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

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

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
AGENDA ITEM 4 – PRESENTATION – Retail Items for a Cause
Brent Heinisch, General Manger for Service Systems America (SSA), gave an overview of how the Zoo’s concessionaire is making a difference with sustainable retail items. Highlight’s 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
  - Kastlhel 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
  o 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
• Relaunched 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  SECRETARY