

AGENDA

Potter Park Zoo Advisory Board
1301 S. Pennsylvania Avenue ~ Lansing, MI 48912
Telephone: 517.342.2776; Fax: 517.316.3894

The Board information packet is available on-line by going to www.potterparkzoo.org, selecting "About," clicking on "Zoo Advisory Board" and clicking "October 09, 2024".

POTTER PARK ZOO ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, October 09, 2024
6:00 PM

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Approval of the August 14, 2024 Meeting Minutes**
3. **Limited Public Comment – *Limited to 3 minutes with no discussion***
4. **Late Items/Deletions/Consent Items**
5. **Action Items**
6. **Director's Report**
 - a. Finance Report – Cynthia Wagner
 - b. Admission and Parking Reports- Cynthia Wagner
 - c. Director's Report – Cynthia Wagner
7. **New Business**
 - a. Emergency Memo – Penguin Chiller
 - b. Wild Wanderers Survey Results and Program Recap
8. **Old Business**
 - a. Animal Health Facility Progress – Cynthia Wagner
 - b. Feline Primate Renovation Progress – Cynthia Wagner
 - c. Fundraising Update – Amy Morris-Hall
 - d. Core Values and Vision Statement Update – Cynthia Wagner
9. **Board Comments**
10. **Limited Public Comment - *Limited to 3 minutes with no discussion***
11. **Upcoming Meeting**
 - a. **Zoo Advisory Board Meeting November 13, 2024 at 6:00 PM**
12. **Adjournment**

Official minutes are stored and available for inspection at the address noted at the top of this agenda. Potter Park Zoo will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting for the visually impaired, for individuals with disabilities at the meeting upon five (5) working days' notice to the Zoo. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Zoo by writing to: Zoo Director, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing, MI 48912, or by calling 517.342.2776.

**MINUTES – INGHAM COUNTY
POTTER PARK ZOO ADVISORY BOARD**

**1301 S. Pennsylvania Avenue,
Lansing, MI,
August 14, 2024**

BOARD MEMBER

PRESENT: Chair Cheryl Bergman, Commissioner Pawar, Commissioner Tennis, Vice Chair Kyle Binkley, Kasey Kent, Dr. Richard Snider, Emily Linden, Mary Leys, Julie Pingston, Samantha Harkins and Caitlin O’Rourke

ALSO PRESENT: Cynthia Wagner, Zoo Director, Amy Morris-Hall, Zoological Society Executive Director, Brian Fisher, Deputy Director/Maintenance Manager

ABSENT: Dr. Jack Kottwitz

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES: Moved by Mary Leys and supported by Emily Linden to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2024 meeting as written, **Yes-11; No-0; MOTION CARRIED**

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Chair Cheryl Bergman introduced new board member Samantha Harkins and requested each board member introduce themselves. Introductions ensued.

LATE ITEMS/DELETIONS/CONSENT ITEMS

None

ACTION ITEMS

Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements Community Project Funding

Director Wagner explained this resolution is to accept the funding, not to accept what will be done. Mary Leys stated on in second WHEREAS, there is a period that should be a comma.

Moved by Commissioner Pawar and supported by Caitlyn O’Rourke to support the Resolution to accept the Federal grant for Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements at Potter Park Zoo, **Yes-11; No-0; MOTION CARRIED**

Feline Primate Building Renovations Grant

Director Wagner explained that this resolution is also to accept the funding. She explained that the money was awarded to Ingham County as was the Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements Community Project Funding. Commissioner Pawar asked what the grant was written for. Director Wagner answered that the grant was written for things specific to the Feline Primate Building including infrastructure and exhibits.

Moved by Kasey Kent and supported by Samantha Harkins to support the Resolution to accept the State grant for

Renovation of the Feline Primate Building at Potter Park Zoo, **Yes-11; No-0; MOTION CARRIED**

Zoo Maintenance Deputy Director and Horticulture Grounds Manager Reorganization

Director Wagner explained the changes in the two positions. She stated with the hospital construction showed that the zoo needs a position that focuses on project management so changing the positions will allow the Deputy Director to focus on management of CIP projects and the Horticulture and Grounds Supervisor will focus on day-to-day supervision of all maintenance staff.

Mary Leys asked what the difference is on the organizational chart between facilities and maintenance staff. Director Wagner explained these positions were created with the County took over management of the zoo and that the Facilities positions focus more on building maintenance including HVAC and are in UAW TOPS. The four-maintenance staff are in UAW Zoo and in general focus more on grounds and repairs related to outside of buildings. Ms. Leys also stated that under physical requirements for the Horticulture and Maintenance Supervisor position there is up to a 100 lb. requirement. She mentioned in her opinion requiring 100 lb. weight limit could discourage female applicants and is excessive.

Director Wagner stated she would review the other maintenance staff job descriptions and make sure they are in line across the board.

Moved by Dr. Snider and supported by Kyle Binkley to support the Resolution to reorganize the Maintenance Deputy Director and Horticulture Grounds Manager positions at Potter Park Zoo, **Yes-11; No-0; MOTION CARRIED**

FINANCIAL REPORT

Director Wagner reported the 2024 year to date financials show property tax revenue did go up to within \$50,000 of budget which increased the unrestricted fund balance substantially. She stated revenue is up for 2024 compared to the same time in 2023. Director Wagner stated she is continuing to monitor the financials closely as there have been some emergency repairs.

ADMISSION & PARKING REPORT

Director Wagner reported that admissions is up for the year compared to 2023. She stated June was down slightly, but that is likely because more groups came in May vs. June. She also stated that she expects August to do well with mosquitos dissipating.

ZOO DIRECTOR REPORT

Major Elements Reported by Director Wagner:

- Staff shirt colors are changing to Carolina blue zoo wide.
- Wild Wanderers was spectacular and there was a club member every day.
- National Zookeeper Week included videos of a day in the life of keepers and was very well received. Kasey asked if those are shared on Tik-Tok and Amy Morris stated Tik-Tok is new for us, but growing.
- The new ice cream machine is working well, and the zoo is selling lots of ice cream.

- Conservation and Engagement Days are going well this year including Tiger, Monarch, Red Panda and Black Rhino.
- Sundown Safari was replaced with Twilight Adventures. Caitlyn O'Rourke stated she thought this was a good change as it keeps all the fun activities but removes the difficulty of sleeping at the zoo. Amy Morris-Hall stated it has also been a good change for Zoological Society staff.
- Potter Park Zoo will be participating in a research project and field work involving native turtles.
- Zoo Nights is Thursday, Aug. 22 as well as Sept. 12. The September event will have a private reception for the boards and legislators in the Safari room as well as allowing them the opportunity to enjoy Zoo Nights. The event will also include tours of the Feline Primate building for those interested.
- The Bowling for Rhinos fundraising event is Aug. 23 at Spare Time in Frandor. Lanes can be sponsored to support rhino conservation. Dr. Snider asked if a lay person can join AAZK. Director Wagner stated they have keepers join from other zoos, but typically it is for keepers.
- The FALCONERS dinner was sponsored by Olive Garden in Okemos. This is a very popular event for families to relax while eating a restaurant meal.
- Virtual tours by Able Eyes are completed and on the website for the entire zoo now.
- Otter pups are all on exhibit doing well.
- Moving to increase the kangaroo population and have fewer wallabies.

NEW BUSINESS

Emergency Memo Water Line Repair

Director Wagner stated the repair was in the water line near the okapi barn.

Feline Primate Renovation Discussion

Director Wagner stated once the funding is accepted that the next step will be to do an RFP for design. Brian Fisher stated there will be evaluations during the initiation phase to determine what infrastructure improvements will take place including things like the roof and HVAC.

Director Wagner clarified that the zoo would be phasing out lions until a new exhibit can be built. She stated the first priority is infrastructure, then the outside exhibits, then the inside of the building and finally the outside primate exhibits. She also shared that staff are visiting other AZA zoos to tour their cat exhibits to get ideas for design and gather as much information as possible related to safety.

Julie Pingston asked if cats would be able to breed in the new enclosures. Director Wagner stated there would not be space to breed tigers, but that there are discussions ongoing about the possibility of breeding snow leopard.

Director Wagner stated they are involving the keepers in discussions about the space and will continue to do so throughout the project.

Discussion ensued about the new water line.

Stormwater Infrastructure Project Discussion

Director Wagner explained the best management practices that will be addressed are gutters to flow stormwater to

drains, removing storm drains from the exhibits with the farmyard animals, planting the area behind the Reptile building and the drain in the elk pond to address erosion. Since the zoo did not receive the full amount of funding it is likely that the drain in elk will not be addressed as part of this project.

Membership Survey Results

Director Wagner stated there were 387 members that responded. One interesting point was that of the respondents, 34 percent responded that they did not have children. Zoo staff were surprised that number was so high and would consider this in future decision making.

Zoo Nights Event

Director Wagner stated that as previously discussed the event is Sept. 12 and she encouraged as many board members to attend as possible.

OLD BUSINESS

Animal Health Facility Progress

Brian Fisher reported that there was a lot of interest when the project went out to bid and there were at least three bids for each component which was very good.

Mary Leys asked if they can work through the winter. Brian Fisher replied that they would be able to continue work in the winter and that expected completion at this time is late summer. He stated that the water line is through design and needs to go out to bid to keep the project timing on track. He shared that BWL has been very helpful in gathering information needed for the documents. Mary Leys asked if the zoo would lose any trees due to the excavation. Brian Fisher responded that the plan is to directionally bore in the park which will help minimize tree damage and the decision is still being made inside the zoo.

Director Wagner stated there would be a resolution going to the Board of Commissioners to approve a \$6.5 million bond for the hospital.

Fundraising Update

Director Wagner stated the \$50,000 grant through ERESA has helped transform the high school classroom. Amy Morris Hall share that the zoo would be replacing the front entrance sign on Pennsylvania Avenue thanks to a \$10,000 grant from the Team Lansing Foundation.

Core Values and Vision Statement Update

Director Wagner shared the narrowed down core values and vision statements based on feedback from the zoo staff. Commissioner Tennis stated he knew this could be a difficult process and thanked Director Wagner and Director Morris-Hall for working on this.

BOARD COMMENTS

None

LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

DRAFT

**POTTER PARK ZOO
BALANCE SHEET - PRELIMINARY
AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

ASSETS

CASH	\$ 2,137,470
DEPOSITORY CASH	73,346
IMPREST CASH	8,000
TAXES REC - CURRENT LEVY	-
IFT TAX RECEIVABLE	(12,378)
TAXES REC - DELINQUENT	42,932
ESTIMATED UNCOLLECTIBLE DELINQUENT TAXES	(18,601)
ACCOUNTS REC-OTHER	428
PROPERTY TAX RECEIVABLE	-
INTEREST RECEIVABLE	2,627
DUE FROM STATE	-
DUE FROM OTHER FUNDS	-
INVENTORY	171,296
INVESTMENT YIELD ADJUSTMENT	1
PREPAID EXPENSES	-

TOTAL ASSETS

	\$ 2,405,122
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LIABILITIES

VOUCHERS PAYABLE	3
DUE TO ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY	46,952
TAX LEVY LIABILITY	19,100
SALES TAX PAYABLE	12,570
REFUND NOW	(61)
REFUND APPLY	(865)
ACCRUED PAYROLL	-
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	58,404
DEFERRED REVENUE - DELINQUENT TAXES	26,628
DEFERRED REVENUE - PROPERTY TAXES	-
DEF REVENUE -POTTER PARK	15,202

TOTAL LIABILITIES

	177,933
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FUND BALANCE

UNSPENDABLE	256,679
UNRESTRICTED FUND BALANCE	1,970,510
	2,227,189

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

	\$ 2,405,122
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NOTE: The Fund balance beginning balance is based on figures posted in the 2023 Ingham County Audit.

Prepared By: Eric J. Thelen

POTTER PARK ZOO
YEAR TO DATE BUDGET/ACTUAL REPORT - PRELIMINARY
FOR 9 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

	2024 BUDGET	SEPT 2024 YTD ACTUAL	BUDGET REMAINING	% OF BUDGET	SEPT 2023 YTD ACTUAL	% DIFF LAST YR
REVENUES						
PROPERTY TAX	\$ 4,487,927	\$ 4,523,714	\$ (35,787)	100.80%	\$ 4,419,735	2.35%
UNALLOCATED PORTION OF TAXES (9 MONTHS)	\$ -	\$ (1,130,928)	\$ -	0.00%	\$ (1,104,934)	0.00%
ADMISSIONS	\$ 695,000	\$ 812,537	\$ (117,537)	116.91%	\$ 757,662	7.24%
CONCESSIONS, GIFT SHOP, VENDING	\$ 705,000	\$ 855,171	\$ (150,171)	121.30%	\$ 783,283	9.18%
PARKING FEES	\$ 180,000	\$ 164,415	\$ 15,585	91.34%	\$ 153,789	6.91%
INTERACTIVE SITES	\$ 95,000	\$ 97,148	\$ (2,148)	102.26%	\$ 105,298	-7.74%
INTEREST INCOME	\$ 30,000	\$ 58,598	\$ (28,598)	195.33%	\$ 57,061	2.70%
OTHER REVENUES	\$ (324,576)	\$ 155,040	\$ (479,616)	-47.77%	\$ 176,190	-12.00%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 5,868,351	\$ 5,535,695	\$ (798,272)	94.33%	\$ 5,348,084	3.51%
EXPENDITURES						
PERSONNEL SERVICES						
Salaries & Wages - Full Time	\$ 1,936,415	\$ 1,377,380	\$ 559,035	71.13%	\$ 1,381,303	-0.28%
Salaries & Wages - Seasonal	\$ 695,284	\$ 705,399	\$ (10,115)	101.45%	\$ 700,120	0.75%
Benefits	\$ 1,120,034	\$ 795,165	\$ 324,869	70.99%	\$ 811,385	-2.00%
Total Personnel Services	\$ 3,751,733	\$ 2,877,944	\$ 873,789	76.71%	\$ 2,892,807	-0.51%
CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURES						
Supplies	\$ 436,000	\$ 405,424	\$ 30,576	92.99%	\$ 511,907	-20.80%
Animal Care	\$ 317,000	\$ 190,085	\$ 126,915	59.96%	\$ 223,990	-15.14%
Purchased Services	\$ 647,000	\$ 560,434	\$ 86,566	86.62%	\$ 717,348	-21.87%
Utilities - Telephone	\$ 23,125	\$ 14,244	\$ 8,881	61.60%	\$ 16,056	-11.29%
Rentals & Leases	\$ 6,000	\$ 4,580	\$ 1,420	76.34%	\$ 6,692	-31.56%
Other Expenses	\$ 141,100	\$ 91,652	\$ 49,448	64.96%	\$ 86,447	6.02%
Total Controllable Expenditures	\$ 1,570,225	\$ 1,266,419	\$ 303,806	80.65%	\$ 1,562,441	-18.95%
NON-CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURES						
Utilities	\$ 240,000	\$ 165,867	\$ 74,133	69.11%	\$ 170,601	-2.77%
Insurance	\$ 90,000	\$ 72,410	\$ 17,590	80.46%	\$ 70,307	2.99%
IT Support Expense	\$ 215,899	\$ 185,436	\$ 30,463	85.89%	\$ 173,622	6.80%
Other Expenses	\$ 494	\$ 371	\$ 123	75.05%	\$ 398	-6.92%
Total Non-Controllable Expenditures	\$ 546,393	\$ 424,084	\$ 122,309	77.62%	\$ 414,928	2.21%
CAPITAL OUTLAY						
Capital Improvements	\$ -	\$ 127,668	\$ (127,668)	#DIV/0!	\$ 840,724	-84.81%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 5,868,351	\$ 4,696,115	\$ 1,172,236	80.02%	\$ 5,710,899	-17.77%
TOTAL CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	\$ -	\$ 839,580			\$ (362,816)	
FUND BALANCE AS OF 1/1/24						
NON-SPENDABLE		\$ 256,679				
UNRESTRICTED		\$ -				
		<u>\$ 256,679</u>				
FUND BALANCE AS OF 09/30/24		\$ 1,096,259				
FUND BALANCE AS OF 09/30/24						
UNSPENDABLE		\$ 256,679				
UNRESTRICTED		\$ 839,580				
		<u>\$ 1,096,259</u>				

NOTE: The Fund balance beginning balance is based on figures posted in the 2023 Ingham County Audit.

Prepared By: Eric J. Thelen

**POTTER PARK ZOO
MONTHLY ATTENDANCE REPORT
FOR MONTH AND YTD AUGUST 31, 2024**

ADMISSION TYPE	2023	2024 Gate	2024 Online	2024 Total	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY	2023 COUNT	2024 COUNT	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY
GENERAL								
CHILD RESIDENT	1,625	1,457	17	1,474	(151)	8,286	8,499	213
CHILD NON-RESIDENT	2,197	2,355	98	2,453	256	10,896	12,173	1,277
CHILDREN - UNDER 3	1,000	1,061	34	1,095	95	6,474	6,569	95
ADULT RESIDENT	3,123	3,272	69	3,341	218	21,054	22,269	1,215
ADULT NON-RESIDENT	3,695	3,614	206	3,820	125	21,969	25,829	3,860
SENIOR/MILITARY RESIDENT	497	599	7	606	109	2,223	2,771	548
SENIOR/MILITARY NON-RESIDENT	686	937	26	963	277	3,232	4,105	873
GROUPS	933	630	0	630	(303)	20,129	22,546	2,417
SUBTOTAL	13,756	13,925	457	14,382	626	94,263	104,761	10,498
MEMBERSHIPS/PROGRAMS								
PPZ MEMBERS/RECIPROCAL	2,421	2,905	0	2,905	484	15,023	19,180	4,157
SOCIETY PROGRAMMING/EVENTS	2,058	1,450	320	1,770	(288)	14,192	13,251	(941)
MONDAY PROGRAM	846	1,142	0	1,142	296	4,802	6,807	2,005
ZIYN	697	723	0	723	26	3,526	4,054	528
OTHER (non-paying)	45	754	0	754	709	2,413	5,202	2,789
SUBTOTAL	6,067	6,974	320	7,294	1,227	39,956	48,494	8,538
GRAND TOTAL	19,823	20,899	777	21,676	1,853	134,219	153,255	19,036

Wild Wanderers 344 0 2,196 2,196

ADMISSION TYPE	DESCRIPTION
CHILDREN RESIDENT	Children, Ingham County ages 3-16 (\$5 April - October, \$3 November-March)
CHILDREN NON-RESIDENT	Children, Out of Ingham County ages 3-16 (\$5 April - October, \$3 November-March)
CHILDREN - UNDER 3	All Children, any county under age 3 (Free)
ADULT RESIDENT	Adult of Ingham County (\$7 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
ADULT NON-RESIDENT	Adult Out of Ingham County (\$13 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
SENIOR/MILITARY RESIDENT	Seniors/Military of Ingham County (\$5 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
SENIOR/MILITARY NON-RESIDENT	Seniors/Military of Ingham County (\$11 April 1 - Oct. 31, \$4 November-March)
PPZ MEMBERS	Visitors holding membership at PPZ - one time payment
SPECIAL EVENTS - PPZ	Admission included in event fee
SPECIAL EVENTS - COUNTY	Admission included in event fee
RECIPROCAL ZOO MEMBERS	Reciprocal Zoo memberships (Discount varies)
RECIPROCAL ZOO MEMBERS (100%)	Reciprocal Zoo Members (Free admission)
GROUPS	20 or more guests paying together (\$1 off per person)
MONDAY PROGRAM	Ingham County and City of Lansing Residents free 9-12 PM on non-holiday Mondays
OTHER (non-paying)	Any coupon related attendee

