

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

IN CITY COUNCIL

May 16, 2019

RESOLUTION HONORING THE BUTTONWOOD PARK ZOO ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 125TH ANNIVERSARY

WHEREAS, On April 20, 1894, the West End Park was named Buttonwood, shortly thereafter, a menagerie was started at Buttonwood and the Buttonwood Park Zoo in New Bedford, Massachusetts was established, today it is the 12th oldest zoo in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Buttonwood Park Zoo is owned and operated by the City of New Bedford and features a variety of animals native to Asia, Africa, Europe, North and South Americas and is dedicated to wildlife conservation and to providing excellent care for animals as well as educating the public; and

WHEREAS, The idea of a City Zoo was originally for exhibition and entertainment, the focus today is on animal welfare, education, conservation and the protection of endangered species, the Buttonwood Park Zoo is in the process of presenting more than 50 endangered and threatened species in habitats mirroring their natural environments; and

WHEREAS, The Buttonwood Park Zoo's focus is to become a regional leader in environmental science education, developing the highest standards of animal care and welfare, a community model for sustainable practices, and is involved in a number of conservation and research projects of regional, national and international scope, protecting threatened and endangered species; and

WHEREAS, The Buttonwood Park Zoo has met the high standards of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums for exhibit quality, animal care, educational programs and conservation projects and has been approved for four consecutive five-year accreditations by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums; and

WHEREAS, In 1984 the present Buttonwood Park Zoological Society (BPZS) was formed, the Society is a private, non-profit, tax-exempt organization that supports the zoo by providing funding for educational programming, managing its membership program, concessions, fundraising events and organizing family focused occasions for the community, such as Boo at the Zoo, Feast in the Wild, Party for the Planet and ZooCrew; and

WHEREAS, In 1995, the Buttonwood Park Zoo closed to the public for a major redesign and reconstruction, a Zoo Master Plan was completed and in 2000, a grand opening of the new Zoo was held with a "Berkshires to the Sea" theme, housing mostly endangered regional wildlife; and

WHEREAS, Also, in 2000, a large number of today's residents arrived for the re-opening, including black bears Amy, Toby and Ursula and the harbor seal, Yellow, who gave birth to Blue in 2003; and

WHEREAS, The Buttonwood Park Zoo's oldest, most famous residents, Asian elephants Emily and Ruth, live in a newly expanded elephant habitat, with Ruth enjoying the status of currently being the third oldest elephant in captivity; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Buttonwood Park Zoo is one the most frequently visited cultural attractions in Southeastern Massachusetts, with an annual attendance of approximately 175,000 guests, a seven acre zoo which has been rightly recognized as "One of the finest small zoos in the United States", and continues to develop dynamic educational programs and animal habitats to allow zoo guests access to culture and history;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the New Bedford City Council hereby honors **THE BUTTONWOOD PARK ZOO ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 125TH ANNIVERSARY**, applauds their high standards of animal care, their focus on conservation and their overall contribution to the City and extends best wishes for continued success in the years to come as a national leader in protecting the welfare of endangered species.