



Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE RETURN OF BROOKFIELD ZOO CHICAGO'S DOLPHINS AND ANIMAL CARE SPECIALISTS

WHEREAS, Brookfield Zoo Chicago is home to seven bottlenose dolphins who, for the past 15 months, have lived at fellow Association of Zoos and Aquariums' accredited Minnesota Zoo as an extensive \$10 million renovation took place on their Seven Seas habitat; and

WHEREAS, During those 15 months, the dolphins continued to be cared for by Brookfield Zoo Chicago's marine mammal care team; all nine members of the team, as well as veterinary staff, rotated up to Minnesota for varying lengths of time during the project; two staff members, Bethany and Heather, remained in Minnesota for the entire 15 months; and

WHEREAS, While there, staff provided daily care to the dolphins and engaged with them in the same manner they do in Cook County, feeding and training the dolphins five times per day, and engaging in two daily presentations for Minnesota Zoo guests; and

WHEREAS, The renovation of the 37-year-old Seven Seas habitat was aimed at enhancing both animal wellbeing and guest experience, and added a variety of dynamic elements to the dolphins' habitat to enrich their daily lives, including rockwork structures with anchors where animal care staff can attach enrichment items such as kelp strips and floating objects; a shallow sand pit, where staff can hide enrichment items or food; and built-in bubbler systems where the dolphins can play with the bubbles, roll over them, or maneuver objects over the stream; and

WHEREAS, The new exhibit theming reflects Sarasota Bay, Florida, where Brookfield Zoo Chicago's Sarasota Dolphin Research Program is based; the longest-running study of dolphins in the wild, this program has provided information on the species' biology, behavior, health, ecology, social structure, and communication, benefiting marine mammal conservation programs around the globe; and

WHEREAS, New hydrophones (underwater microphones) will enable researchers, staff and guests to listen to the dolphin's vocalizations, and new digital monitors provide a look at the behind-the-scenes dolphin science and research conducted both at the Zoo and in Sarasota Bay, enabling guests to learn the important role science plays in maintaining healthy ecosystems, as well as personal actions they can take
To make a difference for animals everywhere; and

WHEREAS, The Seven Sea's renovations were made possible in part by funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act through Cook County and the Forest Preserves of Cook County, the Public Museum Capital Grant funding through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois State Museum, as well as many generous donors.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That Toni Preckwinkle, President, and the Forest Preserves of Cook County Board of Commissioners honor Brookfield Zoo Chicago's marine mammal care and veterinary teams for their enormous dedication and commitment to providing the best possible care for the Zoo's dolphins; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this Resolution be presented to Brookfield Zoo Chicago in recognition of their service.

