



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date

October 12, 2009

Agenda Item No. 46

Roll Call No. 09-

Communication No. 09-756

Submitted by: Judy A. Bradshaw, Chief of Police

AGENDA HEADING:

Ordinance amending Sections 18-4 and 18-196 of the City Code regarding the keeping of exotic and dangerous animals to specifically exempt the keeping of primates by the Iowa Primate Learning Sanctuary for research and educational programs.

SYNOPSIS:

The Iowa Primate Learning Sanctuary, d/b/a Great Ape Trust of Iowa, James Aipperspach, Director of Operations, 4200 S.E. 44th Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50320, has requested that the City Code be amended to remove any ambiguity regarding their ability to keep bonobos, orangutans and other primates for research and educational purposes.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

Amount: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Great Ape Trust of Iowa is a world-class research center dedicated to providing sanctuary and an honorable life for great apes, studying the intelligence of great apes, advancing conservation of great apes and providing unique educational experiences about great apes. Located in southeast Des Moines on 200 acres of lowlands, river forest and lakes, Great Ape Trust has plans to become the largest great ape facility in North America and one of the first worldwide to include all four types of great apes: bonobos, chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans.

The City Council demonstrated its support for the Great Ape Trust of Iowa in 2003 by conveying to it the real property locally known as the Hubbell Tract specifically for use as a primate learning sanctuary, research facility and associated educational uses.

Great Ape Trust of Iowa has requested that the City amend Chapter 18 of the City Code to clearly identify that it may lawfully keep bonobos, orangutans and other primates for research and educational purposes. The City Code currently prohibits the keeping of great apes within the City, with only limited exceptions. The exception allowing the keeping of great apes for instruction, research and study purposes is currently limited to public zoos, bona fide educational or medical institutions, humane societies and museums. The Great Ape Trust does not squarely fall within the current exemption because its primary focus is upon conservation and research.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: May 5, 2003

Roll Call Number: 03-1090

Action: Development Agreement with Iowa Primate Learning Sanctuary and conveyance of property known as Hubbell Tract. (Council Communication No. 03-205). Moved by Brooks to adopt. Motion Carried 6-1.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Date: April 28, 2003

Roll Call Number: 03-951

Action: Waiver of readings and final passage of ordinance rezoning the "Hubbell Tract" in the vicinity of 4200 E. Brooks Drive, from "U-1" (Floodplain) and "R1-80" (One Family Residential), to "PUD" (Planned Unit Development), for the Iowa Primate Learning Sanctuary.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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