



## MINUTES

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

TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2016 – 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  
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Los Angeles  
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Fax 323/662-9786  
<http://www.lazoo.org>

Eric Garcetti  
Mayor

David E. Ryu  
Council Member  
4<sup>th</sup> District

Zoo Commissioners

Karen B. Winnick  
President

Bernardo Silva  
Vice President

Tyler Kelley

Yasmine Johnson

Marc Mitchell

Richard Lichtenstein  
ex officio member

John R. Lewis  
Zoo Director

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen B. Winnick  
Tyler Kelley  
Marc Mitchell  
Yasmine Johnson

#### VISITORS

Rex Link

#### MEMBERS ABSENT

Bernardo Silva

#### EX OFFICIO MEMBER ABSENT

Richard Lichtenstein

#### COMMISSION STAFF

John R. Lewis  
Lisa Gerencser

#### MEDIA

None signed in.

#### CITY ATTORNEY LIAISON

Dov Lesel

#### AGENDA ITEM 1

##### CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM.

#### AGENDA ITEM 2

##### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF MAY 17, 2016

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes of May 17, 2016  
Commissioner Johnson so moved, Commissioner Mitchell seconded and the  
motion passed.

#### AGENDA ITEM 3

##### GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Four women representing Elephant Guardians spoke. Highlights of their comments  
as follows:

Kiersten Cluster: Ms. Cluster stated her credentials then discussed the history of  
“Billy” the Asian elephant. Believes “Billy” has been suffering mental and sexual  
distress for his entire captive life. Zoo is torturing a sentient being.



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Laurie Weber: Ms. Weber stated she is a clinical Psychologist who works with people who have suffered sexual trauma. "Billy" is experiencing sexual trauma. His conditions are the equivalent of a human living in a closet for 27 years.

Deborah Elliot: Ms. Elliot stated she was a part-time special education teacher. Gave examples of uses of animatronics and holograms as to create a "virtual" zoo. Stated kids prefer the "virtual" ideas more than seeing actual animals. Zoos should be sanctuaries and the money used for conservation of the world's natural environment.

Judith Powell – Ms. Powell stated she wasn't sure what the Commissioners credentials. Not sure how this Commission sits by while the Zoo abuses its animals. Stated elephants need thousands of acres to roam. Send Billy to a sanctuary.

Group tried to engage Commission in discussion; Brown Act explained regarding Agenda items.

#### **NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

No Comments

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4 - PRESENTATION – SLOAN GRANT RECIPIENT – BALI MYNAH PROGRAM IN PEJENG BALI**

Animal Keeper Lori Rogalski discussed her trip to Bali and the conservation efforts taking place there. Highlights included:

- The Bali Mynah (or Bali Starling) have gone from a population of 10 to 100 in just a few years because of this facility's work
- Refuge originally for orangutans but now there is an emphasis on birds as well
- Most animals are rehabbed and sent back to the wild
- Conservation group has gotten the local villagers involved in the protection and release of these animals. Education has helped reduce poaching.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5 – PRESENTATION – CDC PARK PLANS**

Vice President of GLAZA, Genie Vasels, discussed the preliminary plans for the CDC park special event space

- The space will accommodate small groups up to 3,000 people
- Rios Design is completing the design options
- Park space is currently used for camps or classes; has potential for more uses
- Space was cleared for the Dinosaur exhibit giving everyone a better idea of the true size of the space
- Space can be broken into multiple use space or entire space for one large event
- Initial cost estimate is \$3.5 million; have already secured donor for naming opportunities
- Goal to have space completed in 2017

President Winnick asked that Ms. Vasels provide her report to Commission Vice President Silva.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6 – COMMISSION TO ACKNOWLEDGE CITY SERVICE OF CURATOR OF BIRDS SUSIE KASIELKE**

Commission President Winnick acknowledged Curator of Birds, Susie Kasielke, for her over 30 years in the Zoo industry. Ms. Kasielke is an avian specialist and has lent her services all over the world holding egg/incubating training sessions. Ms. Kasielke is also responsible for overseeing the Animal Keeper class which most of our Animal Care staff graduated from. One of the greatest achievements of Ms. Kasielke's career is the repopulation of the CA condor. Discussion about the condor program ensued. Commissioner Johnson thanked Ms. Kasielke for all she has done for the LA Zoo.

## **AGENDA ITEM 7 – CITY BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 16/17**

Zoo Director John Lewis gave an overview of the Zoo Department's adopted budget. The Zoo Department's budget is \$20.3 million with no monies coming from the General Fund. Zoo gained five (5) positions this fiscal year. Based on the new budget, the Zoo is expected to bring in 1.8 million visitors; this includes nighttime events. First year without an admissions increase. Adding a giraffe feeding to increase visitor's connections with animals. There will also be some Department reorganization by placing Custodial and Ground Maintenance Divisions back under Administration as it is a function of the guest experience. Continuing work on the Master Plan.

## **AGENDA ITEM 8**

### **GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

#### **A. Animal Transactions**

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

- Eastern tiger salamander going to the Aquarium of the Pacific
- Received box turtles through a confiscation; hoping to use turtles as outreach animals
- Blue macaw has laid eggs
- Bringing in another ocelot for breeding purposes

#### **B. GLAZA Update**

GLAZA VP Genie Vasels gave an update on GLAZA activities:

- Have received funds from a donor for CDC park upgrade
- Donor purchased a livestock vehicle for Zoo staff
- Another donor will be taking over the Sloan Grant to continue the great work out keepers get to do in the field
- Beastly Ball raised \$1.1 million with about 700 persons in attendance. GLAZA staff now looking to change the layout of the event especially in honor of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year
- Raised \$23,000 during live auction for new rhino and hippo flooring

#### **C. GLAZA/Marketing and Events Update**

Kait Hilliard, Vice President of GLAZA gave a fiscal year overview of events and marketing efforts:

- Dinosaur exhibit has increased general attendance by 4%
- There has been a 30% increase in paid attendance
- 7.6% total increase to paid admissions
- Discussion of various events and moving from weekend events to month long events
- Showed the Ad campaign on display at LAX
- Sponsors: 99 cents stores, Disney's "Pete's Dragon", and Solar Optimum

**D. Zoo Director Reports**

Zoo Director John Lewis commented on the following:

- Mayor is supportive of the Zoo as an environmental place and organization
- Zoo Camp began this week
- Art installation for “Save the Drop” campaign located at the Rainforest of the Americas
- May attendance was 8% above projections and 10% above for revenue

**AGENDA ITEM 9**

**OLD BUSINESS**

Commission President Winnick polled the Commissioners and they unanimously agreed to change the July Zoo Commission date to July 26, 2016.

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no more business to come before, President Winnick motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Johnson so moved the meeting be adjourned and Commissioner Mitchell seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 11:24 AM.

ATTEST:

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PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY