

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO.05-263

DATE October 6, 2005

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BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: GRIFFITH PARK VISITOR CENTER LOBBY – DONATION FROM GRIFFITH TRUST FOR REFURBISHMENT AND EXHIBIT IMPROVEMENTS

*J. Combs	<u>JK (bn)</u>	J. Kolb	___
H. Fujita	___	F. Mok	___
S. Huntley	___	K. Regan	___
B. Jensen	___	M. Shull	___

Robert H. Jensen (bn)
General Manager

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board accept the donation as specified in this report and that appropriate recognition be given to the donors.

SUMMARY:

After several months of collaborating with park staff on planning for refurbishment of the aging and non-descript Visitor Center lobby in Griffith Park, the Griffith J. Griffith Trust commissioned a private exhibit design firm, Universal Exhibits, in March 2005 to consult on final project and exhibit design, construction, and installation. Primary project elements included replacing a decayed wood ceiling, adding security and exhibit lighting, retiling stained and worn flooring, creating exhibits that feature park plants, animals, geology, and geography, including a 3D fiber optic map of Griffith Park, installing welcoming visual displays, including informational video, historic and current photos of outstanding occurrences and park features with accompanying text panels, and installing and equipping an attendants' station / gift store counter with shelving.

Supplementing the construction effort was Department facility repair staff who refurbished a men's and women's restroom by replacing aging fixtures and configuring interior space to allow for wheelchair accessibility in compliance with ADA standards. The Visitor Center exterior courtyard area was also improved by rebuilding a decayed wooden trellis, repainting walls, repairing security lighting, and replanting decorative landscaping with native specimens.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 2

NO. 05-263

On June 15, 2005, a donation was made by the Griffith J. Griffith Trust for the sum of \$25,546.59 (see Report #05-186) bringing the Trust's total support for the Visitor Center refurbishment project to \$298,760.00. These monies were expended for costs involved with designing, constructing, and installing media displays and purchasing camera equipment needed to produce informational graphics and video materials.

Park staff and visitors are indebted to Trust members Mr. Van Griffith, Ms. Clare Darden, and Mr. Mike Eberts for their generous contribution which has made possible the creation of a modern public space that duly recognizes the remarkable gift, which park benefactor, Griffith J. Griffith, bestowed upon the citizens of Los Angeles. This project gives fitting recognition and pays deserved tribute to the unique urban landmarks, attractions, wildlife, geology, and recreational opportunity that is now shared by millions.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The Trust's generous donation facilitated the welcome development of a modern and centralized Visitor Information and Education Center in Griffith Park which the Department would not have otherwise been able to accomplish. Tens of thousands of visitors are expected to utilize and benefit from this facility annually.

The Department had previously budgeted a full-time position to provide public information at the Visitor Center, and daily maintenance was already being performed in the lobby and public restrooms prior to refurbishment. Expenditures for additional printed materials and exhibit maintenance may nominally increase operations costs. However, anticipated profit resulting from the proposed sale of gift items to the public such as maps, postcards, and posters may be used to offset such an increase.

Prepared by Senior Park Ranger Anne Waisgerber