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SLCo ZAP Program Wins Top Grade From Auditors

Salt Lake County's Zoo, Arts and Parks program got a vote of confidence today. The County Auditor's Office completed a Performance Audit of the ZAP Program. The audit focused on a review of funding for zoological, cultural and arts organizations and did not include the recreational component. James Wightman, Director, Internal Audit concluded, "that the County's ZAP Program is in compliance with pertinent regulations and procedures set forth in State Statute and County Policies and reached no findings to the contrary".

"The positive results of this audit are an example of Mayor Peter Corroon's open, honest, fiscally responsible government in action," says Erin Litvack, Director of the Department of Community services and charged with management supervision of the ZAP program. "The taxpayers can rest assured that the Zoo, Arts and Parks program is administered fairly, equitably with strong, thorough fiscal oversight."

Funding for Tier I or large cultural organizations is awarded as a percentage of the average qualifying expenses for the three previous years compared against other organizations applying in Tier I. That means that organizations with higher qualifying expenses receive more funding than those with lower expenses. To ensure that all expenses meet qualifications, an independent CPA review of qualifying expenses is made prior to further review by the Advisory Board and the ZAP Program Manager. A maximum of 23 organizations can qualify for the Tier I category.



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Tier II organizations are smaller cultural groups where an unlimited number of organizations may apply for funding.

Advisory Boards exist at both Tier I and Tier II levels to review and approve applications. Jim Wightman also noted, “it was a pleasure working with the staff and board of the ZAP program. The advisory board members play an important role in ensuring these funds are wisely and appropriately distributed.”

The Tier I Advisory Board also reviews applications for zoological organizations. The 12-1/8 percent of ZAP tax revenue received for zoos is divided between the qualifying organizations, the larger organization receiving 94.5 percent and the smaller organization receiving 5.5 percent.

Among the findings by the Auditor:

- All applications reviewed met guidelines in Countywide Policy for disbursement of ZAP funds.
- All organizations had certified financial statements on file as required.
- All members of both Advisory Boards completed a Conflict of Interest Statement and that statement was on file at the ZAP Program Office.

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