

**Fresno's Chaffee Zoo Corporation**  
**October 11, 2005**  
**MINUTES**

**Present**

Cheryl Assemi  
David Cowin  
Sharon Levy  
Sheri Manning-Cartwright  
Shari Rainwater  
Tom Templeton  
Jay Weed  
Mike Woods

**Absent**

Manuel Ferreira

**Guests**

Donna Fernandes

Meeting called to order at 6:10

Call for public comment. There was none.

Adjourned at 6:15 for Special session to discuss budget and Brown Act.

Meeting reconvened at 8:30

**Present**

Cheryl Assemi  
David Cowin  
Sharon Levy  
Sheri Manning-Cartwright  
Shari Rainwater  
Tom Templeton  
Jay Weed  
Mike Woods

**Absent**

Manuel Ferreira

**Guests**

Sheri Manning Cartwright made a motion to table resolution to adopt board policy concerning Brown Act. She argued that the matter should be discussed at a regularly scheduled board meeting in order to give the public the chance to attend.

Cheryl Assemi seconded it.

Motion failed 5 – 3.

Motion was made by Dave Cowin to pass the resolution "Procedures to Ensure Public Participation". Seconded by Mike Woods.

Jay and Mike stated that the public voted for a private entity to run the zoo. Private entities are not subject to the Brown Act.

Jay states that we exceed the requirements of the Brown Act in many areas.

Cheryl Assemi agreed that we are a private entity, but felt that calling ourselves “transparent” is meaningless, and inaccurate if there were no restrictions on what could be discussed in closed session.

She also felt that the board needs to maintain the public’s trust, as, when the tax ends, we will need to approach the public for another tax.

Shari Rainwater felt that the public just wants access to the financial records, i.e. how the money is spent.

Sheri Manning-Cartwright noted that the Brown Act has 7 components and that the resolution fails to mention or incompletely fulfills 5 of those components. She stated that she would be more comfortable with the resolution if it included limitations on the types of items that can be discussed in closed session. Cheryl Assemi and Sharon Levy agreed with this.

Sharon Levy said that the document leaves too many subjects available for private session and that even discussing items like the Brown Act and the general budget should be held in public session.

Sheri Manning Cartwright felt that with modifications it could be a document that we all would feel comfortable signing if the area of closed session items were better defined.

Jay Weed stated that he would not vote for the resolution if it were amended to include a section limiting items to be discussed in closed session.

Sharon Levy reminded members of the transition committee that we agreed not to have an executive committee style of board making decisions to be rubber stamped by the rest of the board.

Motion to pass the Resolution for the board policy regarding the Brown Act moved by Dave Cowin. Second by Mike Woods.

Motion passed 5 – 3.

Sharon Levy asked to be quoted for the record that enough time was not spent discussing this issue and that the resolution did not go far enough.

Motion was made by Tom Templeton to approve the budget with amendments (adding \$50,000 to the line item for depreciation, changing the wording for “Improvements” to “Repairs and Replacements” and adding the \$675,000 separate start-up budget to the main budget as a line item) prepared by the Director. Second by Dave Cowin.

Motion passed – unanimous.

Sheri Manning Cartwright passed out the letter that she was directed to draft at the October 7 meeting.

Dave Cowin said that there was no point sending it out, and clarified that he would resign as treasurer if the letter were sent.

Cheryl Assemi asked that a motion was passed at the last meeting to direct Sheri Manning Cartwright to draft a letter, but didn't include sending it?

Mike Woods said yes.

Sheri Manning-Cartwright voiced her concern about being given "busy work" when there is real work to be done.

Cheryl Assemi suggested that a joint meeting with the Zoo Tax Authority be held to coordinate our efforts.

Sharon Levy concurred.

Meeting adjourned 9:30.

Minutes submitted by Cheryl Assemi