



**City Council
Agenda Memo**

City Council Meeting Date: 9/22/2015

TO: Robert Hanna, City Manager

FROM: James W. Childers, Director of Community Services

SUBJECT: Resolution: Approval of Zoo Entrance Fee Increase

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Abilene Zoological Society (AZS) voted at the September 3, 2015 board meeting to raise admission fees for the Abilene Zoo in the following categories:

<u>Regular admission</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Children (3yrs – 12yrs)	\$3.50	\$4.50
Adult (13yrs – 59yrs)	\$6.00	\$7.00
Seniors (60yrs and up)	\$5.00	\$6.00

<u>Group rate (groups of 10 or more)</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Children	\$2.50	\$3.50
Adults	\$4.00	\$5.00
Seniors	\$3.50	\$4.50

The proposed fee increases would still rank the Abilene Zoo 13th lowest out of a comparison set of 15 zoos in the region, state and country. Zoo entry fees were last increased \$1 across the board in October of 2013.

Fee increases would be effective October 1, 2015 with public notification going out so zoo patrons are aware of the changes.

Part 6(f) of the City's agreement with the AZS contractually gives them oversight of the Zoo entrance fees with veto or modifications from the City Community Services Department or the City Council.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is important to note that 45% of all zoo admissions are free or at a discounted rate. Examples of discount and promotional opportunities provided by the AZS include:

- All AISD and WISD students admitted free of charge as part of school sponsored field trips.
- Zoolute to Dyess where active and retired military receive free entry
- Admission \$2.00 per person every Tuesday in Jan & Feb
- All mothers and fathers are admitted free on Mother's and Father's Day with paying child, regardless of age
- AZS Memberships
- Guest under 3 years old

Is also important to note that the fee increase will also help fund staffing for and general maintenance and up keep of many recently AZS funded improvements which include:

- New \$3.5 Million Giraffe Exhibit slated to open in fall of 2015
- Numerous patron attractions within the zoo (Mining sluice, carousal, train)
- Funding of 13 Full time and 24 seasonal City employees that support zoo operations

FUNDING/FISCAL IMPACT

The proposed fee increase is projected to generate an additional \$170,000 in revenue that will go back to cover operation expenses for the zoo.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends approving the requested entrance fee increase.

BOARD OR COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

AZS Board approved the rate increase with a unanimous vote at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting held September 3, 2015.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
□ Resolution	Resolution Letter

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS,
APPROVING ENTRANCE FEES TO ABILENE ZOO**

WHEREAS, on May 11, 2011, the City of Abilene, Texas and the Abilene Zoological Society, Inc., a non-profit corporation, entered into a Zoo Operating Agreement; and

WHEREAS, Part 6(f) of the Zoo Operating Agreement provides that the Abilene Zoological Society, Inc. may establish reasonable entrance fees to the Abilene Zoo, which fees shall be subject to veto or modifications by the City of Abilene Community Services Department or the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Abilene Zoological Society, Inc. Board voted unanimously at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 3, 2015 to increase the entrance fee to the Abilene Zoo; and

WHEREAS, the Abilene Zoological Society, Inc. voted to increase the regular and group entrance fee by \$1; and

WHEREAS, the immediate prior Abilene Zoo entrance fee increase was implemented in October 2013; and

WHEREAS, the revenue generated from the increased entrance fee shall be used for operating expenses of the Abilene Zoo.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS:

PART 1: That the Abilene Zoo Entrance Fee schedule attached hereto as Exhibit A, shall be in all things, approved.

PART 2: That this resolution shall take effect October 1, 2015.

PASSED this 22nd day of September, A.D. 2015.

ATTEST:

CITY SECRETARY

MAYOR

APPROVED:

CITY ATTORNEY

EXHIBIT A

Regular admission

Children (3yrs – 12yrs)	\$4.50
Adult (13yrs – 59yrs)	\$7.00
Seniors (60yrs and up)	\$6.00

Group rate (groups of 10 or more)

Children	\$3.50
Adults	\$5.00
Seniors	\$4.50