

The City Council met in a special meeting at the hour of 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall, on the day above written.

Present:	Brian Calhoun	Councilmember
	Paul Caprioglio	Councilmember
	Jerry Duncan	Councilmember
	Henry Perea	Councilmember
	Cynthia Sterling	Acting President
	Blong Xiong	Council President

Absent:	Mike Dages	Councilmember
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Andrew Souza, City Manager  
 Bruce Rudd, Assistant City Manager  
 James Sanchez, City Attorney  
 Rebecca E. Klisch, City Clerk  
 Cindy Bruer, Deputy City Clerk

City Manager Souza gave the invocation, and President Xiong led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**(9:00 A.M.) REQUEST COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF SUSPENSION/WAIVER OF ROEDING PARK ENTRANCE FEE**

President Xiong announced the time had arrived to consider the issue and opened the discussion to the public.

Speaking were: Barbara Hunt, 2475 S. Walnut, spoke on the City’s Sphere of Influence and private enterprise, adding Chaffee Zoo belonged to the City of Fresno and anyone visiting the zoo should pay the same fee. Also speaking to the issue were: Gerald Lyles, 7459 N Teilman Avenue, Chairman of the Zoo Authority, stated the City Council was a Board making a decision for the citizens of Fresno, noting this was a major issue and advised there was a need to conduct a complete analysis prior to making a decision. He added he felt a fee increase was a mistake and stressed the importance of rescinding the fee. Mr. Lyles stated that by the year 2014, with the implementation of the proposed Master Plan, the zoo would be close to meeting the goals. John M. Valentino, 541 E. Terrace Avenue, representing the Fresno Chaffee Zoo Board, stated when Measure Z was successfully enacted, the City of Fresno was investing \$1.2 million per year in the zoo which had been reducing each year by \$240,000, adding by the end of the year 2010 the City of Fresno would not contribute any funding to the zoo. Mr. Valentino stated the voters had a vision of the zoo they approved through Measure Z, stressing the importance of respecting the voters, advising the Zoo Board voted unanimously to rescind the fee increase.

Barry Falke, 1311 E. Goshen, Executive Director of Rotary Storyland/Playland, spoke in opposition of raising the fees at Roeding Park, adding the park was very unique in that it had different amenities to draw people to the park along with the inclusion of two non-profit organizations that generated a numerous amount of car traffic, adding raising the fees through the park entrance to \$5.00 was unfair when the bulk of people were there to support the non-profit organizations. Mr. Falke spoke of the importance of “Destination Fresno” and reviewed the new Splash Junction opening, adding the project was a \$200,000 free investment into Roeding Park, emphasizing the need to rescind the increase in fees.

Upon call, no one else wished to be heard and President Xiong closed the public input portion of the meeting.

PARCS Director Cooper explained the reasoning for the fee increase, adding the City had invested a large amount of funding in the parks and southwest regional, noting the concept was based on not only residents of the City of Fresno who enjoyed the park, but also people outside the Valley came to enjoy the amenities. Mr. Cooper stated the residents of Fresno paid a property tax to build and maintain the facilities, advising the City needed assistance by charging fees to non-residents, noting the \$5.00 charge was based on what was currently being charged for Lost Lake and Kearney Park.

Mr. Cooper responded to questions by Councilmember Duncan, adding people who were zoo members would also be able to purchase a pass at the same discounted rate as Fresno residents and enter into any regional park and elaborated. Councilmember Duncan stressed the importance of rescinding the fee increase in its entirety, with City Attorney Sanchez stating the action today was to suspend/ waive the Roeding Park entrance fee, adding if it was Council's desire to rescind the fee increase, it could be placed on the next Council agenda, advising the rescinding of the fee increase would be approved by a resolution.

Councilmember Duncan stated when the fee was originally approved no one had any idea of the implications, adding there was no communication with the people who were affected. Councilmember Duncan noted there were still many questions unanswered, namely how would City residents having Clovis addresses be handled, advising he would be placing an item on the next Council agenda to rescind the \$2.00 fee increase.

A motion was made and acted upon after extensive discussion.

Councilmember Perea spoke in support of suspending the fee increase, as well as rescinding the increase, noting today people faced tough economic times and this was a time to encourage families to enjoy the City of Fresno amenities at a cost residents could afford.

City Manager Souza thanked Council for calling the special meeting, adding one of the component of Roeding Park was also being supported by the County as well, and which had not been addressed and the goal was to remedy the issue within the 30-day period of time, advising the commitment was to come up with a plan that was simple and streamlined as possible. Mr. Souza apologized for the inconvenience and stated his office would continue to work with the Fresno Chaffee Zoo and the City Council.

On motion of Councilmember Duncan, seconded by Councilmember Sterling, duly carried, RESOLVED, the request to consider the suspension/waiver of the Roeding Park non-resident entrance fee until August 1, 2008 hereby approved, by the following vote:

Ayes : Calhoun, Caprioglio, Duncan, Perea, Sterling, Xiong  
Noes : None  
Absent : Dages

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to bring before the City Council, the hour of 9:24 a.m. having arrived and hearing no objections, President Xiong declared the special meeting adjourned.

*Approved* on the \_\_\_\_ day of July, 2008.

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Blong Xiong, Council President

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy Bruer, Acting Assistant City Clerk