



MINUTES

BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

TUESDAY, December 17, 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
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
Bernardo Silva
Daryl Smith
Christopher Hopkins

VISITORS

Rex Link

MEMBERS ABSENT

Margot Armbruster

EX OFFICIO MEMBER ABSENT

Richard Lichtenstein

COMMISSION STAFF

Denise Verret
Lisa Gerencser

MEDIA

None signed in.

ZOO GENERAL COUNSEL

Valerie Flores

AGENDA ITEM 1

CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

AGENDA ITEM 2

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 19, 2019

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes November 19, 2019. Commissioner Hopkins 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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AGENDA ITEM 4 – PRESENTATION – Ornato Grant - NAI Conservation’s Salva Dantas Program in Costa Rica

Anna Becker, Curator of Education, discussed her month-long trip to Costa Rica where she worked with NAI Conservation on tapir field work. Highlights of her trip included:

- NAI is a conservation group that works directly with the government of Costa Rica and is primarily focused on Baird’s tapirs
- During her month-long trip, Ms. Becker visited – Bijagua de Upala, San Jeronimo and Cerro
- Major role of NAI is community involvement; participating in local community events, schools and festivals
- Worked with schools to bring “nature play” and other informal education practices to the classroom; creating a strong younger community of conservation enthusiasts
- Adding “Tapir Crossing” signs to roads; traffic accidents are one of the leading causes of death to the local tapir population
- Participated in a presentation at the University of Costa Rica on “Nature Play”

Discussion about how many tapirs are in the wild and the different types of tapirs.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – PRESENTATION – NEW ZOO CONCESSIONS PROGRAM

GLAZA’s Director of Special Events, Sara Rodriguez, gave an overview of the Request for Proposals (RFP) process and results of GLAZA’s search for a new concessionaire. Process highlights included:

- GLAZA has run the Zoo’s concession since 1997; contract extensions have been created for the concessionaire through 2017
- In 2017 GLAZA embarked on an RFP for a new concessions agreement
- The plan was for a 15-year contract with a concessionaire that included capital improvements and other specific stipulations
- In 2018 the RFP was completed and ten bidders attended the bidders conference in December 2018
- Three RFPs were received
- GLAZA selected their current contractor, Service Systems Associates (SSA) to continue the concessions program
- City Council approved GLAZA’s selection in May 2019

Discussion regarding the actual RFP process and commitments made by the concessionaire that will be undone/redone by the Zoo’s Vision Plan implementation. SSA agrees to complete capital improvements that may be changed by the Vision Plan.

AGENDA ITEM 6

GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

A. Animal Transactions

General Curator, Beth Schaefer, noted she had just returned from Borneo where she attended the ICUN conference on Asian elephants. Ms. Schaefer also noted she will be leading the travel program trip to Costa Rica in March 2020. Animal transaction highlights include:

- Outgoing cape vulture and vampire crabs
- Incoming male babirusa for breeding recommendation
- Incoming two female chimpanzees for breeding recommendation
- Black duiker was born
- Congo peafowl hatched; off exhibit

- An ultrasound image of N'jida, pregnant lowland gorilla was shown to the Commission; staff is on baby watch

B. GLAZA Update

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

- Introduced GLAZA's new CFO, Gretchen Humbert
- Received three gifts totaling \$35,000 for various programs
- Received \$300,000 for the Angela Collier Gardens
- Audited numbers for FY 2019 have been compiled and will be shared with the Commission
- Membership is slightly above projections for the year with over 50,000 households represented
- Attendance is even with projections while revenue is 8.5% below projections; lower revenue is attributed to use of discounted tickets
- Zoo Lights is on track for the season

Commissioner Smith asked if the Zoo ticket price increases will be pricing the Zoo out for the general public. Mr. Jacobson noted that accessibility to the Zoo is a priority; will look into free and discounted tickets for underserved communities

C. Zoo Director Reports

Zoo Director, Denise Verret, commented on the following:

- Attended a press event for the launch of the Griffith Park Park Shuttle line; the shuttle will connect MTA with the shuttle service that is free for park visitors to use while visiting all the attractions within Griffith Park

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; Vice President Silva so moved and Commissioner Smith seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 10:48 AM.

ATTEST:

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY