



Chicago Park District

Legislation Text

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AUTHORIZATION TO CHANGE THE GENERAL ADMISSION FEE FOR THE DUSABLE MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

To: The Honorable Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Park District

I. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Commissioners adopt an order authorizing an increase in the general admission fees for the DuSable Museum of African American History. The proposed general admission fee increase is to take effect on February 1, 2020. This would be the first increase since September 1, 2010.

II. Explanation

Founded by educator, artist, and activist Dr. Margaret T. Burroughs in 1961, the DuSable Museum of African American History is the oldest independent museum in the country devoted to the collection, and preservation of the history and culture of African Americans. The proposed general admission fee increase is necessary to offset the museum's increased costs, replenish its operating resources after several significant capital improvements, and to allow the Museum to continue expanding programming for guests and students. The Museum has previously reduced costs by reducing headcount as employees retired as well as increasing revenues from retail sales and facility fees from production shoots.

Even with those cost reduction and revenue efforts, the Museum requires an increase to the general admission fees to continue to provide programming and create exhibit content that educates and informs the public.

After the fee increase, the Museum will still have a low general admission fee and will continue the practice of not having a separate charge for special exhibits. The Museum will continue to offer 52 free days to Illinois residents as well as offer free admission to Illinois school groups and active members of the military.

The Museum states total admissions have increased 65% over the past 4 years but the large increase is partly due to free school groups. The Museum is also looking to increase revenue through activation of the roundhouse, bringing in a new retail partner and working on grant and sponsorship opportunities.

II. Explanation (continued)

[CONT.]

The following is a summary of the proposed general admission increase:

	<i><u>Current Admission Fee</u></i>	<i><u>Proposed Admission Fee</u></i>	<i><u>Increase By</u></i>	<i><u>Amended Admission Fee</u></i>
Children under 6	Free	Free	0	Free
Chicago Resident:				
Children (6-11)	\$2	\$4	\$2	\$4
Adults (12 and up)	\$8	\$12.50	\$4.50	\$12.50
Students and seniors	\$5	\$9	\$4	\$9
Non-Resident:				
Children (6-11)	\$3	\$5	\$2	\$5
Adults (12 and up)	\$10	\$14	\$4.50	\$14.50
Students and seniors	\$7	\$10	\$4	\$11

In reviewing the DuSable Museum's request we compared their proposed pricing structure with other museums in the Chicago area and concluded that the Museum's proposed pricing structure is below or in line with other museums.

The DuSable Museum of African American Studies is an invaluable resource to the people of Chicago. Increased admission fees will help allow the Museum to continue to provide world-class experiences for guests of all ages; therefore, we respectfully request the Board's authorization for the requested increase.