



MINUTES

BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2018 – 10:00 AM

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

“Creating dynamic experiences to connect people and animals”

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

Eric Garcetti
Mayor

David E. Ryu
Council Member
4th District

Zoo Commissioners

Karen B. Winnick
President

Bernardo Silva
Vice President

Margot Armbruster

Nicole Chase

Christopher Hopkins

Richard Lichtenstein
ex officio member

John R. Lewis
Zoo Director

MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen B. Winnick
Bernardo Silva
Margot Armbruster
Nicole Chase
Christopher Hopkins

VISITORS

none signed in

EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT

Richard Lichtenstein

COMMISSION STAFF

John R. Lewis
Denise Tamura

MEDIA

none signed in

ZOO GENERAL COUNSEL

Dov Lesel

AGENDA ITEM 1

CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:08AM.

AGENDA ITEM 2

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF JANUARY 16, 2018

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes of January 16, 2018. Commissioner Chase so moved, Commissioner Armbruster seconded and the motion passed.

AGENDA ITEM 3

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None

AGENDA ITEM 4

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

None



An Equal
Employment
Opportunity
Employer

Accredited by the Association
of Zoos and Aquariums

Member of the American
Alliance of Museums

Member of the California Association
of Zoos and Aquariums

AGENDA ITEM 5

PRESENTATION – ORNATO GRANT RECIPIENT – CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF BEARDED VULTURE CONSERVATION IN EUROPE

Chandra David, Lead Animal Keeper/Condors, provided a summary of her participation at the Celebration of 20 Years of Bearded Vulture Conservation in Europe. The bearded vulture is similar in size to California condors and its diet is made up of bones primarily. It is the rarest vulture in the world. Concerns that affect both programs include wildlife poisoning, lead poisoning, food availability and West Nile Virus. The bearded vulture is being reintroduced into the wild after becoming extinct in the wild in 2013. Ms. David was able to exchange knowledge of breeding vultures with other experts from all over the world. She was able to visit and participate at bearded vulture breeding facilities in France and Spain. This trip provided an exchange of information for:

- Egg incubation techniques
- Chick rearing techniques
- Tagging
- Chick release preferences
- Wild nest protocols
- Other ways to contribute

Locals are being educated about bearded vultures so the birds do not die from human interaction. Ms. David thanked Mr. Ornato and the Los Angeles Zoo for allowing her the opportunity to participate in this program.

AGENDA ITEM 6

IBEX MALIGNANT CATARRHAL FEVER (MCF) SUMMARY REPORT

Dr. Lisa Naples, Chief Veterinarian/Director of Animal Health, provided a brief summary of the origin of malignant catarrhal fever (MCF) herpes virus.

- Very little is known about the ibex-associated strain of MCF since it was recently identified.
- Based on lineage, staff is assuming (and it cannot be confirmed) that the ibex strain will behave like goat or sheep-associated MCF in the Caprinae subgroup.
- At the Zoo, 8 duikers and one bongo succumbed to fatal illness due to MCF. Seven ibex were humanely euthanized and submitted for complete necropsies and molecular testing for MCF viruses.
- Through PCR, DNA and c-ELISA testing, all seven ibex tested positive for ibex-associated MCF herpes and specific antibodies.
- Molecular testing confirmed the ibex-associated MCF herpes in 5 animals which confirms ibex were the source of infection.
- Two ibex born to the herd last year did not survive. They were also tested for ibex-associated MCF herpes and were negative which may support the theory that ibex-MCF herpes behaves similarly to the goat herpes, which is not typically transmitted to offspring in the womb.
- Subsequent samples submitted from exotic hoofstock have tested negative and all newborn hoofstock and hoofstock that have been handled for wellness examinations have undergone molecular testing for MCF which has been negative.
- Since the euthanasia of the ibex, all hoofstock have been monitored for signs of illness and all hoofstock transactions were delayed. No clinical signs have been noted and based on the incubation period for sheep-associated MCF viruses, hoofstock transactions can now resume.

