MINUTES
BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS
OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
VIRTUAL MEETING*
TUESDAY, July 21, 2020 – 10:00 AM

* IN CONFORMITY WITH THE GOVERNOR’S EXECUTIVE ORDER N-29-20 (MARCH 17, 2020) AND DUE TO CONCERNS OVER COVID-19, THIS BOARD MEETING WAS HELD ENTIRELY TELEPHONICALLY VIA GOOGLE MEET.

“Creating dynamic experiences to connect people and animals”

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Eric Garcetti
Mayor

David E. Ryu
Council Member
4th 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
Margot Armbruster
Daryl Smith
Bernardo Silva

VISITORS
No response

MEMBERS ABSENT
Christopher Hopkins

EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT
Richard Lichtenstein

COMMISSION STAFF
Denise Verret
Denise Tamura

MEDIA
No response

ZOO GENERAL COUNSEL
Steve Houchin

AGENDA ITEM 1
CALL TO ORDER
Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM.

AGENDA ITEM 2
APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF June 16, 2020
Commission President Winnick moved to approve June 16, 2020 minutes. Commission Vice President Silva so moved, Commissioner Armbruster seconded, and the motion passed.

AGENDA ITEM 3
GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT
No Comments

LOBBYING NOTICE
No Comments

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
No Comments

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AGENDA ITEM 4
ELECTION OF COMMISSION OFFICERS
Vice President Silva nominated President Winnick to continue as the Commission President and Commissioner Armburster seconded. By unanimous vote, Mrs. Winnick was re-elected as the Commission’s President. President Winnick nominated Vice President Silva to continue as the Commission Vice President and Commissioner Armburster seconded. By unanimous vote, Mr. Silva was re-elected as the Commission’s Vice President.

AGENDA ITEM 5
AUSTRALIAN HERPETOLOGY CONFERENCE SUMMARY & PERENTIE FIELD WORK
Ian Recchio, Curator of Reptiles, Amphibians and Fish, provided a summary of the Australian Herpetology Conference he participated in last year. The Zoo has five species of varanids (monitor lizards) – Komodo dragon, Phillipine water monitor, Gray’s monitor (butaan), Mertens’ water monitor and perentie lizard.

In addition to participating in a panel to discuss Komodo dragon husbandry and reproduction, he also presented three papers while at the conference:
- Komodo Dragon Reproduction and Management at Los Angeles Zoo
- Successful Blood Collecting Technique for Sex Determination of Incubating Komodo Dragon Eggs at Los Angeles Zoo
- Reproduction of Rare, Frugivorous Monitor Varanus olivaceus (butaan)

After the Conference, Mr. Recchio was able to go into the field with research biologists working with perentie lizards. He was able to track and assist with capture and data research for this species. He provided expertise in capturing these animals with minimal disruption to the field biologists. By observing these lizards in their native habitat, he is able to provide better husbandry for the animals in our care.

AGENDA ITEM 6
GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS
A. Animal Updates
Beth Schaefer, General Curator, noted the loans listed on the report have been cancelled due to transportation issues from COVID-19 pandemic emergency. Staff has been working to continue animal transfers as they are able to do so with transportation issues.

Dr. Dominique Keller, Chief Veterinarian, provided additional information about the galah death.

B. GLAZA Update
Tom Jacobson, GLAZA President, provided the following update on GLAZA:
- Restricted funding has been negatively impacted by COVID-19
- Continue to receive funds for SCAN program and Angela Collier Gardens
- Membership, attendance and revenue have been negatively impacted by COVID-19
- COVID-19 and Zoo closures have affected staffing, some have been laid off or furloughed and remaining staff are taking 10% salary reduction
- Spring Appeal continues to be successful with approximately $270,000 received to date
- Meeting with staff to discuss supporting restrictive grants for Conservation and Learning & Engagement divisions
- Have selected firm to assist with feasibility study for vision plan campaign
- Have appointed four new Board of Trustees this past fiscal year
C. Zoo Director Reports

Denise Verret, Zoo Director, provided an update on the following:

- Zoo remains closed due to COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency
- Staff continues to modify the Zoo in anticipation of the Zoo’s reopening
- Learning & Engagement have been providing virtual field trips for LAUSD
- Participating as a site for Recreation & Parks’ Summer childcare program
- California condors were spotted in Sequoia National Park. Two of the six birds spotted hatched here at the Zoo
- Jess Kohring, from Learning & Engagement Division, has been selected as the Zoo’s Director of Equity Programs and will be working on social and racial justice in addition to inclusion and equity opportunities

In response to Ex-Officio Member Lichtenstein’s inquiry about revenue generating projects, Ms. Verret noted that any possible revenue generating projects will be carefully considered, but may not be feasible due to limited resources. She and GLAZA President Jacobson continue to meet regularly to discuss these possibilities.

Vice President Silva inquired about the status of the EIR for the Vision Plan. Ms. Verret noted progress continues and there will be a draft project description soon to share and completion is expected in the fall, so it remains on schedule.

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; Commissioner Vice President Silva so moved and Commissioner Armbruster seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 10:43AM.

ATTEST:

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PRESIDENT  SECRETARY