have programs that provide funding for the underserved community, depending on the mission statement. Private equity firms have sustainable messages and provide funding to organizations like the Zoo and Northwest Trek if their programs meet the firm's sustainable guidelines. It may be as easy as filing out an application and providing a copy of the programs offered to support sustainability.

RECRUITMENT UPDATE

Doug Andreasson, was born in Norway, but grew up in Tacoma. He runs his family business in Norway out of Seattle, WA. He has been involved in parks all his life and his wife volunteers for Parks Watch at Point Defiance Park. Both he and his wife heard about the BRAAC council looking for volunteers and she had asked him to join.

Members of the Council were introduced.

FINANCIAL REPORT

No financial update reported.

MEETING SUMMARY AND FOLLOW-UP

Request for a copy of the Powerpoint presentation to be sent to the council.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, June 12, 2018, Metro Parks Tacoma Headquarters Building, main conference room.

ADJOURNED

The meeting ended at 10:20 a.m.

Approved:
Don Golden, Chair

Submitted by: Julie Wilfong