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Excerpt from the Minutes of the 84th Regular Session of the Sixteenth Sangguniang Panlungsod held on February 06, 2024 at the Sangguniang Panlungsod Session Hall, 3rd Floor, Ormoc City Hall Building, Aunubing St., Cogon, Ormoc City, Leyte.

ORDINANCE NO. 141
(Series of 2024)

AN ORDINANCE INSTITUTIONALIZING THE TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE ANIMAL RESCUE & REHABILITATION CENTER OF ORMOC CITY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Section 16, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall protect and promote the right of the people to a balance and healthful ecology in accordance with the rhythm and harmony of nature;

Republic Act 9147 also known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, Section 2 (a) states that it shall be the policy of the state to conserve the country's wildlife resources and their habitats for sustainability;

Section 35 of the Republic Act 9147 (RA 9147) also known as "Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act" states that the Local government units shall initiate conservation measures for endemic species in their areas. For this purpose, they may adopt flagship species such as the Cebu black shama (*Copsychus cebuensis*), tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*) Philippine tarsier (*Tarsius syrichta*), Philippine teak (*Tectona philippinensis*), which shall serve as emblems of conservation for the local government concerned;

Based on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) records, the Philippines is the sole host to 1,137 animal species and 14,000 species of plants, the country is also one of the top biodiversity hotspots with 592 endemic species of amphibians, birds and mammals considered "threatened or endangered.

Section 7 of the Animal Welfare Act (1998) provides that it shall be the duty of every person to protect the natural habitat of the wildlife. The destruction of said habitat shall be considered as a form of cruelty to animals and its preservation is a way of protecting the animals", thus, acknowledging the importance of establishing a dedicated center for wildlife rescue and rehabilitation;

Ormoc City is also a home of many terrestrial wildlife considering its vast area of forest and other wildlife habitat and Ormoc may be used as transit area of trafficked terrestrial wildlife animals;

Under Section 32 of RA 9147, the DENR Secretary is authorized to establish or designate a wildlife rescue centers to take temporary care and custody of all confiscated, abandoned and/or donated wildlife to ensure their welfare;

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On November 2022, The City Government of Ormoc and the DENR Region VIII, executed a Memorandum of Agreement wherein the DENR designated the Ormoc Arboretum located in Brgy. Dolores, Ormoc City, as WildLife Rescue Center;

Recognizing the need and as part of the Ormoc City's dedication to protect, preserve and conserve local wildlife species, the Local Government of Ormoc City is the first City in Region VIII to have a Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Center, located at Barangay Dolores, Ormoc City, duly accredited by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) office;

In order to ensure continuity and sustainability of the program, there is a need to institutionalize the program of operating a Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Center in Ormoc Arboretum, located in Brgy. Dolores, Ormoc City;

BE IT ORDAINED by the 16th Sanguniang Panlungsod in Regular Session duly assembled, that:

SECTION 1. Short Title. This Ordinance shall be known as the ***"ORMOC CITY TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE ANIMAL RESCUE & REHABILITATION CENTER ORDINANCE OF 2023."***

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY. It shall be the policy of the Ormoc City Local Government Unit to conserve the country's wildlife resources. In the pursuit of this policy, this ordinance shall have the following objectives:

a) To conserve and protect wildlife species in order to promote ecological balance and enhance biological diversity;
b) To pursue, with regard to national interest, the Philippine commitment to international conventions, protection of wildlife and their habitats;
c) To initiate support scientific studies on the conservation of biological diversity; and
d) To take temporary care and custody of all confiscated, abandoned and/or donated wildlife in order to ensure their welfare.

