

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-29

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF VENICE, FLORIDA; URGING PARQUES REUNIDOS SERVICIOS CENTRALES, S.A., THE OWNER AND OPERATOR OF MIAMI SEAQUARIUM, TO RETIRE LOLITA, THE ENDANGERED ORCA WHALE FROM HER TANK AT MIAMI SEAQUARIUM AND MOVE HER TO A SEA PEN IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

WHEREAS, killer whales, also known as orca whales, are traditionally important to the Lummi Nation, a Native American tribe in western Washington state; and

WHEREAS, the orca whale, known as "Lolita," was captured from Penn Cove, Puget Sound, Washington, in 1970 and sold to Miami Seaquarium. In 2014, Miami Seaquarium was sold to Palace Entertainment, a subsidiary of Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales, S.A.; and

WHEREAS, Lolita is now 20 feet in length, weighs 8,000 pounds and has lived for over four decades in a concrete tank measuring only 80 feet across at its widest point, just four times her body length and only 20 feet in depth at its deepest point; and

WHEREAS, during Hurricane Irma, Lolita was exposed to potential hurricane force winds. If Hurricane Irma had traveled along a forecasted path along the eastern Florida coast, the resulting damage could have led to Lolita's injury; and

WHEREAS, Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales, S.A., should work with a group of experienced experts to transport, rehabilitate and retire Lolita safely to Eastsound, Orcas Island, in Washington state for rehabilitation in a sea pen in her natural environment; and

WHEREAS, on August 1, 2017, the Lummi Nation passed the following motion regarding Lolita, also known as Tokitae: "The Lummi Nation honors our connection to the Killer Whale (qw'e lh' ol me chen) as a culturally significant species and supports the work of the Lummi Nation's Sovereignty and Treaty Protection Office in its efforts to bring the Killer Whale Tokitae home to her family as soon as possible"; and

WHEREAS, the future health, safety and welfare of the endangered orca, Lolita, is a matter of concern to the City of Venice and to all who care about our endangered species and their humane treatment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VENICE, FLORIDA, as follows:

SECTION 1. The Whereas clauses above are ratified and confirmed as true and correct.

SECTION 2. The City of Venice hereby urges Parques Reunidos Servicios Centrales, S.A., to retire Lolita, the endangered orca whale, from her small tank at Miami Seaquarium and move her to a sea pen in the Pacific Northwest as soon as possible.

SECTION 3. The City Clerk shall transmit a copy of this resolution to the City of Miami Beach and the Florida League of Cities.

John W. Holic, Mayor

ATTEST:

Lori Stelzer, MMC, City Clerk

I, Lori Stelzer, MMC, City Clerk of the City of Venice, Florida, a municipal corporation in Sarasota County, Florida, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full and complete, true and correct copy of a Resolution duly adopted by Venice City Council at a meeting thereof duly convened and held on the 28th day of November, 2017, a quorum being present.

WITNESS my hand and the official seal of the said city this 28th day of November, 2017.

Lori Stelzer, MMC, City Clerk