**POTTER PARK ZOO
MONTHLY PARKING REPORT
FOR MONTH AND YTD ENDING AUGUST 31, 2024**

ADMISSION TYPE								
	2023	2024 Gate	2024 Online	2024 Total	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY	2023	2024	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY
ANNUAL RESIDENT PASS	4	4	0	4	0	290	246	(44)
ANNUAL NON-RESIDENT PASS	0	0	0	0	0	31	37	6
PPZ MEMBER DELUXE/PREMIUM	258	451	0	451	193	1,758	2,396	638
DAILY RESIDENT PARKING	2,425	2,483	16	2,499	74	13,550	15,577	2,027
DAILY NON-RESIDENT PARKING	2,815	2,930	51	2,981	166	17,270	18,423	1,153
EVENTS	202	0	0	0	(202)	743	1,402	659
ANNUAL PASS RESIDENT ENTRY	9	348	0	348	339	451	1,128	677
ANNUAL PASS NON-RESIDENT ENTRY	169	28	0	28	(141)	198	345	147
WAIVED ANNUAL PASS	2	1	0	1	(1)	39	41	2
OTHER (non-paying)	160	153	0	153	(7)	2,195	711	(1,484)
TOTAL	6,044	6,398	67	6,465	421	36,525	40,306	3,781

ADMISSION TYPE	
ANNUAL RESIDENT PASS	
ANNUAL NON-RESIDENT PASS	
RESIDENT DAILY PASS	
NON-RESIDENT DAILY PASS	

**POTTER PARK ZOO
MONTHLY ATTENDANCE REPORT
FOR MONTH AND YTD SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

ADMISSION TYPE	2023	2024 Gate	2024 Online	2024 Total	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY	2023 COUNT	2024 COUNT	BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY
GENERAL								
CHILD RESIDENT	967	775	11	786	(181)	9,253	9,285	32
CHILD NON-RESIDENT	1,170	907	15	922	(248)	12,066	13,095	1,029
CHILDREN - UNDER 3	611	950	22	972	361	7,085	7,541	456
ADULT RESIDENT	2,480	2,597	60	2,657	177	23,534	24,926	1,392
ADULT NON-RESIDENT	2,440	2,328	133	2,461	21	24,409	28,290	3,881
SENIOR/MILITARY RESIDENT	361	428	4	432	71	2,584	3,203	619
SENIOR/MILITARY NON-RESIDENT	478	512	10	522	44	3,710	4,627	917
GROUPS	848	531	0	531	(317)	20,977	23,077	2,100
SUBTOTAL	9,355	9,028	255	9,283	(72)	103,618	114,044	10,426
MEMBERSHIPS/PROGRAMS								
PPZ MEMBERS/RECIPROCAL	1,961	2,525	0	2,525	564	16,984	21,705	4,721
SOCIETY PROGRAMMING/EVENTS	1,124	3,234	223	3,457	2,333	15,316	16,708	1,392
MONDAY PROGRAM	430	520	0	520	90	5,232	7,327	2,095
ZIYN	328	530	0	530	202	3,854	4,584	730
OTHER (non-paying)	2,315	559	0	559	(1,756)	4,728	5,761	1,033
SUBTOTAL	6,158	7,368	223	7,591	1,433	46,114	56,085	9,971
GRAND TOTAL	15,513	16,396	478	16,874	1,361	149,732	170,129	20,397
Wild Wanderers	0	38	0	38		0	2,234	2,234

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OTHER (non-paying)	Any coupon related attendee

**POTTER PARK ZOO
MONTHLY PARKING REPORT
FOR MONTH AND YTD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

ADMISSION TYPE					BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY			BETTER (WORSE) THAN PY
	2023	2024 Gate	2024 Online	2024 Total		2023	2024	
ANNUAL RESIDENT PASS	1	0	0	0	(1)	291	246	(45)
ANNUAL NON-RESIDENT PASS	0	0	0	0	0	31	37	6
PPZ MEMBER DELUXE/PREMIUM	231	373	0	373	142	1,989	2,769	780
DAILY RESIDENT PARKING	2,285	2,040	15	2,055	(230)	15,835	17,632	1,797
DAILY NON-RESIDENT PARKING	2,115	1,859	33	1,892	(223)	19,385	20,315	930
SOCIETY/EVENTS	84	116	0	116	32	827	1,518	691
ANNUAL PASS RESIDENT ENTRY	138	8	0	8	(130)	589	1,136	547
ANNUAL PASS NON-RESIDENT ENTRY	3	287	0	287	284	201	632	431
WAIVED ANNUAL PASS	2	0	0	0	(2)	41	41	0
OTHER (non-paying)	84	85	0	85	1	2,279	796	(1,483)
TOTAL	4,943	4,768	48	4,816	(127)	41,468	45,122	3,654

ADMISSION TYPE	
ANNUAL RESIDENT PASS	
ANNUAL NON-RESIDENT PASS	
RESIDENT DAILY PASS	
NON-RESIDENT DAILY PASS	



Director's Report October 09, 2024

Staff

The Ingham County Health Department will be hosting its annual flu clinic at the zoo Tuesday, October 8 from 9 to 11 a.m. This clinic is open to all County staff.

The Horticulture and Maintenance Supervisor position is posted.

September was a busy month for professional development and conferences. Brian Fisher, Pat Fountain and Cynthia Wagner attended the AZA annual conference in Calgary along with four Society staff members. Sarah Foote attended the Registrar conference. Delanie Miller attended the AAZK annual conference. Kelsey Osman attended the Felid TAG meeting at John Ball Zoo. Dr. Ronan Eustace attended and presented at the annual AAZV conference. Brian Fisher attended and presented at the AZFA annual conference.

Cynthia Wagner, Pat Fountain and six zookeepers visited Toledo Zoo on October 1. This included tours of behind the scenes hoofstock, reptile and large cat spaces.

Public Safety



We added freshly painted crosswalks at the entrance and exit paths to the zoo! This important safety improvement helps make the zoo even more visitor-friendly. This idea was brought up during a Safety Committee meeting by a zoo staff member. A big thank you to the Parks department for allowing the zoo to borrow their striper.

We conducted a code green (animal escape) drill for Emmett, the elk.

Firearms training led by the Ingham County Sheriff's Department will be held on October 29. This training is for all members of the PPZ Emergency Response Team.



Communications

- Wild Wanderers Club: Working on securing a sponsor for 2025.
- Social Media: Fall posts will highlight pumpkin enrichment, World Okapi Day, U of M vs MSU content, and introducing Wiley, our red panda cub, to the public.
- Event Promotion: Running ads, newsletters, and press releases for Boo at the Zoo.
- Wonderland of Lights: Finalizing artwork for ads.

Conservation Engagement

Summer Conservation Education Stations

- Over the summer months, PPZ Volunteers made contact with 18,234 guests at these stations. This summer, we had 2 new stations; the Lynx and Okapi.

Eaton RESA High School

- This semester, 46 students across 13 districts and 5 counties are enrolled in our Animal Science class.

BIG Zoo Lesson

- The first 2 weeks of BZL with our new Site Coordinator, Roxanne Truhn, have been successful! 41 students from 2 districts have experienced the immersion learning program of BZL here at PPZ.
- This program is designed for students in grades 2 through 6 and offers a unique five-day educational adventure right here at the zoo. Throughout the week, students are immersed in interactive lessons led by teachers and our expert volunteers as well as independent research time, all aimed at fostering a greater understanding of wildlife, their habitats, and conservation.
- This year, we welcome 39 classes from school districts from Lansing, East Lansing, Eaton Rapids, Fowler, Holt, Mason, Potterville, St. Johns, and Waverly.

Homeschool Zoo Crew

- 356 enrollments to partake in 24 sessions of our themed homeschool program ranging in ages from 5 to 15 years old.

Summer/Fall Education Events

- Tiger Day (7/27) brought in 1,312 guests to engage in various activities related to tigers and conservation messaging.
- National Monarch Day (8/17) reached 709 guests with 70 attending the Monarch Talks throughout the day. During our later pop-up Monarch release event, around 60 guests experiences newly emerged butterflies take flight and start their journey to Mexico. Education Staff will monitor their tags through Monarch Watch to see what success our butterflies had over the vast migration. Look for a PPZ blog to be written and published to our website about the whole experience of raising Monarchs at PPZ.

- International Red Panda Day (10/15) reached 829 guests with 5 activities spread throughout the zoo to engage the public in learning about Red Pandas.
- World Rhino Day (10/22) brought in 548 guests to partake in 4 activity tables throughout the zoo.
- The Zoo was the host site for the Michigan Waterways Stewards September 21 river clean up event!



Summer Tours

- 409 guests participated in 14 tours over the summer.

Twilight Adventures (a new program)

- 187 guests enjoyed this unique program at dusk over the summer months. We plan to expand this program next year to accommodate more guests since we did sell out during 2 nights.

Zookambi Summer Camp

- 467 students enjoyed our 7 week summer camp program this year!

Zoo Teen Summer Program

- 42 teens (13 of which are returning from last year) helped our education staff with summer camp and conservation education stations, as well as assisted in the contact yard and keeper shadows over the summer. A new sub-program called “Zoo Teen Leaders” was kickstarted this summer with 5 teens who applied and were tasks with leading the Zoo Teens in various activities, including a career workshop and a visit to the Detroit zoo.

