MINUTES
BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS
OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
VIRTUAL MEETING*
TUESDAY, August 18, 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 ZOOM.

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

EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT
Richard Lichtenstein

COMMISSION STAFF
Denise Verret
Lisa Gerencser

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 JULY 21, 2020
Commission President Winnick moved to approve July 21, 2020 minutes. Commission Vice President Silva so moved, Commissioner Armbruster seconded, and the motion passed.

AGENDA ITEM 3
GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT
No Comments

LOBBING NOTICE
No Comments

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
No Comments
AGENDA ITEM 4
LOS ANGELES ZOO – A COMMUNITY RESOURCE
Dan Keeffe, Director of Learning and Engagement (L&E), provided an overview of all the community outreach work staff has done during the Zoo’s closure. The main focus of L&E is to foster lasting relationships between communities, animals and nature; with this as the guiding principal staff implemented creative ways to keep the community engaged. From mid-March through April, children were engaging in much more screen time than actual activities and creative learning. L&E staff utilized this time to reimagine engagement and created the following website (www.lazoo.org) content:

- **Nature Tries** – L&E staff created videos from their homes showing various projects children/parents could engage in rather than just watch. Activities were created so they could be done regardless of a person's vicinity to outdoors. Through GLAZA marketing efforts, these “Nature Tries” were shared by PBS SoCal for an even further reach.
- **Virtual Field Trips** – These can be used by anyone but were set up with the intent of teachers being able to utilize the Zoo for continued learning and engagement. The virtual field trip allows user to click on animal and watch their behaviors while also being promoted with questions for children.
- **Zoo Camplettes** – being unable to host Zoo Camp, staff created “Camplettes” which are online pamphlets that contain various activities that parents and children can engage in; each activity describes the level of parent engagement making it even easier for parents to decide which activities to utilize.
- **LAUSD Continued Relationship** – Zoo was utilized by LAUSD as part of their STEAM summer school program for third graders. L&E staff also continued to provide content for the LAUSD Migrant Program.
- **Summer Play LA** – The Mayor picked the LA Zoo to be one of the child care sites for “Summer Play LA”. Staff were able to provide a unique child care experience to 79 children over the course of 6 weeks.

Commission President Winnick thanked Mr. Keeffe and his staff for their amazing work.

AGENDA ITEM 5
GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS
A. Animal Updates
Beth Schaefer, General Curator, discussed animal transactions. These included:
- Outgoing - meerkat, mountain yellow-legged frog, serval, Grey’s monitor and colobus monkey
- Catalina rattlesnakes and mountain yellow-legged frog have hatched

Vice President Silva asked about the chimpanzee death. Dr. Keller explained the 29 year old female chimpanzee had not been doing well. After a scan it was discovered she had several clots. During surgery it was determined her illness was too advanced for her to be saved. Still awaiting official necropsy results.

B. GLAZA Update
Tom Jacobson, GLAZA President, provided the following update on GLAZA:
- Received $100,000 for restricted accounts
- Conservation and the Angela Collier Gardens are the focus of fundraising
- Membership is down to 45,000 and with the extended memberships there will be limited revenue from membership once we reopen
- The fiscal year ended poorly for Admissions due to the COVID pandemic, but
concessions did well through March 13

- Currently working with Zoo Director on how to utilize our parking lot for revenue generating partnerships and how to possibly host smaller events

Ex-Officio Member Lichtenstein asked if GLAZA would be hosting Zoo Lights this year. Mr. Jacobson responded that most local attractions have canceled their holiday programs due to uncertainty of the pandemic and limited resources.

C. **Zoo Director Reports**

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

- Zoo will be reopening in a few weeks so that is staff’s primary focus
- Opening with limited timed ticketed capacity
- Continued closure of indoor spaces and high touch areas
- New signage, directions, and a larger staff presences on grounds
- Working on a reopening visitor video that will show the new zoo experience
- Participated in two interviews. First with Channel 35 and the second with Carla Hall from LA Times and Spectrum News One. Discussed the zoo closure, conservation, and first year as Zoo Director

Vice President Silva thanked Director Verret for hard work on getting the Zoo reopened.

President Winnick asked that the Director’s interviews be sent to Commissioners. President Winnick asked what percentage capacity the Zoo will open with. Director Verret noted we will be at 25% capacity.

Ex-Officio Member Lichtenstein asked about utilizing the parking lot to expand the zoo experience; Director Verret noted that had not been discussed but open to ideas.

Commissioner Armbruster asked about selling face masks with our animals on them. Zoo Director Verret stated that had already happened with the online shop. Tom Jacobson noted that SSA began selling items online several weeks ago and that face masks are the number one selling item.

**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 Armbruster so moved and Commissioner Smith seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 10:46AM.

ATTEST:

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PRESIDENT  SECRETARY