

Ward 13

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Date: Sept 5th, 2013
To: Parks and Environment Committee Members
From: Councillor Sarah Doucette
Re: Official recognition of Friends of High Park Zoo

Recommendation:

1. That the Parks and Environment Committee recommend Toronto City Council support the official recognition of Friends of High Park Zoo.
2. Friends of High Park Zoo be recognized by the Parks and Environment Committee for their outstanding fundraising efforts and commitment to the continuing operation of High Park Zoo.

Friends of High Park Zoo (FHPZ), a non-profit organization, was formed in the spring of 2012 to protest the 2012 city budget decision to revoke funding for the zoo. The group wanted to raise public awareness about the zoo and to raise funds to keep it open. FHPZ entered into an agreement with the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation to collect monies for the zoo and issue Tax Receipts to donors. A core group of volunteers continue to raise funds through grass roots campaigns at the zoo itself, for example volunteers are at the llama pens in the zoo on weekends and holidays, from March to October, where they receive donations to feed the llamas. To date FHPZ have successfully raised the funds required to keep the zoo operational from July 1st, 2012 to the present day

The Board of Friends of High Park Zoo have put together a comprehensive business plan and have worked on governance for the group. The Board and the volunteers are working together to ensure that there will always be a free community zoo in High Park and they plan to enhance the zoo for the benefit of all visitors by leading activities that engage the community, while promoting awareness and fundraising for the Zoo

The Friends of High Park Zoo embodies the principles set out by the City of Toronto to better our communities through volunteers. I would like to commend the Friends of High Park Zoo for their work in saving the High Park Zoo from closure and recommend that their efforts be recognized by the Parks and Environment Committee.

Sincerely,

Councillor Sarah Doucette
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