Upcoming: Boo Stations (conservation education stations) for Boo at the Zoo

1. **Clever Corvids:** Guests will learn how intelligent ravens actually are by using tools, similar to how ravens would, to solve a puzzle. Volunteers will also share folklore on why ravens are associated with Halloween.
2. **Going Batty:** Volunteers talk to guests about the important roles bats play in pollination, pest control, and even in the medical field!
3. **Killer Plants:** Volunteers engage guests to learn about *killer* adaptations that carnivorous plants have. They will have carnivorous plants that have been pressed to show guests what they look like up close.
4. **Not so Spooky, Scary Skulls:** Who says skeletons and skulls are scary? Not you! Volunteers will be talking all about skulls at this station! They may talk about the different teeth animals have and what they eat, the placement of eye sockets and if that means they are predator or prey, or how you can identify what an animal is based on its skull!
5. **Who's Goes There?** Have you ever been out at night, heard something, and said, "Who's goes there?" Volunteers will talk to guests about nocturnal animals at this station and the special adaptations they have to help them to thrive in the dark.

Zoo Nights

The four Zoo Nights events this summer were successful.

- We added more food and drink vendors at each event. We increased the number of vendors by four and food vendors by one or two at each event. This did increase expenses, but many of the vendors who attended each event participate will refund or credit us for the amount of unopened full cases of product which helps decrease costs.
- We added an additional ticket type with our new Designated Driver tickets. This was offered at a discounted rate and tickets could be used for non-alcoholic beverages. We worked with two of our distributors to offer a non-alcoholic beer option. Overall, offering this new ticket type was a success and not only allowed us to encourage responsible drinking, we also hit a target market we were missing before by offering an adults only event for guests who do not drink alcohol.
- Instead of hosting a May Zoo Nights, we hosted a September Zoo Nights.

Drink Vendors- 34 total

Food Vendors- 18 total

Sponsors- Biggby Coffee and Shaheen Chevrolet of Lansing. Both have expressed an interest in returning as sponsors next year and providing more as sponsors.

Private Events

We hosted a total of 29 private events ranging from birthday parties, corporate picnics and weddings during the months of May through September! In total, these events have brought in roughly 5,000 guests to the Zoo.

Zoo Days

On July 9 Zoo Days hosted 2,981 guests. On July 10 Zoo Days hosted 284 guests (rain day). We hosted a total of 14 Community Partners during Zoo Days and offered a discounted meal deal. Meijer was the event sponsor.

Upcoming Events

We are looking forward to Boo at the Zoo, Wonderland of Lights and Zoo Nights with Lights. We are currently in the process in booking our Toys for Tots fundraiser with the local Salvation Army during Wonderland of Lights and we already have three private events booked for corporate holiday parties. We are also excited that the events team will be participating in the Silver Bells parade by decorating a van and trailer and utilizing our mascots to promote the zoo in the community!

DEAI

In the month of September we welcomed 84 participants to our FALCONERS event. Our next event is Friday, October 18 and is our annual Sensory Friendly Boo at the Zoo! Over 85 families have already registered for the event.

In the month of September there were 530 guests that visited the zoo with a Zoo in the Neighborhood family zoo pass. This was a record month for our zoo passes! Offsite programming for ZIYN has concluded for the year. Our volunteers educated 575 individuals this summer.

This fall, Michigan State University student Emma Reich will be assisting Mariah Martinez with our community engagement and DEAI initiatives. Over the past year, this internship has provided MSU Zoology students with valuable insights into alternative career paths within zoos and aquariums.

Mariah Martinez, Equity and Engagement Program Manager, presented during this year's AZA conference. Her session, "Navigating Diversity Accreditation in AZA – Everything You Need to Know on Standards," focused on how our zoo showcases its DEAI program achievements and plans for ongoing advancement. Mariah emphasized the importance of consistent growth rather than trying to do everything at once.

Mariah will be completing the following trainings:

Naturally Inclusive – Engaging Children of All Abilities Outdoors: This is a four week virtual classes that will provide information on how to engage those with disabilities in outdoor activities. This will provide great insight for our FALCONERS program and education programming.

Indigenous Learning – Foundation of Knowledge: Trainings are once a month from October – May. Key topics in this first course: Colonialism, racism, history, treaties, industrial schools, terminology, relationship and reconciliation.

Potter Park Zoo installed StoryWalk signs in the park, along the River Trail! These durable, weather-resistant displays turn your stroll into a story time adventure. We're thrilled to continue our literacy initiatives and can't wait to bring more to the park. Check out our current story, 'Box Turtle at Long Pond' and add a little magic to your next walk! This project was made possible by City of Lansing Neighborhood Grants.

Volunteers

During the month of September, there were 82 individual volunteers who donated 828 hours. We also had 80 group volunteers help with various grounds and facility beautification projects, with 160 hours. Additionally, 3046 guests were engaged through education events, roaming "Ask Me" volunteers, Zoo in Your Neighborhood programs and special event education stations.

Membership

Our total number of individual members for September, 2024 was 6,797, representing 3,123 household and we welcomed 2,525 members who visited the zoo during the month.

Animal Care and Research

- Emmett, the male elk, is in rut and separated from the herd for the season.
- Gordo the wallaby who has been dealing with a long term infection has healed and rejoined the group.
- The three otter pups continue to grow and are doing well on exhibit.
- Our four new young goats, Pearl, Crush, Hank and Gil, have been introduced to the group and are doing great.
- Wiley, the red panda cub, has ventured outside for the first time.

Dr. Ronan Eustace and the Zoo veterinary department are co-authoring four groundbreaking presentations at the 2024 Joint AAZV/EAZWV Conference. These include:

EVALUATION OF THIAFENTANIL-MEDETOMIDINE-KETAMINE COMBINATIONS FOR ANESTHESIA WITHOUT THE USE OF A RESTRAINT DEVICE IN ADULT ZOO HOUSED GIRAFFE (*Giraffa camelopardalis*)

Megan M. Roeder, Priya Bapodra-Villaverde, Matthew E. Kinney, Ryan A. Sadler, Julie Swenson, Ronan Eustace, Christopher J. Thibault, Kimberly A. Thompson
(will be the largest giraffe anesthesia study to date)

RETROSPECTIVE STUDY OF REPRODUCTIVE TRACT LESIONS IN GIRAFFE (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) AND OKAPI (*Okapia johnstoni*)

Carrie Kosiba, Anneke Moresco, Dalen Agnew, Ronan Eustace, Kimberly Thompson

GENERATION OF REFERENCE INTERVALS FOR PROTEIN ELECTROPHORESIS AND MRP-126 AS A MARKER OF INFLAMMATION IN THE ALDABRA GIANT TORTOISE (*Geochelone gigantea*)

Allison E. Dianis, Kimberly A. Thompson, Ronan Eustace, Jeny Soto, Carolyn Cray

HEMATOLOGICAL AND BIOCHEMICAL REFERENCE INTERVALS FOR ZOO-HOUSED NEONATE GIRAFFES (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) LESS THAN 72 HOURS OF AGE

Hunter Ferchaw, Jennifer Thomas, Ronan Eustace, Kimberly Thompson

TO: Board of Commissioners County Services Committee
FROM: Cynthia Wagner, Potter Park Zoo Director
DATE: September 30, 2024
SUBJECT: Emergency Penguin Pool Chiller Repair
For the meeting agenda of October 15, 2024

BACKGROUND

On August 24th, 2024, the chiller that provides chilled water to cool both the penguin pool and holding failed. With temperatures forecasted to be in the high 80's and 90's, it was critical for the health and wellness of the penguins that repairs be completed immediately.

Trane U.S. Inc. was contacted, upon inspecting the system, they found a failed sensor. As the failure occurred on a Saturday evening, the parts stores were closed. Due to the severity of the situation, the technician was able to open a store, receive the part and have the chiller back in operation by early Sunday morning.

Emergency repair of the chiller was approved by the Controller's office and the Purchasing Department.

ALTERNATIVES

The repair could not be delayed as the chiller is essential for the health and wellness of the penguins.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The final cost of the repair was \$4,280.93. Funds to cover the total cost were available in Zoo Budget line item #25869200 931000 30000.



SPONSORSHIP

Program Overview

The Wild Wanderers Club is Potter Park Zoo's community-driven initiative aimed at promoting nature engagement and exercise. In its inaugural year, the club welcomed nearly 700 households and over 1,000 total members, who made almost 2,500 visits to the zoo. Running from May 1 through Labor Day, the Wild Wanderers Club provided members with early access to the zoo. Next year, operations will begin April 1 and expand to include weekends in September. This free-to-join program has garnered significant media attention, reinforcing its role in fostering community connections in the Lansing area.

Trailblazer Sponsor: \$5,000

We invite you to be the exclusive Premier Sponsor for the Wild Wanderers Club's 2025 season.

Sponsorship Benefits

Brand Visibility

- Premier sponsor logo on all promotional materials (flyers, website, newsletters, and press releases).

Exclusive Recognition

- Official acknowledgment as Premier Sponsor in communications and signage.
- Business information at the admissions desk during the Wild Wanderers Club hour.

On-site Branding

- Your logo will be featured on club marketing materials, including the zoo's 'Plan Your Day' board. This prime visibility comes during the summer season when the zoo welcomes the majority of its 190,000+ annual guests.

Sponsorship Impact

Your sponsorship will support the club's operating expenses, materials, and marketing.