SECTION 3. DEFINITION OF TERMS. For the purpose of this ordinance, the following shall mean:

a. **Arboretum** – refers to the large garden where many types of tree are grown, for people to look at and be used for scientific purposes, located in Brgy. Dolores, Ormoc City.
b. **Conservation** - means preservation and sustainable utilization of wildlife, and/or maintenance, restoration and enhancement of the habitat.
c. **Habitat** – means place or environment where species or sub species naturally occur or has naturally established its population.
d. **Wildlife Animal**– means undomesticated animal species to include all organism that grow or live in the wild without being introduced by humans.
e. **Terrestrial Wildlife** – Wildlife animals that lived predominantly or entirely on land.

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SECTION 4. INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE DESIGNATED TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE ANIMAL RESCUE AND REHABILITATION CENTER. The designated Wildlife Rescue Center in Ormoc Arboretum, located in Brgy. Dolores, Ormoc City, through the MOA dated November 2022 with the DENR Region VIII and the City of Ormoc, is hereby institutionalized by this ordinance.

SECTION 5. FUNCTIONS. It shall serve as a facility committed to the rescue, rehabilitation, and eventual release of injured, turned over, or distressed wildlife, providing a haven for their recovery and a renewed chance at thriving in their natural habitat.

It shall take temporary custody and care of all confiscated, abandoned and/or donated wildlife in order to ensure their welfare and well-being.

All rescued, confiscated, abandoned and/or donated terrestrial wildlife shall be properly coordinated with Wildlife Rescue Enforcement Office of the DENR.

The center shall be under the management and supervision of the Environment and Natural Resources Office of Ormoc City. The construction of facilities, establishment and implementation of the programs for the operation of said center and the funds necessary to carry it out shall be allocated within the budget of the ENRO.

SECTION 6. FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE. The Rescue and Rehabilitation Center shall be managed by the City Environment and Natural Resources Office being the main responsible office, with the assistance of the City Engineering Office for the Site Development concerns, the City Tourism Office for the Eco-tourism concerns, the City General Services Office for maintenance needs and ORWASA for water supply.

SECTION 7. TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE RESCUE AND REHABILITATION OPERATIONS UNIT. There shall be created a Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Operations Unit within the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, whose members must undergo proper training in identifying, rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife.

The unit shall formulate rehabilitation program of all rescued wildlife animals within the area.

The unit shall provide educational program to all LGU employees, all barangay officials regarding the importance of protection and conservation of terrestrial wildlife animals.

Such unit shall regularly monitor all Pet shop stores situated in Ormoc City to ensure that no wildlife are illegally traded.

SECTION 8. Composition of the Ormoc City Terrestrial Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Unit, are the following:

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Unit Head : Head of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office
Members : Designated Wildlife Rehabilitation Specialist from the ENRO
Designated Wildlife Rescue Coordinator From the ENRO
Designated Administrative Officer from the ENRO

SECTION 9. DESIGNATED POSITIONS AND THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

9.1 **Wildlife Rehabilitation Specialist** -The **section head of the watershed and wildlife** of the ENRO (Environmental Management Specialist I, Item No.775) is hereby designated as the Wildlife Rehabilitation Specialist. His/her duties and responsibilities aside from his regular duty in the office are the following:

a. Responsible for the care, treatment, and rehabilitation of wildlife in the center;
b. Collaborates with city veterinarian, and other specialists for the welfare of the animals; and
c. Develops and implements rehabilitation programs for various wildlife species.

9.2 **Wildlife Rescue Coordinator** –There shall be created a casual position to serve as the **Focal person of Wildlife Protection and Management Program** of the ENRO who is also designated as the Wildlife Rescue Coordinator. His/ Her duties and responsibilities aside from his/her duty as the focal person of the program in the office are the following:

a. Oversees and coordinates wildlife rescue operations within Ormoc City;
b. Trains and leads rescue teams in handling wildlife emergencies;
c. Works closely with local authorities and agencies for the safe retrieval and transportation of distressed wildlife to the WRRC; and
d. Directly report to the section head of the water shed and wildlife of the ENRO (Environmental Management Specialist I, Item No.775).

