



# MINUTES

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

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2013 – 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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Eric Garcetti  
Mayor

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

Zoo Commissioners

Karen B. Winnick  
President

Bernardo Silva  
Vice President

Sue Downing, D.V.M.

Yasmine Johnson

Marc Mitchell

Richard Lichtenstein  
ex officio member

John R. Lewis  
Zoo Director

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen B. Winnick  
Bernardo Silva  
Sue Downing, DVM  
Yasmine Johnson

### VISITORS

Rex Link

### MEMBERS ABSENT

Marc Mitchell

### EX OFFICIO MEMBER ABSENT

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 10:08 AM.

### AGENDA ITEM 2

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 19, 2013

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes of November 19, 2013. Commissioner Downing so moved, Commission Vice President Silva seconded and the motion passed.

### AGENDA ITEM 3

#### GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None



An Equal  
Employment  
Opportunity  
Affirmative  
Action  
Employer

Accredited by the Association  
of Zoos and Aquariums

Accredited by the American  
Association of Museums

Member of the California  
Association of Zoos and Aquariums

**AGENDA ITEM 4**  
**PRESENTATION – BROWN ACT**

Item tabled for future meeting when all Commissioners are present.

**AGENDA ITEMS 5**  
**PRESENTATION – DUTTENHAVER EARTHWATCH TRIP - THAILAND**

Sean den Bok, Curator of Education, gave an overview of this past summer's Earthwatch trip to Thailand. The group of six high school students and two chaperons traveled to the northern most part of Thailand; the Mekong river area referred to as the "Golden Triangle" as that is where Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos meet. The group worked with Think Elephant International. This experience was different than previous Earthwatch trips as the group was able to not only do field research, but they had direct interaction with elephants, the Mahouts, and local people. The group had daily interaction with 5 – 12 elephants studying elephant intelligence and social interactions. The hotel that the research is based out of is called Anantara.

Mary Van Dyke, a senior at North Hollywood Zoo Magnet spoke about her experience while in Thailand. This trip has inspired Mary to study Zoology and possibly join the Peace Corps.

Jennie Becker, Curator of Mammals, was the other chaperon on the trip. Ms. Becker stated that even though she already had 20 years of experience working with elephants, this trip altered her view and gave her an even better understanding of elephants. Discussion about research being done and the possibility of utilizing some of the research here at the Zoo. Commission President Winnick asked if there could be presentation in the future specifically on the research techniques being applied here at the Zoo.

Discussion on the process for picking students to attend. Connie Morgan noted that next year's Earthwatch trip will be going to the same place in Thailand.

**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 95% complete.
- Have spent \$163 million on capital projects to date.
- Work continues on ROA – stilt house is mostly complete, visitor paths and shade structures, harpy eagle and giant otter exhibits
- City has approved an open bid process for the jaguar exhibit; should open bidding in January

**B. Animal Transactions**

Susie Kasielke, Curator of Birds discussed the latest animal transactions. Some highlights include:

- Received a female hippo as a companion for our male; she is being quarantined on exhibit
- Reindeer on grounds for Reindeer Romp
- Flamingo chicks have hatched; new chick now on exhibit
- Zoo staff assisted with catching up and transporting Caribbean flamingos from Hollywood Park to Atascadero.

Commissioner Downing asked about keeping reindeer on grounds as a permanent exhibit. Discussion about location not the best for cold weather animals.

**C. GLAZA Update**

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

- GLAZA brought back Reindeer Romp
- Radio ads and billboards up promoting the Zoo
- Received two small gifts for education posters

**D. Zoo Director Reports**

Zoo Director John Lewis commented on the following:

- The Zoo's Business and Marketing Plan and MOU with GLAZA went before a joint committee meeting; Committee members decided to extend MOU for 90 days so they would have time to review everything
- Possible ROA opening in April 2014; during spring break
- Attendance and Revenue continue to be behind projections
- Discussion about the Mayor adding transparency to every department; information about what items the Zoo will place in the public data base.

Commissioner Johnson asked for clarification on Goal 2 in the Business and Marketing Plan. Mr. Lewis noted that it refers to improvements of animal holding and breeding areas of the exhibits.

Discussion about future public comments in Council about the Business and Marketing Plan. Noted public comments were held in committee so there may be no further open discussions for public. Commissioner Johnson suggested everyone write letters to stress the importance of the relationship with GLAZA.

**AGENDA ITEM 9  
OLD BUSINESS**

None

**AGENDA ITEM 10**  
**ADJOURNMENT**

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

ATTEST:

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PRESIDENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
SECRETARY