

## **Proposed Chicago City Council Resolution re Lincoln Park Zoo Elephants**

Whereas, the conditions at the Lincoln Park Zoo, including the outdoor enclosure of less than one-third of an acre for elephants, have deprived elephants of adequate space and forced them to stand on hard compacted surfaces, causing serious health problems; and

Whereas, Chicago's cold winter climate is not appropriate for elephants because elephants are a warm-climate species and this weather has further exacerbated the limited spatial problems by routinely confining elephants to small, indoor facilities for extended periods during low temperatures; and

Whereas, the Lincoln Park Zoo does not have the space nor the climate to provide an adequate or appropriate environment for elephants, the largest land mammal in the world; and

Whereas, an elephant named Tatima suffered a leg injury in 2003, significant weight loss, and early death at age 35 at the Lincoln Park Zoo; and

Whereas, an elephant named Peaches also suffered an early death at age 55 at the Lincoln Park Zoo; and

Whereas, captivity-induced foot problems and arthritis caused by lack of exercise and standing on hard surfaces are the leading reasons for euthanasia of elephants in zoos; and

Whereas, the remaining elephant at the Lincoln Park Zoo, Wankie, age 35, does not have adequate room to exercise and has been observed limping; and

Whereas, two sanctuaries, The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee and the Performing Animal Welfare Society in California, accredited by The Association of Sanctuaries provide elephants with a much healthier environment that more closely resembles their natural habitat; and

Whereas, at these two sanctuaries, the remaining elephant, Wankie, will have a permanent home and free access to hundreds of acres to roam on green grass and soft earth and the largest elephant enclosure in any U.S. zoo is only 6 acres; and

Whereas, these two sanctuaries treat elephants with dignity and respect and never use negative stimuli as a form of punishment, and half the zoos in the U.S. still use circus-style training that involves chaining and physical discipline that includes the use of bullhooks; now therefore

Be it resolved, that the City Council of Chicago requests that the remaining elephant at the Lincoln Park Zoo, Wankie, be transferred immediately to one of the two sanctuaries.

Be it further resolved, that the City Council of Chicago recommend that the Lincoln Park Zoo join the Detroit Zoo and others by permanently closing its elephant exhibit.