- Next steps include working with MCF researchers at the Animal Disease Research Unit at USDA to continue to identify potential MCF risk in the Zoo. Staff is also working other pathologists to continue further investigation of this virus and anticipates peer-reviewed papers will be published with the findings.
- Staff will also be sharing this information with other zoos so that they can identify possible MCF herpes virus within their collection and which species are susceptible to being hosts and negatively affected by the virus.

Commissioner Chase inquired what would cause an animal to shed the virus. Dr. Naples noted that it is unclear what would provoke an animal from being a carrier to actively shed the virus; this is one of the questions she and the pathologists hope to answer. In response to another question, Dr. Naples noted that this MCF virus has been seen in the wild, but it has not been well studied so there is little information.

AGENDA ITEM 7 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION RELATIVE TO COUNCILMEMBER KORETZ'S MOTION 17-0453 REGARDING THE ZOO'S ELEPHANT PROGRAM

Commission President Winnick read a letter that was drafted to Councilmember O'Farrell about the Zoo Commission's opposition of Councilmember Koretz's motion #17-0453 to send Billy to a sanctuary. Commission President Winnick noted she also sent an email to Mayor Garcetti about her opposition to Councilmember Koretz's motion. Commission Vice-President Silva moved to send the letter as written, Commissioner Armbruster seconded and it was unanimously passed.

AGENDA ITEM 8 GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

A. Animal Transactions

General Curator Beth Schaefer thanked the Commission for their support in keeping Billy at the Zoo. Ms. Schaefer discussed the latest animal transactions. Some highlights include:

- Outgoing horned lizards
- Outgoing cape rock lizards
- Outgoing cape thick knee (bird)
- Incoming Raggiana bird of paradise to set up a breeding pair
- Recent births include feather-tailed gliders and a female gerenuk being hand-raised

B. GLAZA Update

GLAZA President Connie Morgan gave an update on GLAZA activities:

- \$500,000 donation for Angela Collier Gardens park
- \$5,000 donation for ZooCamp scholarships

C. Zoo Director Reports

Zoo Director Lewis commented on the following:

- Thanked Zoo Commission for their support in keeping Billy at the Zoo
- Thanked Dominic Ornato for allowing Zoo staff to work out in the field to exchange knowledge

- Have been attending Neighborhood Council meetings to educate them about the Zoo's elephant program. So far, the Councils have been welcoming and seemed to appreciate the opportunity to learn about our program. Councils have also been invited to visit/tour the Zoo and our elephant program so they can see first hand the work that is being done for Billy and the other elephants.
- A protest was held last month with Councilmember Koretz and David Casselman addressing the protesters about their desire to remove Billy from the Zoo and send him to a sanctuary. There is another protest scheduled for this Saturday.
- Attendance and revenue are doing well and are ahead of projections for the year.
- The next Zoo Director Series will feature AZA President (and former USFWS Director) Dan Ashe.
- The Zoo's new Business and Marketing Plan has been included in your Commission packet. This information has also been forwarded to the Mayor and City Council. Will have a presentation before the Commission at next month's meeting.
- The Zoo's Vision Plan (formerly Master Plan) is being printed and a draft should be ready soon.
- Bob Barnes, former Zoo Registrar that retired in 2011, passed away last week. He worked at the Zoo for approximately 40 years starting as an Animal Keeper.

Commission Vice President Silva asked for an update on the Observatory Trailer in the Zoo's far south parking lot. Mr. Lewis replied that he and the General Manager at Recreation and Parks have worked it out and the trailer should be removed within three years.

Commission President Winnick asked for an update on Shaunzi. Mr. Lewis noted that she is being introduced to Jewel at this time. It is a slow process but the cows are making progress.

Mr. Lichtenstein asked about the tram to the Hollywood sign and how it could impact the Zoo. Mr. Lewis noted that staff has been talking with CD#4 regarding this issue. It appears to be a City-wide issue rather than City Department specific.

**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, Vice President Silva so moved the meeting to be adjourned and Commissioner Armbruster seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 11:07AM.

ATTEST:

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY