MEDIA RELEASE

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS

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County to Propose $500k Loan to Zoo Knoxville

Knoxville, Tennessee—Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs announced today his plan to propose a $500,000 loan to Zoo Knoxville to help overcome operating shortfalls during the facility's COVID-19 closure. The loan will be made from the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund, which is specifically designated for promoting tourism. The fund has a $1.4 million surplus.

"Though Zoo Knoxville closed to do their part in helping slow the spread of COVID-19, the animals they house still need to be fed and cared for," Mayor Jacobs said. "As we continue to work with Knox County partners to keep our community protected, we're happy to help where we can. We hope, too, that the community will continue to support this treasure."

Zoo Knoxville's economic impact on the community is roughly $22 million annually.

Additionally, the Mayor noted that Zoo Knoxville is taking donations of tree trimmings, like limbs and leaves, to help feed some of its animals. The elephants, for example, can eat between 200 and 300 pounds of clippings per day. To donate, please call the zoo at 865-637-5331.

"There is no doubt that this is a tough time and it isn't going to be easy. We are going to get through it together even if we must learn to live a little leaner and learn to take care of each other in different ways. Together we always win," the Mayor added.

Visit zooknoxville.org/emergencyfund. For more information about donating to Zoo Knoxville's Animal Relief fund.

For more information about COVID-19, visit https://covid.knoxcountytn.gov/

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