

APPROVED

JUN 17 2021

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

BOARD REPORT

NO. 21-107

DATE June 17, 2021

C.D. ALL

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: RETIREMENT OF PARK RANGER DIVISION MOUNTED UNIT HORSE AND DONATION OF THE HORSE TO PRIVATE CITIZEN

AP Diaz, H. Fujita, J. Kim, *M. Rudnick, C. Santo Domingo, N. Williams

MR

M. Shue General Manager

Approved X Disapproved Withdrawn

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. Duly acknowledge the practical and intrinsic benefit of the many years of dedicated services provided to the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) by resident horse "Smokey", belonging to the ranks of the Park Ranger Division Mounted Unit;
2. Appropriately recognize the qualitative value that the stately presence of "Smokey" added to official events and ceremonies that proudly showcased public display, decorum, and propriety;
3. Bestow upon "Smokey" its rightful place of gratitude and honor within the annals of RAP history as it's readied for discharge from service and retirement to places of well-deserved care and safety;
4. Approve the retirement of "Smokey" from City service and grant permission to donate this horse to Monica Gilchrist, a private citizen and owner of Gilchrist Farm, so that he may live out the remainder of his life under the care of an experienced equestrian;
5. Find that "Smokey" is surplus City equipment eligible for donation under Los Angeles Administrative Code (LAAC) 22.547 and request the City Council to approve the donation of "Smokey" to Monica Gilchrist, a private citizen and owner of Gilchrist Farm;
6. Direct RAP staff to notify the General Services Department (GSD) and Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) of this surplus equipment available for donation in accordance with LAAC 22.547.

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SUMMARY:

Smokey is a 20-year-old Tennessee Walker gelding that has been with the Park Ranger Division since 2013. During the past eight years with the division, he has participated in numerous public events and regularly patrolled the trails of our City Parks. Over the past year, Smokey has begun to experience medical issues that prohibit him from participating in the work required of a service animal. While RAP honors Smokey's service, staff believes that discharging this aging horse from the burden of City service is the most responsible and humane course of action at this time. Staff recommends that Smokey be donated as surplus City equipment to Monica Gilchrist, a private citizen and owner of Gilchrist Farm, in accordance with LAAC 22.547 as the cost to discard, recycle or transport the surplus equipment would otherwise impose a documented net financial cost to the City.

Gilchrist Farm was founded in 2016 by Jim and Monica Gilchrist on Monica Gilchrist's family farm. It has a robust horsemanship program and summer farm camp. Each weekend, the community can visit Gilchrist Farm to meet the animals, ride a horse or pony, try archery or axe throwing, milk a goat, ride the farm train or wagon, try the giant slide or enjoy a farm craft. Gilchrist Farm would love to welcome Smokey to their stable, which currently includes 26 horses and ponies where they could share his experience with visitors and have students learn from him. They have many options for a semi-retired horse like Smokey to finish his career gently, while being loved by many.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES AND GOALS

Approval of this Board Report advances RAP's Strategic Plan by supporting:

Goal No. 4: Actively Engage Communities

Outcome No. 4: Enhanced visibility and awareness of Department parks, programs, and projects

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact to RAP's General Fund resulting from the above recommendations as all care and feeding costs associated with this animal will be transferred to another horse that will be obtained as a replacement.

This report was prepared by Adam Dedeaux, Mounted Unit Supervisor.