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2021 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Toronto Wildlife Centre

Issue/Background:

- On January 28, 2021, Budget Committee requested a briefing note on:
 - a) the status of the \$750,000 grant, provided to the Toronto Wildlife Centre through the 2017 Budget, related to its wildlife rehabilitation centre, including the status of the work and the utilization of the funds; and
 - b) the status of the Menno-Reesor \$3.5 M project, including the funds spent, the work completed and the scope of work that was defined for restoration of the house and barn (as directed by MM44.99, 2018), as well as the status of the \$450,000 re-allocation of funds for repair of the TRCA-owned heritage barn and dwelling and placement of portable on site (as directed by MM2.23, 2019).

a) Status of the \$750,000 grant, provided to the Toronto Wildlife Centre through the 2017 Budget, related to its wildlife rehabilitation centre, including the status of the work and the utilization of the funds:

Issue/Background:

- Through the 2017 budget process, City Council approved funding of \$750,000 for a grant to the Toronto Wildlife Centre (TWC) as a contribution towards the construction of a new wildlife hospital. This was funded from the balance of Solid Waste Management Services' - Beare Road Landfill Reserve Fund.
- The funds were added to the Municipal Licensing and Standards Operating budget, as the grant was established to be administered by MLS/Toronto Animal Services. The funds were carried forward until a Letter of Understanding with the City and TWC was executed in October of 2019.
- In the agreement, TWC provided timelines, a work plan, and cost breakdown for use of the funds, which were originally planned to be used by January 2020. TWC has reported delays resulting from weather, engineering and archeological assessments, and COVID-19.
- Since December 2019, the City has disbursed \$700,000 from the funds, and have received invoices confirming the expenditure of \$350,000.

Key Points:

- To date \$700,000 has been disbursed to TWC and approximately \$350,000 has been spent. The drawdown schedule expected the entire grant to be disbursed by the end of January 2020; however, as a result of delays experienced, work has not been completed and the remaining \$50,000 has not yet been disbursed.
- The most recent update from TWC indicates that they believe that much of the work will be completed soon, as they are expecting engineering assessments to be completed shortly. TWC has provided an updated work plan and timelines for 2021.
- The \$750,000 grant to TWC was provided for the following:

Portable purchase and installation	\$160,000
Grading, gravel pad and parking lot creation	\$120,000
Surveying, engineering, architect fees	\$120,000
Hazardous material removal & interior demolition of house	\$100,000
Staff salaries (10% of total grant)	\$75,000
Compound fencing	\$65,000
Other project costs (hydro to site, electrical)	\$60,000
Urgent Barn Foundation Repairs	<u>\$50,000</u>
Total Grant	\$750,000

Timeline of Disbursements:

- On Dec 4, 2019, the City through Toronto Animal Services (TAS), disbursed \$250,000 to TWC. By Jan 31, 2020, TAS received invoices for \$144,500 from TWC.
- On Feb 24, 2020, TAS disbursed an additional \$250,000.
- By May 7, 2020 TWC had spent ~\$230,000 of \$500,000 they had received.
- In early May 2020, though TWC had been experiencing delays to construction, they requested that the remainder of the funds be disbursed to allow them to promptly begin construction once able.
- On May 21, 2020, TAS disbursed an additional \$200,000 to TWC.
- On December 31, 2020, TWC informed TAS that after delays due to archeological and engineering reviews, minor work had started on the site.
- Of the \$700,000 disbursed to TWC to date, TAS has received invoices for \$350,000 of the funds.
- On Jan 12, 2021, TAS sent an update on the grant status to TWC including the updated timeline information as provided by TWC.
- The final \$50,000 will be disbursed when the work is completed, as per the letter of understanding between TAS and TWC.

b) Status of the Menno-Reesor \$3.5M project, including the funds spent, the work completed and the scope of work that was defined for restoration of the house and barn (as directed by MM44.99, 2018), as well as the status of the \$450,000 re-allocation of funds for repair of the TRCA-owned heritage barn and dwelling and placement of portable on site (as directed by MM2.23, 2019):

Issue/Background:

- In July 2018, the City issued the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) a capital budget of \$3.5 million (2018-2025) for the Menno-Reesor Restoration Project.
- The purpose of the project was to deliver high quality habitat restoration, grading, fencing, access and landscaping work and planting of 100,000 trees at the 27-hectare site formerly known as the Runnymede site.
- The \$3.5 million was funded through the Tree Canopy Reserve Fund ([decision history](#)).
- There is approximately \$1.6 million remaining unspent from the funds allocated for this project, which the City's Reserves and Reserve Funds Policy dictates must be returned to the fund from which they were withdrawn.
- In consultation with Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PF&R) and the City's Financial Planning Division, it has been recommended in TRCA's 2021 budget notes that underspent funds remain with TRCA and be utilized to advance the implementation of the City's Ravine Strategy in coordination with PF&R. Underspent funds will be utilized to directly advance identified Ravine Strategy implementation priorities for Priority Investment Areas and the Loop Trail, invasive species management and engagement with Indigenous communities and students in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas.
- In 2019, City Council requested that TRCA provide financial support of up to \$450,000 to TWC, from the \$3.5 million Menno-Reesor project funds, for repair of the TRCA-owned heritage barn and dwelling and placement of a portable on site, subject to approval from the Chief Financial and Operating Officer, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, for a zero impact on the City of Toronto Capital Budget. Following the transfer of TRCA lands to Parks Canada in June 2019, the creation of the Toronto Wildlife Centre is no longer taking place on TRCA lands. As such, TRCA is not suited to act as a granting agency for these funds and therefore the transfer has not taken place.

Status of Menno-Reesor Project/Key Points:

- The chart below summarizes the approved funding, actual expenditures, and subsequent carryforwards during the planning, design and implementation phases of the project. The summary also forecasts the planned expenditures into 2025.
- The projected costs for the remainder of last year were to complete the planting operations that includes a traditional hedgerow to buffer the traffic noise from Steeles Avenue. The

projected costs for the next 5 years are for strategic invasive plant management through a monitoring plan for the site improvements.

- The projected carryforward at substantial completion of all deliverables is \$1,686,540.
- It has been recommended in TRCA’s 2021 budget notes that underspent funds remain with TRCA to advance the implementation of the City’s Ravine Strategy. If this recommendation does not move forward, the unused funds will be returned to the reserve fund from which they were withdrawn per the City’s Reserves and Reserve Funds Policy (227-5).

	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 estimate	2022 estimate	2023 estimate	2024 estimate	2025 estimate	Total
Approved Funding (Toronto Capital Levy)	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$315,000	\$50,000	\$45,000	\$35,000	\$30,000	\$25,000	\$3,500,000
Actual Expenditures (Projected)	\$330,450	\$1,195,039	\$204,971*	\$16,600	\$16,600	\$16,600	\$16,600	\$16,600	\$1,846,316
Carry Forward		\$1,169,550	\$1,474,511	\$1,584,540	\$1,617,940	\$1,646,340	\$1,664,740	\$1,678,140	\$1,686,540
Total	\$1,169,550	\$1,474,511	\$1,584,450	\$1,617,940	\$1,646,340	\$1,664,740	\$1,678,140	\$1,686,540	

*\$204,971 is 2020 actual as of January 28, 2021

- Overall Deliverables of the Menno-Reesor Restoration Project carried out through 2018-2020 include:
 - 37,286 Trees and Shrubs Planted
 - 7 Ha of Terrestrial Planting
 - 3 Ha Wetland Creation
 - 700 meters Hydrologic Restoration
 - 850 m of Post and Paddle Fence installed
 - 500 meters of Trail Construction
 - 300 m of Deer Fence Installed
 - Completion of Designated Substance Survey (DSS) for the farmhouse and barn
 - Peer review of outdoor wildlife compound design
 - Site grading to facilitate construction of wildlife compound
 - Installation of essential wildlife habitat

TRCA Work Completed to Facilitate TWC Operations:

- TRCA conducted \$1.73 million in restoration work at the site, of which, approximately \$0.56 million is of direct benefit to TWC. Direct benefits of the restoration work include: wildlife compound grading, peer review of outdoor wildlife compound design, trail construction, and completion of a DDS for the farmhouse and barn.

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Date: January 28, 2021