



# MINUTES

## BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2012 – 10:00 AM

Los Angeles Zoo  
Grand Room  
5333 Zoo Drive  
Los Angeles, California 90027

*“Nurturing  
wildlife  
and enriching  
the human  
experience”*

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Antonio R. Villaraigosa  
Mayor

Tom LaBonge  
Council Member  
4<sup>th</sup> District

Zoo Commissioners

Karen B. Winnick  
President

Bernardo Silva  
Vice President

Elaine Baylor

Sue Downing, D.V.M.

Kimberly Marteau

Richard Lichtenstein  
ex officio member

John R. Lewis  
Zoo Director

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen B. Winnick  
Kimberly Marteau  
Bernardo Silva  
Sue Downing, DVM

### VISITORS

Rex Link  
Jim Bickhart  
Miguel Santana  
Delilah Puche  
Robin Engel

### MEMBERS ABSENT

Elaine Baylor

### EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT

Richard Lichtenstein

### COMMISSION STAFF

John R. Lewis  
Lisa Gerencser

### MEDIA

None signed in.

### CITY ATTORNEY LIAISON

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### AGENDA ITEM 1 CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:09 AM.

### AGENDA ITEM 2

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 27, 2012

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes of November 27, 2012 Commissioner Silva so moved, Commissioner Downing seconded and the motion passed.



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**AGENDA ITEM 3**  
**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**AGENDA ITEM 4**  
**CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT ON REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE LOS ANGELES ZOO**

Miguel Santana, City Administrative Officer (CAO), gave a status update on the RFP for Alternative Management of the LA Zoo. The Los Angeles City Council directed the CAO to release an RFP as well as work with Zoo management and Labor on a “working group” that would be discussing revenue generating ideas and other ways for the Zoo to be more self-sufficient. Two bidders responded to the RFP; GLAZA was the bidder that was chosen to engage in further discussions with CAO and City Attorney. Due to legal challenges GLAZA ended its negotiations with the City. Mr. Santana sent a memo to the Mayor and Herb Wesson, Council President, on November 16, 2012 detailing the status of the RFP. The CAO will be resuming meetings with the “working group” and will report back to Council before the Mayor’s budget is released on April 20, 2013.

A lengthy discussion between the CAO and Zoo Commissioners ensued. Major discussion points were as follows:

- Case law and the City Charter prevented GLAZA from obtaining the kind of governance they foresaw with the change of management
- Still opportunities to expand current partnership with GLAZA through MOUs; change MOUs from yearly to five years was one suggestion
- City’s current and future budget deficits discussed; currently \$1 million for the Zoo from the General Fund, but that will most likely drop to \$0 in the next fiscal year
- Discussion of proposed ballot measure for Sales Tax increase (contributions made directly to the General Fund, not dedicated to individual departments)
- Currently the Planning and Land Use Committee is reviewing the possibility of making the Zoo its own sign district; this would lead to increased revenue through sponsorships. The PLUM committee will be discussing this at their January 22, 2013 meeting. The CAO suggested the Commission write a letter or go to the meeting to show their support for the Zoo
- CAO noted the Commission could invite the City Attorney to have a Closed Session discussion on the City Attorney’s legal opinions related to governance, but the CAO was unable to share that confidential report in a public meeting
- CAO discussed the privatization of the Los Angeles Convention Center; discussion about why the same transition is not applicable for the Zoo

**PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEM 4**

Charles Leon with SEIU noted the LA Zoo should remain public. Mr. Leon suggested a Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) to be created to discuss staff ideas for revenue generation and better business practices. The relationship between the Zoo and GLAZA should be strengthened.

Cheryl Parisi with AFSCME discussed being a part of the “working group” that would be reconvening shortly to complete their report for Council. Ms. Parisi discussed the addition of a Business Intelligence System as well as the use of Municipal Marketing. Commission President Winnick asked if once the report was completed Ms. Parisi would come back to discuss that report. Ms. Parisi agreed.

Jason Elias with SEIU discussed the possible privatization of the Convention Center. Mr. Elias also discussed the unions stepping in to assist the Golf Division of Recreation and Parks with revenue generation.

## **AGENDA ITEM 5**

### **OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY/LAPD OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2013**

Zoo Director John Lewis noted that as of January 1, 2013 there will no longer be an oversight committee as Office of Public Safety will no longer exist and that office will be absorbed by LAPD.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6**

### **GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

#### **A. Capital Projects**

Rebecca Abano with the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) gave a brief update on the following Zoo projects accompanied with a slide show of the work progression:

- *Rainforest of the Americas* (ROA) project is 53% complete.
- Working on upper exhibits, Harpy eagle, tapir and giant otter exhibits
- BOE will be asking the Zoo Bond Oversight Committee (ZBOC) for a completion date extension of September 30, 2013. BOE is hoping to use a balance in Prop CC funds to complete a jaguar exhibit addition to the ROA

John Lewis will report back to the Commission on what the ZBOC decides regarding funding.

#### **B. Animal Transactions**

Ian Recchio Curator of Reptiles discussed the latest animal transactions. Some highlights include:

- Received a confiscated female San Esteban chuckwalla
- A breeding pair of Japanese serow will be arriving
- Will be receiving a breeding pair of white faced sakis

#### **C. GLAZA Update**

GLAZA President Connie Morgan gave a quick update on GLAZA activities.

- Received a \$800,000 estate gift to be used for volunteer programs
- November 2013 will mark GLAZA's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; beginning stages of planning events for the anniversary

Ms. Morgan reiterated the CAO's comment of working together.

**D. Zoo Director Reports**

Zoo Director John Lewis commented on the following:

- Attendance and revenue were ahead for November but have fallen behind for December due to the rainy weather
- Male chimpanzee has been returned to the LA Zoo troop
- Renovation of the lion exhibit continues
- Work on the birdshow continues
- The Zoo will have to make some changes to its budget since the governance change will not be taking place

**AGENDA ITEM 6**

**OLD BUSINESS**

Vice President Silva asked if the exhibits that had been closed in LAIR are now all operational. Mr. Lewis noted the exhibits are fine; staff is waiting for animals to be cleared from quarantine.

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no more business to come before, President Winnick motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Downing so moved and Commissioner Marteau seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 11:36 AM.

ATTEST:

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PRESIDENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
SECRETARY