



**FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF COOK COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Cook County Building, Board Room, 118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois

Third Consent Agenda

Tuesday, April 14, 2026, 10:00 AM

Issued On: 4/13/2026

[26-0245](#)

Sponsored by: FRANK J. AGUILAR, Forest Preserve District of Cook County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING BROOKFIELD ZOO CHICAGO'S VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AND VOLUNTEERS

WHEREAS, Brookfield Zoo Chicago is the largest zoo in the Chicago metropolitan area, spanning over 235 acres and housing over 500 different species of animals; and

WHEREAS, Brookfield Zoo Chicago, founded in 1934, is located on land owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and managed by the Chicago Zoological Society; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Zoo is to inspire conservation leadership by connecting people to wildlife and nature; and

WHEREAS, since 1972, Brookfield Zoo Chicago's Adult Volunteer Program has aimed to build a strong community of conservation leaders and advocates for wildlife and nature; and

WHEREAS, every day, the Zoo's more than 260 volunteers provide critical programmatic support across the following areas: interpretation, special events, animal observations, archival projects, and office and administrative work; and

WHEREAS, in a typical year, Zoo volunteers provide more than \$780,000 of in-kind support; and

WHEREAS, some members of the Zoo's Adult Volunteer Program have remained active for over 40 years, with volunteer Joan Canchola reaching a milestone anniversary of 50 years in 2025; and

WHEREAS, in 2026, Brookfield Zoo Chicago will welcome more than 50 new volunteers to the program, further strengthening this community of conservation leaders; and

WHEREAS, the Zoo's volunteer opportunities begin at the high school level with the King Conservation Science Scholars Program, providing an interactive college and career readiness experience; This adaptable, skill-building program prepares high school students to be change-makers through conservation workshops, immersive experiences, and public engagement opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Brookfield Zoo Chicago strives to offer accessible volunteer opportunities to people of all backgrounds and abilities, providing accommodations to ensure broad community participation; and

WHEREAS, Brookfield Zoo Chicago has made a tremendous impact to Cook County and has provided a place for residents and visitors to explore and learn about animals, wildlife, and more; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of Brookfield Zoo Chicago's leadership, employees, and volunteers should be recognized; and

WHEREAS, April 19-25, 2026 is National Volunteer Appreciation Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the residents of Cook County, do hereby recognize Brookfield Zoo Chicago and its volunteer program in April of 2026.