Inquiries

By Mail: Potter Park Zoo

Attn: Sponsorships

1301 S Pennsylvania Ave Lansing, MI 48912

Email: Hthurman@ingham.org or amorrise@ingham.org

Phone: 517-795-6122



2024 Wild Wanderers Club Survey Results



The Wild Wanderers Club is Potter Park Zoo's newest initiative, designed to engage the community with nature and exercise. Over its inaugural year, the program welcomed nearly 700 households and 1,000 total members, who made almost 2,500 visits to the zoo. The club operated daily from 8 - 9 a.m., providing early access to the zoo before it opened to the public, and was free to join.

Throughout the season, the program consistently attracted members, with the highest daily attendance reaching 46 members. The club garnered media attention from Fox47, WLNS, and Channel 6, highlighting its popularity and community impact.

The program's operational costs were modest, totaling around \$2,000, which included \$1,736 for one hour of admission personnel daily and approximately \$200 for marketing materials such as stickers and badges. This efficient use of resources underscores the club's success and its valuable contribution to our community.



General Feedback and Comments from Members

Enjoyment of the Zoo Environment:

- Many members appreciated the peaceful, safe, and serene environment for their walks.
- The opportunity to see animals early in the morning was highly valued.
- Members enjoyed the familiarity of the zoo and the chance to walk while seeing the animals in a less crowded setting.

Program Features:

- The free access was a major highlight for many, with some suggesting it could even be charged a small fee.
- Early access and smaller crowds were seen as significant benefits.
- The staff were frequently praised for being friendly and welcoming.

Personal Benefits:

- The program helped members achieve fitness goals and provided a safe place to exercise, especially appreciated by those with specific health concerns or new mothers.
- Social interaction and the chance to bring friends and family were also enjoyed.

Areas for Improvement:

Extended Hours and Season:

- Many members requested extended hours, including earlier openings (7:00 am) and later closures (past Labor Day or into the fall).
- Some suggested that the program be available year-round or start earlier in the spring.

Amenities and Logistics:

- Suggestions included having coffee available (for sale) in the mornings and improving the registration/check-in process.
- There were requests for a map of the walking area and the possibility of purchasing refreshments after exiting the zoo.

Animal Enclosures and Visibility:

- A few members expressed desires for larger enclosures for certain animals and better visibility for specific species.

Overall Sentiment:

- **Positive:** The majority of feedback was very positive, with members enjoying the combination of exercise and animal observation.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:** While many aspects were well-received, there were constructive suggestions for extending the program, improving amenities, and enhancing the zoo experience.

Overall, how satisfied are you with the Wild Wanderers Club?

63 Responses- 11 Empty



4.86
Avg. Response

63
Responses

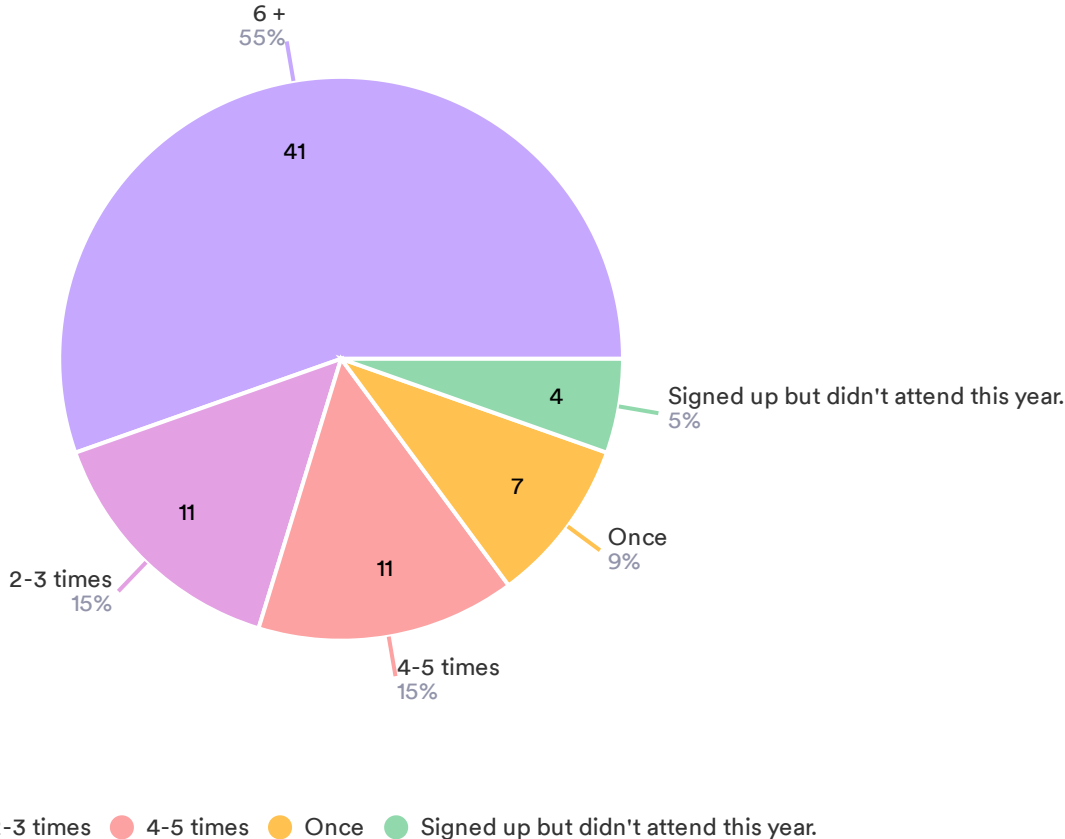
Data	Response	%
★★★★★	57	90%
★★★★☆	4	6%
★★★☆☆	1	2%
★★☆☆☆	1	2%
★☆☆☆☆	0	0%

The Wild Wanderers Club received overwhelmingly positive feedback from our community! Out of 59 responses, a remarkable 90% rated the club a perfect 5 stars. An additional 7% gave it 4 stars, with only 2% rating it 3 stars and 2% rating it 2 stars.

These results reflect the strong support and enjoyment our club has brought to its participants. With such high satisfaction levels, it's clear that continuing the Wild Wanderers Club in future years would be worthwhile.

How often did you participate in the Wild Wanderers Club walks?

74 Responses



Many club members made the Wild Wanderers Club a regular part of their summer! Out of 69 responses, 54% of participants visited the club over 6 times, showing strong engagement throughout the season. Additionally, 16% attended 2-3 times, 16% came 4-5 times, and 10% utilized the club once.

Wild Wanderers Survey

After participating in the Wild Wanderers Club, are you more or less interested in becoming a Potter Park Zoo member? 1 - less interested, 5 - more interested

69 Responses- 5 Empty

Best Response



45%
Percentage

69
Responses

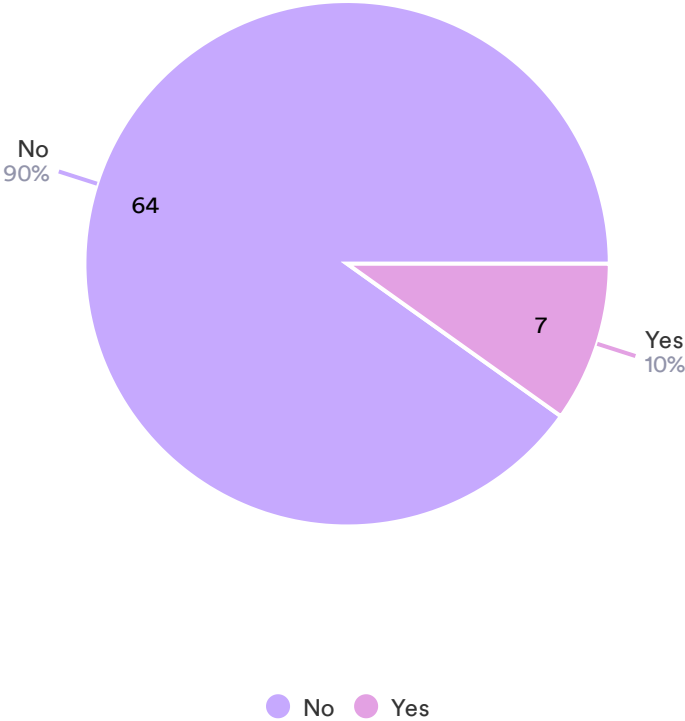
Data	Response	%
5	31	45%
3	19	28%
4	14	20%
1	4	6%
2	1	1%

When asked if the Wild Wanderers Club made participants more likely to become Potter Park Zoo members, the response was overwhelmingly positive. Out of 66 responses, 45% rated their likelihood as a 5 (more likely), and 21% chose 4, signaling a strong interest in zoo membership. Additionally, 26% indicated no change, while only 6% picked 1 and 2% picked 2, reflecting a minimal decrease in interest.

*These responses could potentially generate 44 new membership leads. At \$65 per individual basic membership, this would bring in \$2,860—enough to cover admissions staff costs and other expenses related to running the club. This promising outcome indicates that the Wild Wanderers Club could already be self-sufficient in its inaugural year.

Are you a Potter Park Zoo member?

