



MINUTES
LOS ANGELES EQUINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 Monday, February 9, 2022
 6:30 pm
 VIA ZOOM

	Present	Absent
Stefanie Smith, Chair Department of Recreation and Parks	X	
District 1 VACANT		
District 2 Jeffrey Rewald		X
District 3 Jill Haber	X	
District 4 Lisa Hannawalt	X	
District 5 David Ramey, DVM	X	
District 6 Mary Benson	X	
District 7 Dale Gibson	X	
District 8 Kevin Atkins	X	
District 9 Vacant		
District 10 Todd La Vergne	X	
District 11 Larry Watts	X	
District 12 Stacia Crane		X
District 13 Gene Gilbert		X
District 14 Vacant		
District 15 Vacant		
Mayor's Representative, Scott Perez	X	

Item No. 1 Call to Order. Member Gibson acted as Chair and called the meeting to order at about 6:35 p.m. The Chair announced that this was a duly noticed Special Meeting to address two agenda items on: 1) Review the recent issues concerning the pony ride concession at Griffith Park and whether LAEAC should send a letter on the issue and 2) Council File 20-1575 concerning draft ordinance concerning rodeos and whether LAEAC should send a letter on the issue.

Item No. 2 Griffith Park Pony Rides. The chair called for discussion of the recent complaints concerning alleged ill treatment and care. Member Ramey noted the difference between concern over animal welfare practices based upon animal science and the “Nirvana Fallacy,”

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whereby they compare a current use of animals to a theoretical “perfect” Nirvana. The latter is an emotional feeling that ponies should be living and running free in a pastoral setting and should never working for hire in an entertainment capacity due, as they believe any and all of these practices are abusive The latter position won’t be moved by a showing the ponies at the Griffith Park pony rides are cared for consistent with accepted horse welfare practices.

Member Smith reported the findings of Rachael Sacher, DVM, CVA, the third party veterinarian who conducted an investigation of the pony rides and prepared a Griffith Park Pony Rides Policies and Practices Report. Dr. Sacher found the working conditions to be satisfactory and found no gross violations related to the care and treatment of the ponies. She did make a number recommendations concerning the operations of the concession and updates to the policies and that should be implemented. These changes will include some improvements to animal care practices, better documentation of the management and care of each animal, and improved facility design. With such updated protocols and improved care, Dr. Sacher concluded Griffith Park Pony Rides can be a viable and sustainable concession and feature for Los Angeles and surrounding communities.

Several members of the public also spoke in favor of continuing the pony ride concession and its importance to the community. Several spoke of their own positive experiences the pony rides.

THEREUPON, following this discussion and a motion duly made and seconded the following resolution was adopted;

RESOLVED, that the Los Angeles Equine Advisory Committee write to Board of Recreation and Parks Commission’s Task urging continuance of the Griffith Park Pony Ride concession following the recommendations of Dr. Sacher and the requirements in the January 26, 2022 letter from Rachel Ramos, Concession Manager, Dept. of Recreation and Parks to Mr. Stephen A. Weeks, Los Angeles Pony Rides, Inc.

Item No. 3. City Council File 20-1575 proposed Ordinance Relating to Rodeos.

The Chair noted the LAEAC had heretofore adopted a position on an earlier effort to ban rodeos within the City and directed the City Attorney to draft a proposed ordinance. The City Attorney on about December 24, 2021 submitted a proposed draft ordinance to the City Council.

THEREUPON, following this discussion and a motion duly made and seconded the following resolution was adopted;

RESOLVED, that the Los Angeles Equine Advisory Committee write to the mayor and City Council setting forth its recommendations concerning the draft ordinance reflecting the discussion during the February 9, 2022 special meeting and its previous letter of August 9, 2019 to the Mayor and City Council in Council File 20-1575.

Item No. 5. Adjourn. There being no further business, upon a motion a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Watts,
Secretary

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