



# MINUTES

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

TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2019 – 10:00 AM

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

*“Creating dynamic experiences to connect people and animals”*

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Eric Garcetti  
Mayor

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

Zoo Commissioners

Karen B. Winnick  
*President*

Bernardo Silva  
*Vice President*

Margot Armbruster

Christopher Hopkins

Daryl Smith

Richard Lichtenstein  
*ex officio member*

Denise M. Verret  
Chief Executive Officer  
& Zoo Director

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen Winnick  
Bernardo Silva  
Daryl Smith

### VISITORS

Rex Link

### MEMEBERS ABSENT

Margot Armbruster  
Christopher Hopkins

### EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT

Richard Lichtenstein

### COMMISSION STAFF

Denise Verret  
Lisa Gerencser

### MEDIA

None signed in.

### ZOO GENERAL COUNSEL

Dov Lesel

### AGENDA ITEM 1

#### CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:11 AM.

### AGENDA ITEM 2

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF JULY 16, 2019

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes July 16, 2019. Commission Vice President Silva so moved, Commissioner Smith seconded and the motion passed.

### AGENDA ITEM 3

#### GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

No Comments

### NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

No Comments



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#### **AGENDA ITEM 4 - PRESENTATION – Duttenhaver Trip – Conserving Bees and other Pollinators of Costa Rica**

Jess Kohring, Curator of Education, introduced three of the nine students who participated in this field study program. Jenny, a recent graduate of the Zoo Magnet explained nine students comprised of Zoo Magnet students and Zoo student volunteers, along with three Zoo mentors flew to Costa Rica to study pollinators. The Zoo mentors were Renea from Education, Rose from Animal Care, and Gene from GLAZA. The main focus of this field study was to collect specimens for the biologists overseeing this program. Ricardo, another student from the trip, discussed pollinators, focus on flora, and the effects of climate change. The third student to speak, Bella, noted they were in Puerto Jimenez which is near the border of Panama; this area contains 2.5% of the world's biodiverse climate. The three students discussed daily field activities, bonding time, and the impact this trip had on each of them. The students remarked on seeing the natural wildlife which included sloths, scarlet macaws, howler monkeys, and others. The students thanked Ms. Duttenhaver for providing them with this amazing opportunity.

Jess Kohring explained the difficult application and interview process students must go through to be accepted into this program.

President Winnick and Commissioner Smith asked the students how this trip will impact their future careers and what the biggest take away from this experience were. All three students were moved by their experiences. The trip confirmed they all want to be involved in the global solution of combating climate change and saving species.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5 – Recognition of Linda Duttenhaver for Conservation Field Study Grant Program**

President Winnick thanked Ms. Duttenhaver for creating this grant and giving back to young people since 2008 and presented her with an award for this remarkable program. Zoo Director Verret noted that this program changes the lives of the students and she is very grateful for Ms. Duttenhaver's and GLAZA's support. Vice President Silva thanked Ms. Duttenhaver for being a citizen who is committed to the youth of Los Angeles and the future of zoology. Commissioner Smith also thanked Ms. Duttenhaver. Ms. Duttenhaver thanked the Commission and stated she's just happy to help the kids.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6 - PRESENTATION – 2019/20 Marketing Plan**

Kait Hilliard, Vice President of Marketing and Events for GLAZA presented her current fiscal year marketing plan. After a brief overview of the background to GLAZA's marketing plans, Ms. Hilliard discussed the plan. Major aspects of plan are as follows:

- Branding – the zoo is doing better than the AZA average on repeat visitors (80 – 90%). Even though attendance and revenue are the only metric for marketing, GLAZA would still like to increase the zoo's branding.
- Attendance projection for this fiscal year is over 1.8 million visitors with revenue being projected at \$18.7 million.
- Will continue with brand positioning while promoting annual events and nighttime events, more advertising, publicity, social media outreach, and connecting with new ambassadors.
- Plan to improve group sales program.
- Diversity outreach includes programs with LAUSD, LA Recreation and Parks, LA Public Libraries and a trial run of EBT discounts.
- Working on website redesign

President Winnick suggested more partnerships with Los Angeles based major sports teams. Ms. Hilliard explains there is some partnering with the sports teams but that could always be explored further. President Winnick asked that the Marketing Plan presentation be emailed to all Commissioners. Ex Officio Member Lichtenstein asked if this plan was going to be approved by City Council Committee. Zoo Director Verret explained there is no need for this to go before council for approval. Mr. Lichtenstein asked if their staff were already preparing for the World Cup and the Olympics marketing and wondered what we were doing for outreach to an international audience. Mr. Lichtenstein also asked how the zoo is doing on spending per cap; Ms. Hilliard said she have to get back to him with that information. Zoo Director Verret noted that the Zoo's Vision Plan includes international outreach. Commissioner Smith asked about the ethnic make-up of our visitors and wondered if more was being done to bring in visitors from other ethnic backgrounds. Ms. Hilliard noted that our audience is a true reflection of Los Angeles' ethnic demographics and outreach will continue in all communities.

## **AGENDA ITEM 7**

### **GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

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

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

- Received a female Harpy eagle for possible breeding with our male
- Receiving a juvenile male gorilla who will be introduced to our bachelor group
- Outgoing cape porcupine
- Another successful wild release of mountain yellow legged frogs
- Magpie chicks hatched

Commission President Winnick asked about the death of a vulture chick; Ms. Schaefer stated they believed it was attacked by storks in the exhibit.

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

GLAZA President, Tom Jacobson, presented the Commission with new dashboard reports to show GLAZA activity. Mr. Jacobson explained that these reports are two months behind so the Commission was looking at numbers from June 2019 (close of fiscal year). Noted that attendance goal for the year was reached but revenue was just below projections. Less revenue contributors were LAUSD teacher's strike discounts and additional promotional discounts. Vice President Silva thanked GLAZA for providing more detailed reports.

#### **C. Zoo Director Reports**

Zoo Director, Denise Verret, commented on the following:

- The mountain yellow legged frog release is a great conservation effort by the entire reptile staff and an article about the release and program made the front page of the *Los Angeles Times*
- The EIR for the Vision Plan is continuing and is expected to be completed by July 2020
- Discussed Dr. Barbara Natterson, her book signing event, and the reconvening of the zoo's Medical Advisory Board (MAB)
- The contract for EMT services has moved forward and there are now EMT's on grounds every day to help with patron and staff first aid/medical needs

President Winnick asked what the AZA is doing regarding the changes to the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Zoo Director Verret noted the AZA and other organizations contacted the federal government pleading to keep the ESA in place but the current administration repealed

most of the protections within the ESA. Neither the AZA nor other likeminded organizations are authorized to go above federal law. The hope is each state will implement their own protections with the assistance of AZA and environmental groups.

Vice President Silva asked if there was an update on the Observatory trailer and sign district ordinance. Zoo Director Verret noted Recreation and Parks has been allowed to keep the trailer in the Zoo's far south parking lot until they finish renovations at the City Service Yard across the river from the zoo, but she has been in contact with Recreation and Parks to expedite its removal. The sign district requires the Zoo to be its own sign district and we are waiting for the process to generate that request.

President Winnick asked about Council motion to have veterinarians evaluate "Billy". Zoo Director Verret noted we are still waiting for veterinarians to be selected and dates they will be at the Zoo to perform their health evaluations.

**AGENDA ITEM 6**

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no more business to come before, President Winnick motioned to adjourn the meeting; Vice President Silva so moved and Commissioner Smith seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 11:19 AM.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESIDENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
SECRETARY