



**MINUTES**

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

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2019 – 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  
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  
Margot Armbruster

**VISITORS**

Rex Link

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

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 10:05 AM.

**AGENDA ITEM 2**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF OCTOBER 15, 2019**

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes October 15, 2019. Commissioner Armbruster so moved, Vice President Silva seconded and the motion passed.

**AGENDA ITEM 3**

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

No Comments

**NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

No Comments



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Association of Zoos and Aquariums

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4 – PRESENTATION – Retail Items for a Cause**

Brent Heinisch, General Manager for Service Systems America (SSA), gave an overview of how the Zoo's concessionaire is making a difference with sustainable retail items. Highlights included:

- SSA is the nationwide leader for zoo and aquarium concessions. The company's mission is
  - Stopping waste from the start
  - Transforming the Industry
  - Supporting partners for a sustainable future
- Since 1983 the LA Zoo has not provided lids or straws for beverages; this equates to over 14 million tons of plastic not in circulation or landfills
- New plush animals sold are now made from recycled water bottles but the plush animals themselves are also recyclable. These plush will be sold across the nation beginning in 2020
- Utilizing can and aluminum bottles for water sales
- Items for a cause include
  - Animal figurines made in Kenya (Fair Trade)
  - Clothing and accessories by Marquet a Fair-Trade business in Vietnam
  - Beads for Life made in Uganda
  - Kastifel is a company that makes clothing from recycled water bottles. Six bottles per shirt. SSA hopes to implement this technology in their staff uniforms

Commissioners commended Mr. Heinisch and SSA for the dedication to messaging and sustainability. Ex-Officio member Lichtenstein asked about the status of the new concessions agreement; GLAZA President Jacobson stated it's waiting to be executed.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5 – PRESENTATION – Ornato Grant – Vulpro Vulture Conservation Program in South Africa**

Animal Keeper Katie Vincent was one of this year's Ornato Grant recipients. Ms. Vincent traveled to South Africa to do field work with vultures at Vulpro. Highlights of her month-long experience included:

- Spending 24 hours a day with multiple vulture species; mainly Cape vultures
- Community involvement helps with work at Vulpro; local farmers donate pig carcasses for vulture feeding
- The facility provides a "Vulture Restaurant" where wild vultures can also feed
- Vulpro rehabilitates and releases vultures back into the wild; Ms. Vincent assisted staff at Vulpro with husbandry skills
- At Vulpro, staff remove eggs and replace them with "dummy" eggs to insure more viable hatchlings through incubation. Once birds have hatched they are taken back to the nest and the fake egg is removed

Commissioner Armbruster asked about the bird's sense of smell and Ms. Vincent explained the birds mostly rely on eye sight for the feeding rather than scent.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6**

##### **GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

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

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

- Four Van Der Ducken hornbills hatched
- Receiving crested fireback pheasants
- Receiving pygmy falcons

**B. GLAZA Update**

GLAZA President, Tom Jacobson, provided the following update on GLAZA:

- Have raised \$466,000 in restricted funds
- LA Zoo may partner with 2024 Pacific Standard Time art installation as a mural site
- Membership is behind projections for the year
  - On target for attendance and slightly behind on revenue for the year

**C. EVENTS AND MARKETING Update**

Kait Hilliard, Vice President of GLAZA gave the following events and marketing update:

- Zoo Lights opened November 14. New contractor this year and new discounted tickets available
- Played the new television ad for Zoo Lights
- Social Media already having positive response to the event
- Advance ticket sales are ahead of last year
- Boo at the Zoo happened the entire month of October and was a successful, more immersive experience this year
- Boo's attendance was on par with previous years but revenue increased

Mr. Lichtenstein and Ms. Hilliard thanked the Special Events team for this year's Zoo Lights

**D. Zoo Director Reports**

Zoo Director, Denise Verret, commented on the following:

- Received a male gorilla that will be part of our bachelor group; he is currently in quarantine
- CBS National Morning News will be doing a piece on the LA Zoo's work with the CA condor; air date TBD
- Relunched the Medical Advisory Board (MAB) with a reception on November 12; there are currently 50 members on the reconvened board
- Ms. Verret was in Buenos Aires, Argentina earlier this month to attend the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) conference
- Work continues on the Vision Plan. EIR still slated to be released July 2020. Zoo will work with Cultural Affairs Department to have arts plan incorporated in Vision Plan rather than adding the arts portion at the end of the project

**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 Armbruster so moved and Vice President Silva seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 11:04 AM.

ATTEST:

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PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY