

MOTION

NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY
ENRICHMENT

Established in 1964, the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species (IUCN Red List) is a critical indicator of the health of the world's biodiversity. Since 1986, the Asian elephant has been classified as endangered on the IUCN Red List due to a decline of at least 50 percent of its population in the last three elephant generations. According to the 2019 IUCN Red List assessment, there are an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 Asian elephants in the wild, with continued declines mainly caused by habitat loss, human-elephant conflict and poaching.

Up until January 2023, the Los Angeles Zoo (L.A. Zoo/Zoo Department) was home to four Asian elephants: Jewel, Shaunzi, Tina, and Billy. On January 20, 2023, however, the L.A. Zoo announced that 61-year-old Jewel, the oldest Asian elephant in the Zoo's care had to be compassionately euthanized due to declining health. A year later, on January 3, 2024, the L.A. Zoo announced that 53-year-old Shaunzi had to be euthanized as well because of her declining health.

Jewel spent 30 years in the custody of a private owner until 2009 when the U.S. Department of Agriculture rescued her. After recovery and rehabilitation, Jewel and Tina—her companion of 30 years—arrived at the L.A. Zoo in 2010. Shaunzi was born in 1970 in Thailand and spent much of her youth in a circus environment. She arrived at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo in 1983 and was transferred to the L.A. Zoo in 2017.

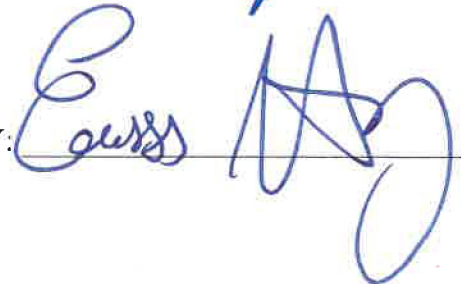
I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council direct the Zoo Department to report within 30 days on the cause of death for both Asian elephants in their care, Jewel and Shaunzi.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council direct the Zoo Department to report within 30 days on the current Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) standards for elephant management and care, the Zoo's current compliance or noncompliance with the standards, and any requested variances by the Zoo to meet these standards.

PRESENTED BY:


BOB BLUMENFELD
Councilmember, District Three

SECONDED BY:




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ORIGINAL