



# MINUTES

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

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2012 – 10:00 AM

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

*“Nurturing  
wildlife  
and enriching  
the human  
experience”*

Los Angeles Zoo  
5333 Zoo Drive  
Los Angeles  
California 90027  
323/644-4200  
Fax 323/662-9786  
<http://www.lazoo.org>

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

### VISITORS

Rex Link  
Jim Bickhart  
Renee Weitzer  
Luciana Giorgi  
Cheryl Parisi  
Delilah Puche

### MEMBERS ABSENT

Elain Baylor  
Sue Downing, DVM

### EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT

Richard Lichtenstein

### COMMISSION STAFF

John R. Lewis  
Lisa Gerencser

### MEDIA

None signed in.

### CITY ATTORNEY LIAISON

Dov Lesel

### AGENDA ITEM 1 (Taken out of turn due to lack of quorum)

#### CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:23 AM.

### AGENDA ITEM 2 (Taken out of turn due to lack of quorum)

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF OCTOBER 16, 2012

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes of October 16, 2012 Commissioner Silva so moved, Commissioner Marteau seconded and the motion passed.



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 3 (Taken out of turn due to lack of quorum)**

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Julie Butcher with SEIU distributed a Public Records request to the Commission. Ms. Butcher noted that SEIU is the union for the majority of Zoo employees. Ms. Butcher noted that at the top step, Animal Keepers would retire at a salary of \$57,800. SEIU encourages the Zoo Commission to support its workers publically. Ms. Butcher noted the employees look forward to continuing the current Public/Private Partnership with GLAZA.

**AGENDA ITEM 4 (Taken as Item 1)**

**DUTTENHAVER EARTHWATCH TRIP - PERU**

Coral Barreiro, Education Curator, discussed the recent Earthwatch trip to Lima, Peru. The purpose of this trip was to help Peruvian Field Biologists with their population studies on macaws. There were a total of seven high school students and three chaperones from the Zoo. The group embarked from Los Angeles on their 24 hour journey which included planes, buses, and boats. The group arrived at Nauta by boat; interestingly noted that the only way this town can be reached is by plane or boat; they spent 6 days on a boat that had been restored since it was built in 1906. The indigenous people of Nauta are the called Cocama. The students and chaperones met with the Cocama and provided the children of the town with pens, pencils, and paper (all items hard to come by in the remote town with no real power aside from a tiny generator.)

Brandon Honjio, a student from the North Hollywood Zoo Magnet, discussed his Peruvian field experience. This trip left him with a greater appreciation for the environment and conservation efforts.

**AGENDA ITEM 5**

**GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

**A. Capital Projects**

Rebecca Abano with the Bureau of Engineering 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 structures and otter pool
- Anticipate construction completion in May 2013

**B. Animal Transactions**

John Lewis, Zoo Director, discussed the latest animal transactions. Some highlights include:

- Will be receiving Matamata turtles and marine toads
- Cotton top tamarins will be coming in
- Series of exchanges with big horn sheep from various institutes
- Received lowland pacas

Commissioner Marteau asked if there is a plan to obtain lions. Mr. Lewis noted that the Curator has already made initial phone calls and is working on obtaining lions; renovations are currently taking place at the exhibit.

*As of 10:42 am Commissioner Silva left and there was no longer a quorum.*

### **C. GLAZA Update**

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

- The Duttenhaver trip for 2013 will be an Asian elephant study in Thailand
- Received \$750,000 for the naming of the otter building at ROA
- GLAZA took out a full page ad in the *Los Angeles Business Journal* inviting business partners to consider working with the Zoo

### **D. Budget Update**

Denise Verret, Assistant General Manager, gave an overview of the budget for fiscal year 2013/14. The Zoo Department has proposed revenue generating items rather than position reductions. Ms. Verret explained the process of budget hearing that will culminate with the Mayor releasing his final budget on April 20, 2013. Discussion about the Zoo Enterprise Trust Fund with regards to the General Fund. Commissioner Marteau asked if the Commissioners should attend the budget hearings. Mr. Lewis noted the Commissioners could attend if they'd like.

Commission President Winnick mentioned she had been to the St. Louis Zoo and was told that Zoo is "tax run". Mrs. Winnick asked if it was possible for the LA Zoo to also be tax run. Mr. Lewis, discussed the county wide tax that exists in St. Louis.

Ex-Officio Member Lichtenstein asked Mr. Lewis about providing a report to the tax payers on the completion of the capital bond projects. Mr. Lichtenstein noted that GLAZA had paid for the initial ballot initiatives for the bond projects. Mr. Lichtenstein went on to say he's had private discussions with the unions regarding revenue generating ideas; he encourages Zoo management to sit down with unions.

### **E. Media Update**

Jason Jacobs, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, noted that the show "New Girl" filmed an entire episode on Zoo grounds; episode to air on November 27. Mr. Jacobs played a news clip highlighting the Zoo's new dwarf goats.

### **F. Zoo Director Reports**

Zoo Director John Lewis commented on the following:

- Some animal highlights including a clutch of 11 giant horned lizard eggs, birth of a babirusa, and Komodo introductions went well for breeding
- Reproductive Specialist from Germany were at the Zoo at the end of October. The specialists worked with elephants, gorillas, and zebras
- "Minyak" male orangutan died during a normal procedure
- Work on the birdshow continues
- Received notice from Office of the City Administrative Officer (CAO) that discussions regarding privatization have ceased. The Zoo will remain a City asset. The Commissioners noted they were still waiting for a copy of the report from the City Attorney to the CAO stating the legal cause for not moving forward with GLAZA negotiations. Dov Lesel stated he had thought the report

would've have already been provided, but it is a confidential report from his office to the CAO. Commission President Winnick inquired if she should write a letter and to whom she should write it to receive that report. Mr. Lichtenstein noted each Commissioner could contact the Mayor's office directly since they are appointees of the Mayor. Commission President Winnick asked Jim Bickhart, Mayor's office representative, if he could provide a copy of the report. Mr. Bickhart noted that if it was legal to provide a copy he would. President Winnick asked that the City Attorney's report be on the next Commission agenda. Discussion about asking the CAO to attend the meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM 6  
OLD BUSINESS**

President Winnick asked if all the heating elements in LAIR were working; Mr. Lewis noted all LAIR exhibits are working. Commissioner Marteau asked about charging a fee for the Bird Show; Mr. Lewis noted that is being reviewed.

**AGENDA ITEM 7  
ADJOURNMENT**

There being no more business to come before, and without a quorum Commission President Winnick adjourned the meeting at 11:11 AM.

ATTEST:

---

PRESIDENT

---

SECRETARY