9.3 **Administrative Officer** -There shall be created a casual position to serve as the **Focal person for Coastal Management Program** of the ENRO who is also designated as the Administrative Officer. His/her duties and responsibilities aside from his/her regular duty in the ENRO as focal person of the coastal management program are the following:

a. Manages administrative tasks such as budgeting, documentation, and reporting for the TWRRC;
b. Coordinates with relevant departments for permits, licenses, and compliance with local regulations;
c. Facilitates public awareness programs and educational activities regarding wildlife conservation; and
d. Act as secretary to the Ormoc City Terrestrial Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Unit.

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SECTION 10. THE CITY VETERINARIAN - The **Head of the City Veterinary Office** is hereby tasked to provide support to the Terrestrial Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Unit by:

a. Providing veterinary care and medical attention to injured or sick wildlife in the center.
b. Conducting health assessments and treatment plans for animals under rehabilitation in the center.
c. Collaborate with the rehabilitation specialist for the overall welfare of the wildlife animals in the center.

SECTION 11. AUGMENTATION OF STAFF. The City Mayor's Office may provide/augment additional staff of the TWRRC who will act as rescuers during actual rescue operation together with the PNP, DENR and other wildlife officers.

SECTION 12. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS. The head of ENRO, the City Veterinarian and the City Legal Officer are hereby designated to formulate the necessary implementing rules and regulations for the implementation of this ordinance subject to the approval of the City Mayor.

SECTION 13. FUNDING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION. There shall be allocated a dedicated budget for the establishment, construction and operation of the TWRRC from the general fund.

SECTION 14. BUDGET. The City shall allocate a budget for the implementation of this ordinance and the operation of TWRRC which shall be included in the regular annual budget of the ENRO from the General Fund. Necessary resources including but not limited to equipment, staffing, and medical supplies shall also be provided for the effective functioning of the center.

SECTION 15. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE – if any part of this Ordinance is declared as unconstitutional or unlawful, such declaration shall not affect the other parts or sections hereof that are not declared unlawful or unconstitutional.

SECTION 16. REPEALING CLAUSE - All previous ordinances inconsistent with this Ordinance shall be deemed repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 17. EFFECTIVITY – This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its approval and after compliance with the requirements of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991.

ENACTED, February 06, 2024.

RESOLVED FURTHER, to furnish copies of this Ordinance one to the City Mayor Lucy Torres Gomez; the City Administrator; the City Legal Officer; the City Veterinary Office; ENRO; City Veterinary Office; Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) - Animal Quarantine; OARA; the City Local Government Operations Officer-DILG; and other offices concerned;

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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WE HEREBY CERTIFY to the correctness of the above ordinance.

MARIA ANTONIETA G. CO HAT
Secretary to the
Sangguniang Panlungsod

ROILAND H. VILLASENCIO
SP Member

NOLITO M. QUILANG
SP Member
Majority Floor Leader

REY F. EVANGELISTA
SP Member

PETER M. RODRIGUEZ
SP Member

GREGORIO G. YRASTORZA III
SP Member
Presiding Officer "Pro-Tempore"

JASPER M. LUCERO
SP Member
1st Asst. Majority Floor Leader

MARIA CARMEN JEAN T. RAMA
SP Member

EDMUND B. KIERULF
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BURT J. PADES
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2nd Asst. Majority Floor Leader

LALAINE A. MARCOS
SP Member

ESTEBAN V. LAURENTE
Ex-Officio SP Member
Chapter President
Liga ng mga Barangay ng Ormoc

KRIZEA CAESSANDRA A. MERCADAL
Ex-Officio SP Member
Chapter President
Panlungsod na Pederasyon
ng mga Sangguniang
Kabataan ng Ormoc

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ATTESTED:

LEO CARMELO J. LOCSIN, SR.
City Vice Mayor & Presiding Officer

APPROVED:

LUCY TORRES GOMEZ
City Mayor
13 FEB 2024
(Date)