“Creating dynamic experiences to connect people and animals”

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MINUTES
BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS
OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
VIRTUAL MEETING*
TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2021, – 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.

MEMBERS PRESENT
Karen Winnick
Bernardo Silva
Daryl Smith
Christopher Hopkins
Margot Armbruster

VISITORS
No response

EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT
Richard Lichtenstein

COMMISSION STAFF
Denise Verret
Denise Tamura
Lisa Gerencser

MEDIA
No response

ZOO GENERAL COUNSEL
Steve Houchin

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 JULY 20, 2021
Commission President Winnick moved to approve July 20, 2021 minutes. Vice President Silva so moved, Commissioner Smith 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
PRESENTATION - EQUINE ANTI-POACHING PROJECT UPDATE
Animal Keeper, Roxane Losey, gave an update on the equine anti-poaching project in South Africa. Ms. Losey is a member of the Board of the Global Conservation Force (GCF) and was able to begin this project when she was awarded the Ornato Grant in 2017. The Amakhala Reserve in the Eastern Cape of South Africa is where the first rangers were trained on horses. Highlights from the last four years include:

- Obtaining horses and training the first equine anti-poaching unit
- Sharing equestrian supplies with other reserves
- Engaging the local community with wildlife awareness as well as job opportunities
- Aligning with the Zoo’s Conservation Strategic Plan (CSP) Pillars of Illegal Wildlife Trafficking and Social and Environmental Justice
- Purchased an off road quad for rhino field monitoring
- Able to provide vital funds to reserves during Covid 19 pandemic
- In 2021, launched Kariega Game Reserve which is a facility that will train rangers, engage local community, and provide a home base for the equestrian unit
- Kariega is funded by GCF and Ms. Losey was able to return in June 2021 thanks to the Montgomery Fellowship award.

Ms. Losey thanked all involved in making this a continually successful project. President Winnick and Commissioner Smith both thanked and praised Roxane for the work she is doing.

AGENDA ITEM 5
GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS
A. Animal Updates
Beth Schaefer, Director of Animal Programs, gave the following transaction updates:

- One female mandrill outgoing for breeding
- Two incoming male chimps to be introduced to the troop
- Incoming male and female koala for breeding
- Received Mangshan Mountain pit viper eggs for hatching
- Births include:
  - Two blue throated macaws
  - Six grey banded kingsnakes
  - Two babirusas delivered via c-section
  - Three meerkat pups
  - Three Bali myna chicks

President Winnick asked about introducing the new chimps to the troop. Curator of Mammals Candace Sclimenti discussed the process.

B. GLAZA Update
GLAZA President Tom Jacobson gave the following update:

- Received $100,000 towards restricted funds and $92,000 in federal grants
- Membership is up to over 38,000 households
- Attendance for June was strong with over 135,000 visitors and $1.7 million in revenue
- Working with new Trustees to secure the remaining $2 million to complete the Collier Garden
- Will be hosting CSP “house parties” to further reach and donations
- Trustees creating a new Conservation Council Committee
- Continue meeting with the City to discuss the operating agreement
C. Zoo Director Update
Zoo Director Denise Verret noted the carousel reopened on July 24; currently only open on weekends. The Zoo launched the CSP on July 22 with the Zoo’s first Keynote. The CSP has received a lot of media attention. The Zoo has been hosting one of the City’s mobile Covid Vaccine and Testing sites in our parking lot on Saturdays during July and August. The Zoo is waiting for distribution of the $10 million in SBA, Shuttered Venues Grant awarded to the Zoo. Summer Zoo Camp was held over 6 weeks and had 243 campers. The final vision plan EIR has been referred to the Arts, Parks, Health, Education & Neighborhoods Council committee and will be heard in September.

Mr. Lichtenstein asked if the City Council approved the EIR, how will the Zoo and GLAZA intend on financing the project. Mrs. Verret noted there have not been financing discussions but the plan is to create financially feasible funding for each Phase of the project.

Vice President Silva asked about a potential ballot measure. Mrs. Verret noted that if the City supports that, the Council would vote on a ballot measure. Discussion about residents initiating ballot measures as well. Mr. Silva asked about the letter he received from the Griffith Park Advisory Board and whether the Zoo had a formal response. Mrs. Verret noted she’s already reached out to the Board and will be setting up a meeting to discuss their traffic concerns; it was noted that this was already included in stakeholder comments on the EIR.

AGENDA ITEM 7
OLD BUSINESS
None

AGENDA ITEM 8
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 11:00 AM.

ATTEST:

_______________________________  ______________________________
PRESIDENT                                                              SECRETARY