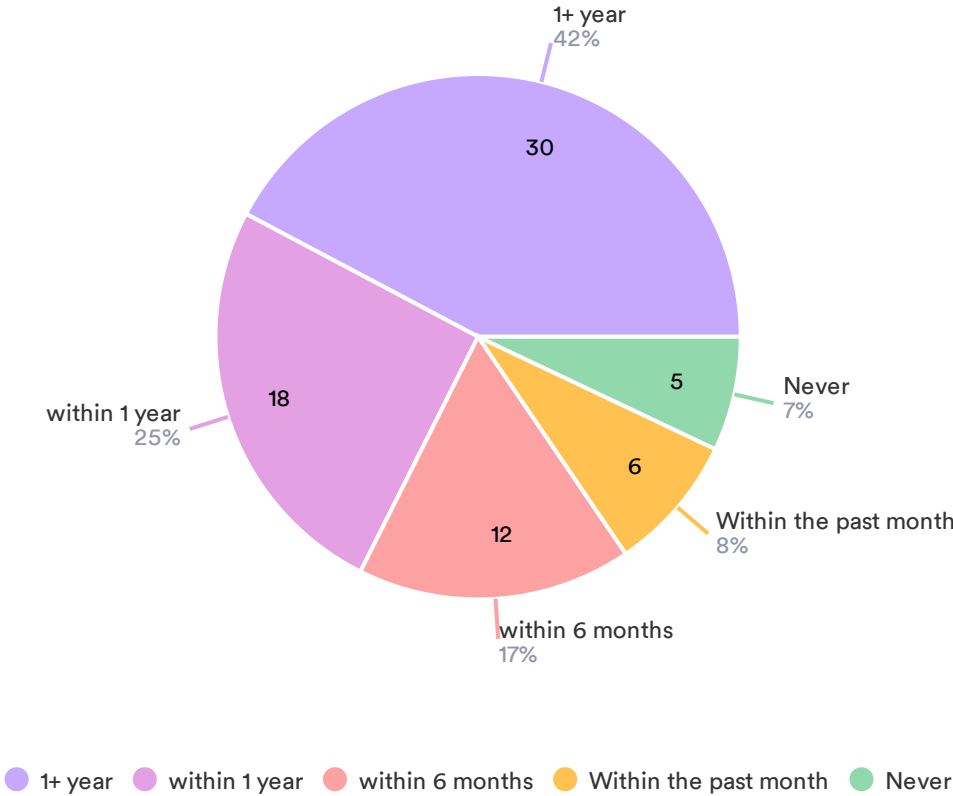
71 Responses- 3 Empty



Notably, 90% of the 67 survey respondents were not current zoo members, with only 10% holding an active membership. This means the Wild Wanderers Club is attracting a fresh and diverse range of visitors to the zoo, engaging a broader audience.

Before joining the Wild Wanderers Club, when was the last time you visited Potter Park Zoo?

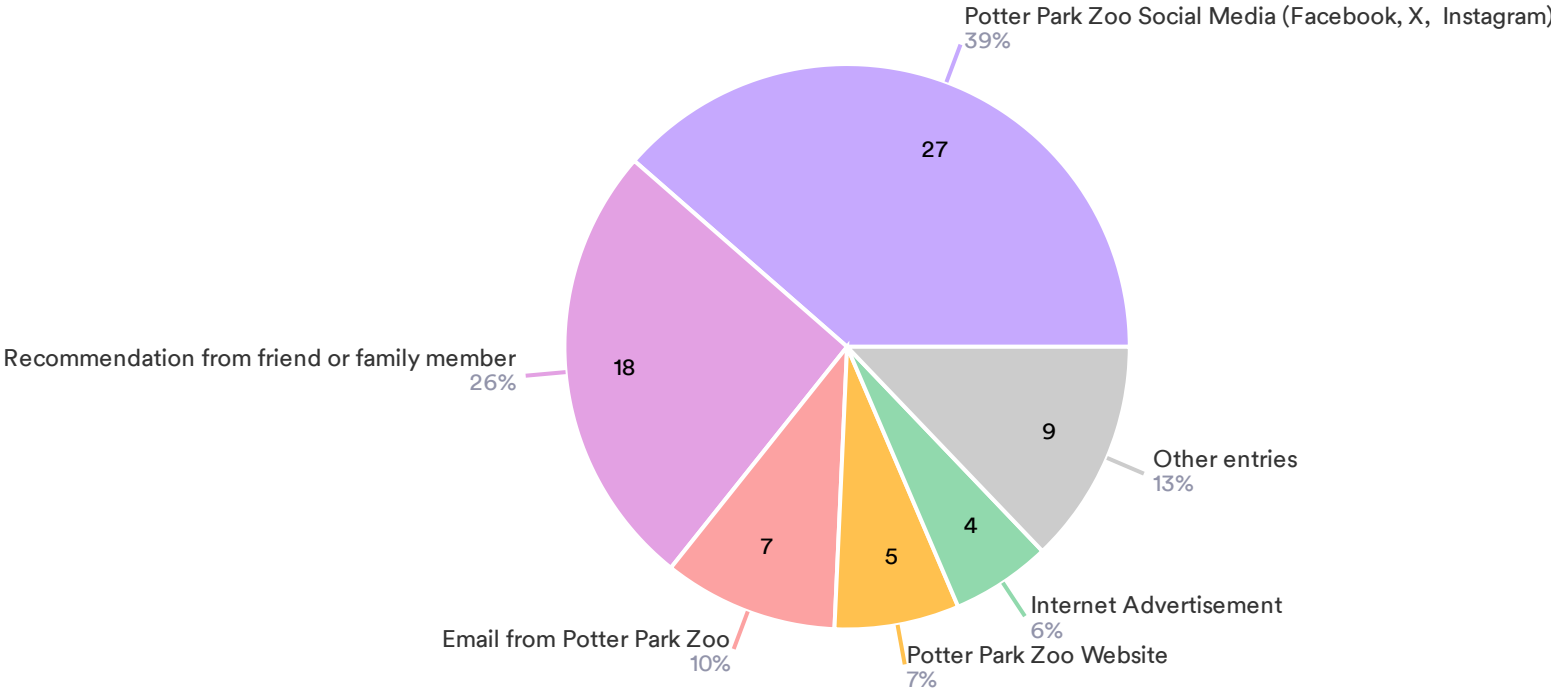
71 Responses- 3 Empty



Before joining the Wild Wanderers Club, 43% of the 67 respondents hadn't visited Potter Park Zoo in over a year, while 6% had never visited before. Meanwhile, 25% had been to the zoo within the past year, 16% within the last 6 months, and 9% within the past month. This indicates that the club is successfully attracting new visitors, including those who hadn't been to the zoo in a while or ever.

How did you hear about this event?

70 Responses- 4 Empty



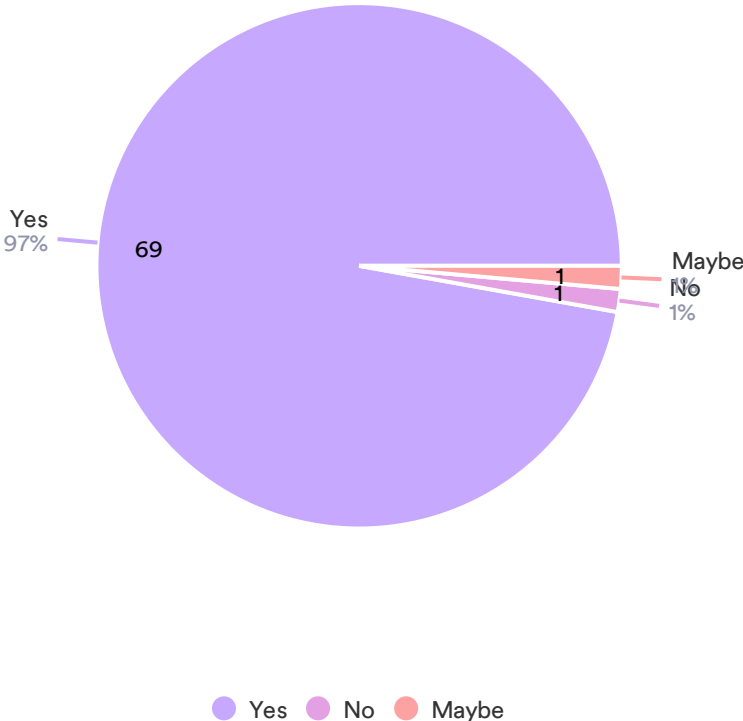
A large portion of respondents (35%) discovered the Wild Wanderers Club through social media, while 27% heard about it from friends and family.

Additionally, 11% learned about it via the zoo’s newsletter, 8% through the zoo’s website, and 6% from other internet sources.

The strong word-of-mouth referrals reflect the quality of the program—people enjoyed it so much they wanted to share the experience with others, demonstrating its value and impact within the community.

Would you be interested in participating in the Wild Wanderers Club next year?

71 Responses- 3 Empty



An overwhelming 97% of respondents expressed interest in participating in the Wild Wanderers Club next year, with only 1% saying "maybe" and another 1% saying "no." This enthusiastic response strongly supports continuing the club in future years.

Do you have any additional comments or feedback about the Wild Wanderers Club?

39 Responses- 35 Empty

Data	Responses
Nope	2
This was a wonderful group, it should continue to be a free group for those of us who work during the week and only have a chance to use it on the weekends	1
My son and I enjoyed the club very much! Thank you!	1
From the bottom of my heart, THANK YOU! Some of our most fun family hours this summer were spent at the zoo in the early morning hours! This is such a great opportunity you provide for our community! Getting outside, moving our bodies, and interacting with animals is all so important for our mental and physical well being. ❤️	1
I would be interested to know how to volunteer for future events or projects at the zoo like this!	1
I am looking forward to attending again next year. Thank you for everything that you do!!	1
❤️❤️❤️❤️	1
I really hope this comes back next year because I seriously loved it! And I'm hoping to make it more time next year :)	1
Other entries	30

Overall, feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing appreciation and enthusiasm for the Wild Wanderers Club. Members highlighted their enjoyment and expressed a strong desire for the program to continue next year, with some suggesting an earlier start and extended duration.

A few suggestions included offering additional behind-the-scenes access, improving animal enclosure sizes, and making camels more visible. Despite these suggestions, the general sentiment was gratitude and satisfaction with the program.

Zip Code of Residence

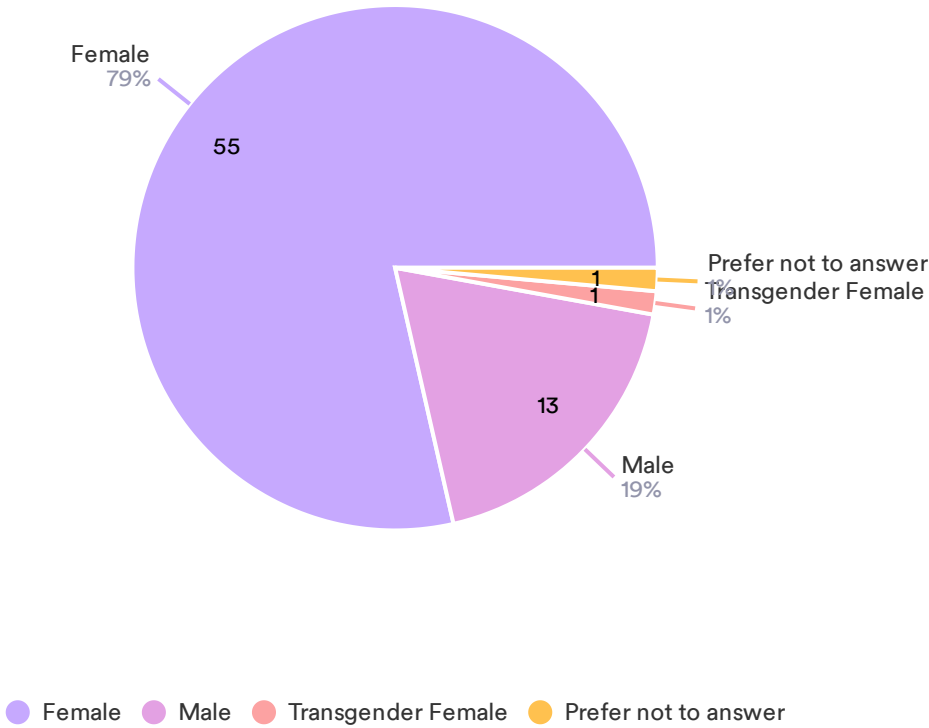
67 Responses- 7 Empty

Data	Responses
48910	19
48911	10
48912	9
48842	6
48823	5
48864	4
48837	3
48917	3
Other entries	8

Most survey respondents are local to the Lansing area and nearby regions. A few respondents are from more distant locations, such as **95758** (California), but the overwhelming majority are from the Lansing area, showcasing a strong connection to the local community.

Gender Identity

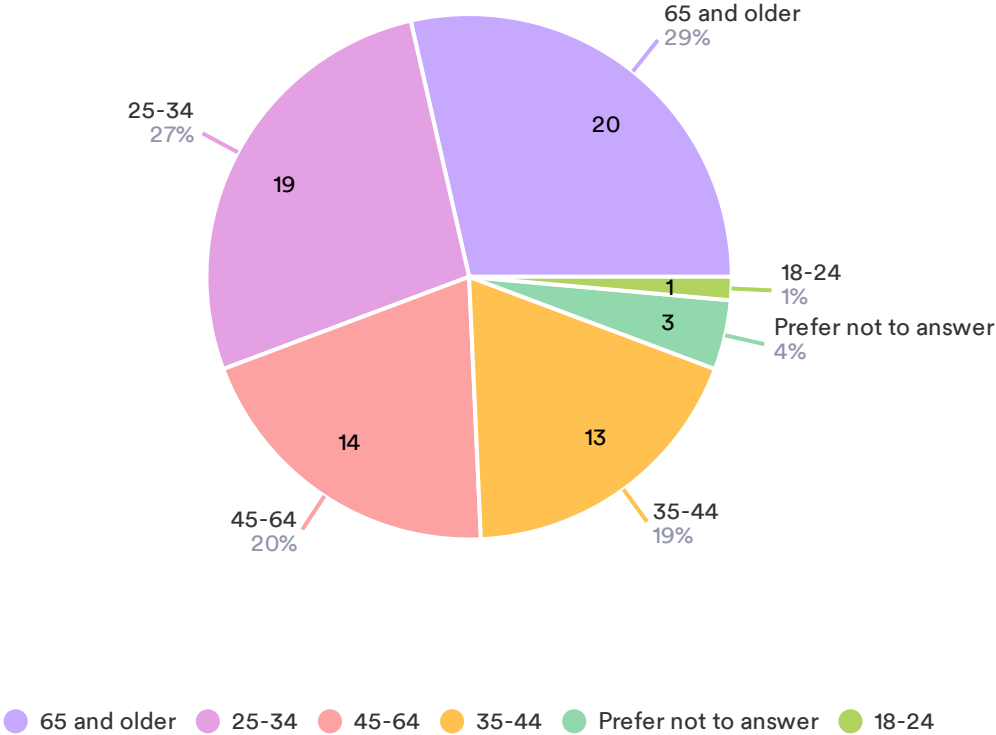
70 Responses- 4 Empty



The gender identity feedback from the survey shows a predominant female participation, with 82% identifying as female, 17% as male, and 2% as transgender female. This indicates a strong engagement from female respondents while also reflecting a diverse range of gender identities.

Age:

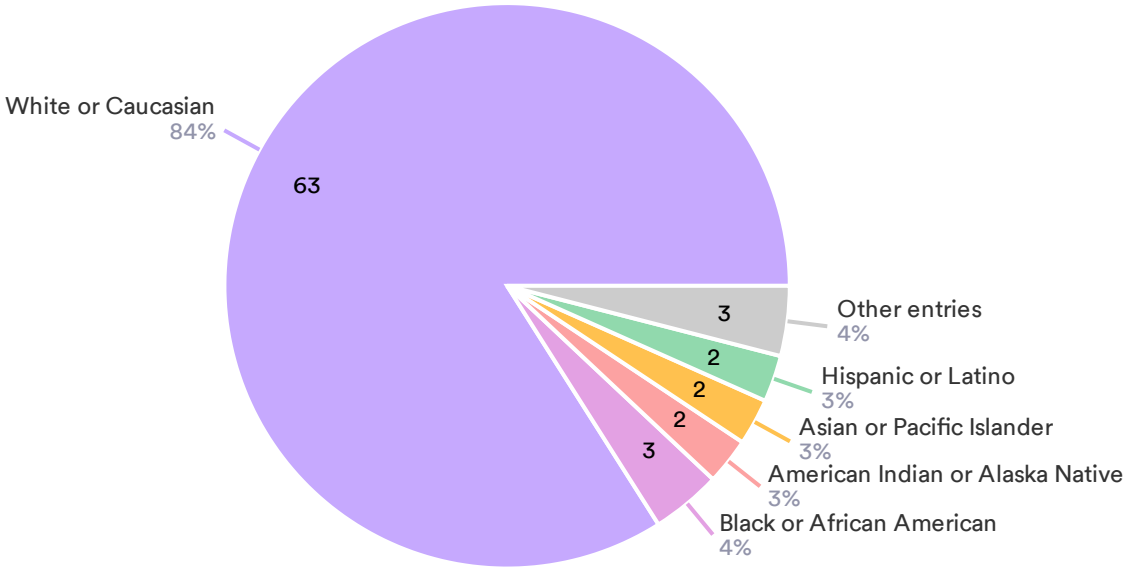
70 Responses- 4 Empty



The age group distribution for the survey shows a well-balanced and diverse range of participants. This distribution highlights a broad spectrum of age groups, indicating that the program appeals to a wide demographic range.

Race/Ethnicity (if you are multiracial please pick all that apply)

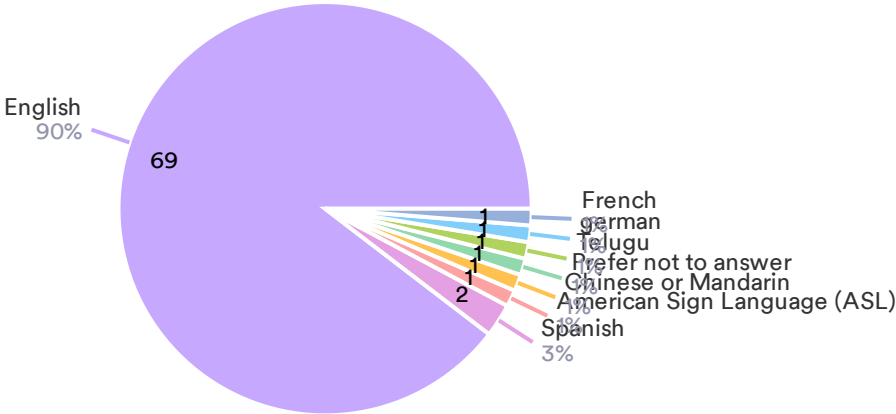
75 Responses- 4 Empty



Overall, while the majority of respondents are White or Caucasian, the survey also reflects a diverse array of ethnicities, better representing our community and introducing a broader range of backgrounds to the zoo.

Language: What language do you speak: Select all that apply.

77 Responses- 4 Empty

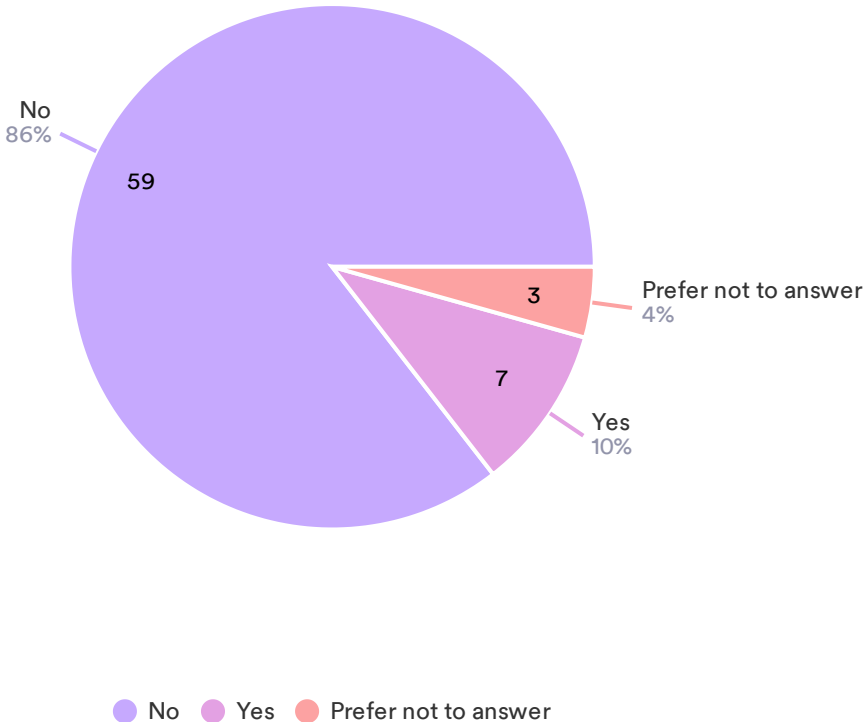


English Spanish American Sign Language (ASL) Chinese or Mandarin Prefer not to answer Telugu german French

The survey results indicate that the vast majority of our members speak English, with a few speaking additional languages. Overall, while English is the primary language spoken, there is notable linguistic diversity among our members. Offering multilingual resources could further enhance engagement and inclusivity.

Disability/Ability Status: Do you have a disability that requires ongoing accomodations?

69 Responses- 5 Empty



The presence of some respondents who require ongoing accommodations highlights the importance of providing accessible services, such as wheelchair rentals. Ensuring that our facilities and programs are accommodating and inclusive will enhance the experience for all members, including those with specific needs.

Please let us know in the comment box if we could improve in accessibility in anyway.

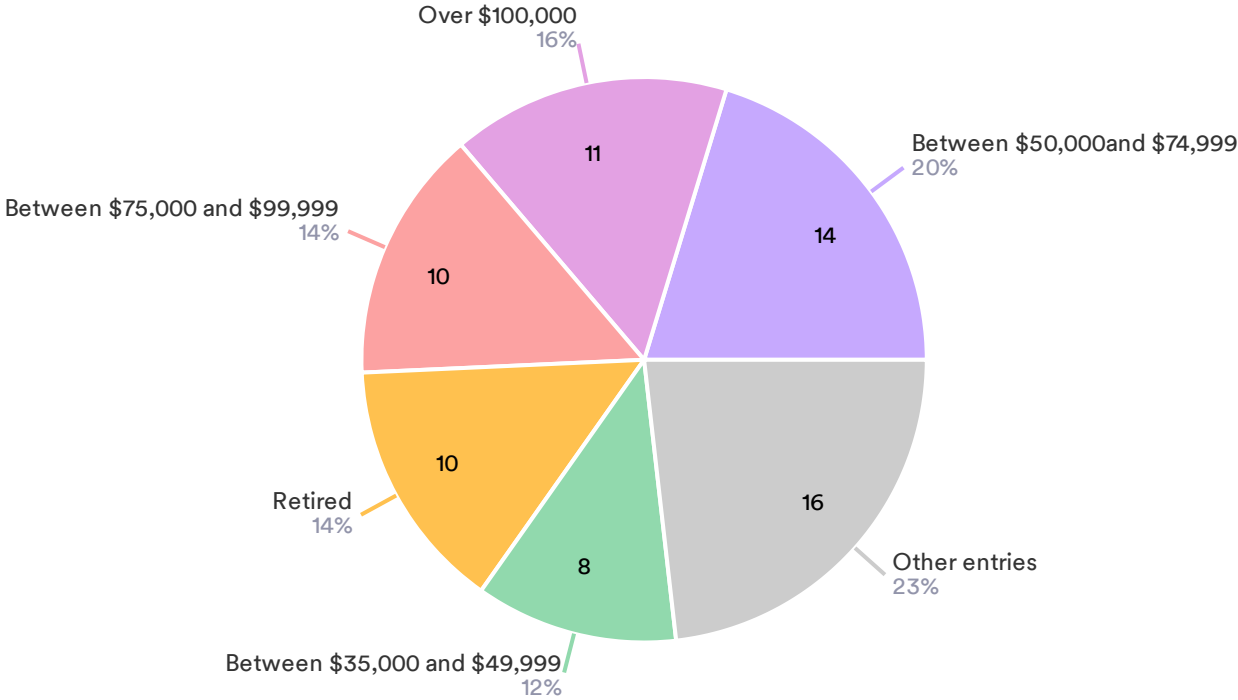
5 Responses- 69 Empty

Data	Responses
No I don't think so	1
Offer umbrellas to 'rent' for free on sunny days for those of us sensitive to heat, the way you do sensory bags through-out the park.	1
No improvements!	1
I don't think so	1
Not really. Just stay open longer during the year.	1

Several respondents felt that no additional improvements were necessary to the zoo's accessibility. One suggestion was to offer free umbrellas on sunny days for those sensitive to heat, similar to how sensory bags are provided. Another suggestion was to keep the zoo open for a longer period during the year and into the cooler months (September and October). The majority of feedback indicates that current accessibility measures are sufficient. Specific suggestions include enhancing comfort on sunny days and extending the zoo's operating season to improve overall accessibility and visitor experience.

Socioeconomic Status: What is your total household income?

69 Responses- 5 Empty



The club attracts a diverse income range, with a strong presence in higher income brackets. A significant number of members are in the middle-income range, reflecting a broad appeal across various economic backgrounds. The inclusion of lower-income members and retirees highlights the club's accessibility and appeal to a wide audience.

Summary of Feedback and Community Impact

The Wild Wanderers Club has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from its members. Participants appreciated the serene, safe environment of the zoo for their morning exercise in a less crowded setting. The free access to the zoo and the friendly, welcoming staff were also highlighted as major benefits.

Key Feedback Highlights:

• Positive Aspects:

- The program provided a peaceful and safe place for exercise.
- Early access to the zoo and seeing animals active in the morning were particularly valued.
- The opportunity to socialize and bring friends and family was enjoyed by many.

• Suggestions for Improvement:

- Extending the season and staying open later into the fall, were common requests.
- Enhancing amenities, such as providing coffee and improving the registration process, were suggested.



Mission Driven: By offering this program, we are furthering our mission of inspiring conservation of wildlife and the natural world. The Wild Wanderers Club fosters a healthy community by encouraging physical activity and providing educational opportunities to read and learn about animals and their habitats. It highlights the significance of nature on mental and physical health, helping participants connect with wildlife and wild spaces. This aligns with our zoo's mission to create meaningful connections between people and the natural world.

Community Impact: The Wild Wanderers Club has become a beloved staple in the community, offering a unique blend of fitness and nature. It serves a diverse group of members, including local residents, new mothers, individuals with health concerns, and families. The program has proven to be self-sufficient through membership leads and has established a strong presence within the community.

Future Considerations: Given the program's success and its importance to the community, it is crucial to continue offering the Wild Wanderers Club in the future. Starting the program in April and extending it into the fall with weekend hours in September would address many of the suggestions from members and enhance the overall experience.

Securing a sponsor could further support the program, but its current self-sufficiency demonstrates its value and sustainability. The Wild Wanderers Club has clearly filled an important niche and has become an integral part of the community's wellness and engagement with the zoo.



What's Next for the Wild Wanderers Club?

Membership Promotion (Heath & Kelly)

- Reach out to WWC members via email with a zoo membership promotion.

Sponsorship Package (Heath & Erin)

- Collaborate with the fund development team (Erin) to create a compelling sponsorship package. Use data from the club to craft a strong proposal.
- In-person visits to potential sponsors will increase our chances of securing a sponsor for the next season.

Expanded Seasonal Offerings (Cindy)

- Open the club in April and extend to weekends only in September and October. This timing would showcase the zoo during its most beautiful season.
- Maintain the 8 a.m. – 9 a.m. window, as it's the ideal timeframe for members' routines.

Map Updates (Heath)

- Print an updated zoo map with the club's walking routes (Okapi Odyssey, Big Cat Boulevard, the Penguin's Waddle). This will help members track their mileage and provide direction during their visits.

Merchandise (Heath & Jon)

- Explore creating Wild Wanderers Club merchandise (T-shirts & Stickers) to boost community pride and raise money for the club.

Virtual 5k Challenge (Heath)

- Host a virtual 5k challenge in the spring, similar to the Michigan DNR's [Happy Little 5k](#). This would attract new members and raise funds through race registration.

Admissions Team & Staffing Solutions (Rick)

- Address admissions staffing issues, including creating a more seamless process for opening at 8 a.m.
- Implement an SOP: (Example)
 - **If admissions calls in sick** → Rick opens the gate, checks in club attendees, and issues badges.
 - **If Rick is unavailable** → Public Safety moves to the admissions gate, opens the gate, checks in club attendees, and issues badges.
 - Further streamline operations to avoid disruption.

Dear Potter Park Zoo
staff,

Thank you so much for introducing the Wild Wanderers Walking club! Walking club has been so good for my mental and physical health!

When I first started attending walking club, I was newly postpartum with my little girl. Walking club gave us a great activity to do in the morning and helped me be active to manage my postpartum depression. I was really bummed when

my maternity leave ended and we couldn't attend on weekdays anymore.

Luke (my husband), AJ (my daughter) and I are so thankful for all of the PPZ staff

- for the keepers that answered our questions as they got exhibits ready
- for the staff that always had a smile and a positive word
- for the animals that didn't mind us intruding on their quiet time before the zoo opens.

Thank you!

Karyn, Luke + AJ

Enclosed is a
\$50 donation to
PPZ