



# MINUTES

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

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2015 – 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>

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

Tyler Kelley

Marc Mitchell

Richard Lichtenstein  
ex officio member

John R. Lewis  
Zoo Director

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen B. Winnick  
Bernardo Silva  
Yasmine Johson  
Tyler Kelley  
Marc Mitchell

### EX OFFICIO MEMBER

Richard Lichtenstein

### COMMISSION STAFF

John R. Lewis  
Denise Tamura

### CITY ATTORNEY LIAISON

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### AGENDA ITEM 1

#### CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:02AM.

### AGENDA ITEM 2

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF DECEMBER 16, 2014

Commission President Winnick moved to approved the minutes of December 16, 2014. Commission Vice President Silva so moved, Commissioner Mitchell 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 – UAKARIS AND GIANT OTTER DIET AND DEN SEARCH IN  
NORTH EASTERN PERU**

Ms. Jennie Becker, Zoo Curator of Mammals, summarized her trip to North Eastern Peru last spring which provided an opportunity to study uakaris and giant otters in their native habitat. One of the purposes of the trip was to try and locate and identify otter dens and the types of fish the giant otters eat. Several otter dens were found with signs of recent activity but no giant otters were seen. Another part of the trip focused on trying to obtain facial pictures of red uakaris to compare coloration to determine if the pigmentation correlates to reproduction or health. There are no studies that support this work at this time. Finally, part of the study focused on identifying food red uakaries eat and how to replicate these items with our captive group. It is unclear if wild uakaries have iron storage issues like the captive group here. It is hopeful by introducing similar foods found in the wild that it may help with the iron storage issues. Field staff in Peru also need to be trained on how to train the uakaries to get blood samples. Upon Ms. Becker's return, she encouraged Ms. Dani Cremona, Animal Keeper, to apply for the Sloan Grant to go down to Peru to discuss operant conditioning for red uakaries.

**AGENDA ITEM 5  
PRESENTATION – SLOAN GRANT RECIPIENT – RED UAKARI AND PILPINTUWASI**

Ms. Dani Cremona, Animal Keeper, was the recipient of this year's Sloan Grant for Advanced Animal Keepers Studies. Ms. Cremona has been the Animal Keeper for the Zoo's red uakaries for the past ten years. While in Peru, she worked with Pilpintuwasi staff to start operant conditioning with positive reinforcement for two male and seven female red uakaries at their facility. This facility has several species that they care for in addition to red uakaris. One of the first training techniques she worked with staff was to swab uakaries to test for parasites and as a precursor to hormone training. As a result of this trip, there was success in external swabbing, she provided a training plan to staff, along with training articles and staff will continue the training behaviors she taught them. Another part of this trip focused on assisting staff to enhance their behavioral enrichment program and she provided them with new ideas to keep the uakaries and other animals at the facility stimulated.

Commissioner Johnson inquired how the Peruvians are being educated about the wild pet trade and conservation efforts. It was noted that several village communities are aware of these issues along with new efforts the Peruvian government are taking to educate their communities about these issues.

**AGENDA ITEM 6  
ZOO LIGHTS SUMMARY**

Ms. Kait Hilliard, GLAZA's Vice President of Marketing, provided a brief summary about the Zoo's inaugural Zoo Lights Program. The program was over a 36 day period from November 28, 2014 - January 4, 2015. Tickets were sold on-line through GLAZA. Approximately 177,000 visitors attended which was above the projected attendance of 105,000. Ticket sales, concessions, site rental and Carousel revenue all exceeded projections. Staff is still finalizing expenses and revenue costs, but it is anticipated that

gross revenue will be over \$2.5 million dollars. Approximately 73% of tickets were sold online and 78% were adult ticket sales. Only 2.5% members utilized their discount, but they could have also visited during the early bird discount offer. It appears that most Zoo Lights visitors have not been to the Zoo previously. The highest attendance night was 9,559.

Commission President Winnick inquired about the future of this program. Ms. Hilliard replied that there is a five-year plan to expand this event to other areas of the Zoo and incorporate lessons learned from this first year.

Commissioner Johnson inquired if there would be an opportunity to incorporate animal interactions for this program. Ms. Hilliard noted that the Zoo maintained the focus of this program was on the lighting displays, but she can work with Animal Care staff to determine if this could be a feature for the future to consider.

## **AGENDA ITEM 7 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:

- Through December 2014 \$167 million has been spent on capital projects
- Construction on the jaguar exhibit is 90% complete.
- Jaguar exhibit expected completion is the end of this month. There have been some sub-contractor issues that the Contractor is experiencing.

Ex-Officio Member Lichtenstein inquired if there would be a final report issued once all bond projects are completed. Ms. Abano replied it is standard for BOE to complete a final report on projects once completed.

### **B. Animal Transactions**

Beth Schaefer, General Curator, discussed the latest animal transactions. Some highlights include:

- Obtaining breeding pairs of rock hyrax
- Two female markhor are moving out of the collection
- Male Masai giraffe will be transferred to a facility in Texas
- Tufted deer will be moving out of the collection. Visayan warty pigs, currently on exhibit in the Australia section of the Zoo, will move to the hillside area. These moves will allow the Zoo to prepare exhibiting Tasmanian devils later this year.

### **C. GLAZA Update**

Connie Morgan, GLAZA President, provided a brief update on GLAZA activities:

- Received a donation for ZooPals program
- Received \$10,000 for Zoo Lights promotion
- Received \$50,000 for orangutan mesh project

**D. Zoo Director Reports**

Zoo Director, John Lewis, commented on the following:

- New births and hatchings at the Zoo include red-rumped agouti and giant horned lizard.
- “Jabari”, male gorilla, continues to heal from his leg fracture. He will be immobilized tomorrow to check status of fracture and a general health exam.
- Have started replacing mesh at orangutan exhibit. Expect this project to take approximately 5 weeks. More shade is being added along with additional climbing structures.
- Winter Zoo Camp was offered the last week of December with 90% fill rate capacity.
- Exceeded attendance projections for December 2014 and year-to-date. There remains a deficit in revenues received, but staff is working with City personnel to further define revenues at the Zoo.

**A. RFP for Concessions Report**

The Zoo submitted a report back regarding Concession operations at the Zoo. It is anticipated that this will be heard by APHA&R later this month. GLAZA has provided this for decades and currently sub-contracts this operation to Service America. Service America has been a good partner for the past 17 years, but it may be time to look if there is another viable option to provide concessions. It is an opportune time to review this since GLAZA’s contract with Service America ends next year. There was a brief discussion about the process should the City decide to operate Concessions.

**AGENDA ITEM 8  
OLD BUSINESS**

None

**AGENDA ITEM 9  
ADJOURNMENT**

There being no more business to come before, President Winnick motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Johnson so moved and Commission Vice President Silva seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 11:38AM.

ATTEST:

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PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY