



MINUTES

BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2013 – 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>

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

VISITORS

Rex Link
Patricia Whelan

Eric Garcetti
Mayor

MEMBERS ABSENT

Marc Mitchell

Tom LaBonge
Council Member
4th District

EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT

Richard Lichtenstein

Zoo Commissioners

Karen B. Winnick
President

COMMISSION STAFF

John R. Lewis
Lisa Gerencser

MEDIA

None signed in.

Bernardo Silva
Vice President

Sue Downing, D.V.M.

CITY ATTORNEY LIAISON

Dov Lesel

Yasmine Johnson

Marc Mitchell

AGENDA ITEM 1

CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:12 AM.

Richard Lichtenstein
ex officio member

AGENDA ITEM 2

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF OCTOBER 29, 2013

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes of October 29, 2013. Commission Vice President Silva so moved, Commissioner Johnson seconded and the motion passed.

John R. Lewis
Zoo Director

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
SUMMARY OF ORANGUTAN SSP WORKSHOP**

Candace Scilimenti, Senior Animal Keeper, gave an overview of the Orangutan SSP Workshop that was hosted by the LA Zoo. The workshop discussions pertained to both captive and wild orangutans. Ms. Scilimenti highlighted the workshop speakers and round table discussions. There were 130 persons in attendance and the group raised \$10,000 for orangutan conservation.

There was a short discussion about palm oil and how the harvesting of it affects the wild orangutan population. There will be a future presentation to the Commission on palm oil.

**AGENDA ITEM 6
USING OPERANT CONDITIONING TO ENHANCE LIFE OF A SPECIAL NEEDS
ORANGUTAN**

Animal Keeper Nancy Bunn discussed operant conditioning related to the treatment of “Eloise” a 45 year old female who is part of the orangutan group. “Eloise” has mobility and learning issues. Through positive reinforcement and repetitive training “Eloise” now presents her limbs for massage/physical therapy and nail trimming. Zoo construction created an apparatus for her sleeping quarters that allow Keepers better access for training and medical attention. Staff has been working with “Eloise” for the past six years to improve her quality of life; improvement has been noted. Discussion about doing some media on this type of conditioning.

**AGENDA ITEM 7
DISCUSSION – BUSINESS AND MARKETING PLAN**

Zoo Director John Lewis, discussed the three year Business and Marketing Plan (Plan) that was submitted to the City Council and Mayor on November 1, 2013. Mr. Lewis highlighted various areas of the Plan including visitor and employee perceived strengths and weaknesses based on surveys that had been conducted. With the end of the capital projects nearing, the Zoo will be revisiting its Master Plan.

Discussion about making the public more aware of the conservation programs the Zoo participates in; public service announcements or weekly newspaper columns.

Commissioners discussed the General Fund contribution and the need for the City to increase its investment in the Zoo. Questions asked about what happens if GLAZA does not fulfill the achievements laid out in the Marketing and Events MOU; Mr. Lewis noted the MOU would then not be extended.

Membership costs versus general admission costs were discussed. Per John Lewis the Zoo industry is researching the recoup rates; a better rate scale will be implemented. Commissioners also discussed concession reimbursement to the Zoo as noted on page 61 of the Plan; Mr. Lewis clarified that language pertained to special events not food and gift shop concessions. Mr. Lewis also noted that GLAZA will be implementing a way to track their member's visits to the Zoo; currently GLAZA does not track visits made by each member.

Limited entertainment value was noted as a weakness by the public. Discussion about addition of the 4D theatre and adding entertainment to the tram ride. Additionally discussion about extended hours, staffing, healthier food options and need for additional lighting.

AGENDA ITEM 8 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 92% complete.
 - Have spent \$162.5 million on capital projects to date.
 - Work continues on ROA – lily pad walkway, walking paths, and caging
- Discussion on the options being looked at for the jaguar exhibit.

B. Animal Transactions

Jennie Becker, Curator of Mammals discussed the latest animal transactions. Some highlights include:

- Receiving a wallaby that was previously a family pet; will hopefully be used for education/outreach programs
- Received a female howler monkey as a breeding recommendation
- Sugar gliders will be exhibited in the former koala house

C. GLAZA Update

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

- Received \$8,000 from Macy's for ZooCamp
- Received a bequest of \$182,000
- Partnering up for "Giving Tuesday" to take place on December 3

D. Events Update

Kait Hilliard, VP of Marketing for GLAZA to gave an update on Zoo events. Ms. Hilliard commented on the following:

- Partnered with radio station 97.1 on a "scavenger hunt"; promoted via social media
- Return of "Reindeer Romp" for the month of December
- Holiday decorations throughout the Zoo and pictures with Santa Claus available on the weekends in December

E. Zoo Director Reports

Zoo Director John Lewis commented on the following:

- Zoo hosted a two day CA condor workshop
- Attendance and Revenue are below projections; monitoring whether the delayed opening of ROA, weather, or if price resistance is a factor
- Partnering with the Bureau of Sanitation (BOS) to receive discounted hay for feed; BOS has a farm. Zoo and BOS received an award for this partnership

**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 11:58 AM.

ATTEST:

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY