



**MINUTES**  
BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
VIRTUAL MEETING\*  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2022, – 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

Nithya Raman  
Council Member  
4<sup>th</sup> 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



An Equal  
Employment  
Opportunity  
Employer

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Karen Winnick  
Bernardo Silva  
Margot Armbruster  
Christopher Hopkins

**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 10:04 AM.

**AGENDA ITEM 2  
APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2022**

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Commissioner Armbruster so moved, Commissioner Hopkins seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**AGENDA ITEM 3  
GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

No Comments

**LOBBYING NOTICE**

No Comments

**NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

No Comments

Accredited by the Association  
of Zoos and Aquariums

Accredited by the American  
Association of Museums

Member of the California  
Association of Zoos and Aquarium

**AGENDA ITEM 4**

**FINDINGS TO CONTINUE TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS PURSUANT TO ASSEMBLY BILL 361 / GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953(e)(3)**

President Winnick asked for a motion to approve findings that virtual meetings are still necessary. Commissioner Hopkins so moved, Commissioner Armbruster seconded. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

**AGENDA ITEM 5**

**DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED 2023 COMMISSION MEETING DATES**

President Winnick asked if there were any objections to the proposed meeting dates for 2023. No objections, President Winnick asked for a motion to approve the dates. Commissioner Armbruster so moved, Commissioner Hopkins seconded. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

**AGENDA ITEM 6**

**PRESENTATION – ZOO LOGHTS 2022/23 PROGRAM**

Sara Rodriguez, Vice President of Events and Operations for GLAZA, provided an overview and highlights of the new Zoo Lights experience.

- LA Zoo Lights – Animals Aglow is the new name for our winter nights event
- 30 new attractions
- Various lighted animal species will include birds, sloths, elephants, snakes, and pronghorn
- New lighted pathways throughout route
- Refreshed Elephant Circle and Twinkle Tunnel
- Plenty of photo ops
- Event will run from November 18, 2022 through January 26, 2023
- During the month of January, we will add lanterns to continue the event through Lunar New Year
- This year the event will be dark on Monday and Tuesday evenings for the wellbeing of our animals and animal care staff
- The event will still last a total of 50 nights

Kait Hilliard, Vice Presenting of Marketing for GLAZA discussed highlights of the new marketing campaign:

- Rebranding the event as “LA Zoo Lights – Animals Aglow” – a celebration of light and nature
- Partnered with a new production company
- Large scale displays
- Special nights: Happy Hours, Family New Year’s Eve, and a new Sensory Inclusive night
- Projected attendance is 175,000, with projected revenue at \$5.4 million
- Increased ticket prices to \$34 adult, \$27 child, and \$25 members
- Advertising and outreach will be focused on digital media (streaming services) with minimal traditional media

The Commission is looking forward to the new event.

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

**A. Animal Updates**

Beth Schaefer, General Curator, gave the following transaction updates:

- Received female Harpy eagle to pair with our male
- Blue-billed curassow going to White Oak Conservation Center in Florida
- Incoming male gerenuk as a breeding recommendation
- Four desert horned sand vipers hatched

- Female mandrill born

President Winnick asked about the death of the tapir. Dr. Keller noted the male mountain tapir was over 20 years old and had started to rapidly decline from various health issues. After completing several tests with no conclusive results, the decision was made to euthanize the tapir for his quality of life; still awaiting final necropsy results.

## **B. GLAZA Update**

GLAZA President Tom Jacobson gave the following update:

- Restricted fundraising goal for FY 23 is steady at 70% of total amount raised to date; fundraising will continue to focus on the Conservation Strategic Plan
- Membership continues to be behind projections; currently over 41,000 households
- Attendance and revenue are behind projections while other revenue sources continue to do well
- Zoo Lights tickets are currently on sale
- Boo at the Zoo continues throughout the month of October
- Walk for the Wild will be in person on February 25, 2023
- Beastly Ball will be held on June 3, 2023

## **C. Zoo Director Update**

Zoo Director Denise Verret provided the following updates:

- Due to the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), the Zoo is taking precautions to protect birds in our collection. We just received confirmation that HPAI has been detected in wild birds in Los Angeles County and as a result the walkthrough aviaries are closed in addition to flamingos and pygmy falcons being temporarily off exhibit
- Conservation Division led efforts for a Griffith Park trail restoration project; this will be an ongoing project. Dr. Jake Owens, Director of Conservation, launches the Zoo's new podcast "BiodiverCITY" today. Conservation Division is currently receiving and reviewing applications for our first Teen Council on Conservation. Applications are due October 24; this Council will be comprised of 30 teens from around the Los Angeles area
- Learning and Engagement Division continue to participate in Community Outreach events sponsored by the City of LA. Second annual "Beloved Pet Offrenda" opened on October 8 – visitors are asked to share pictures, drawings, and stories of dearly departed animal family members. As with last year, we continue to partner with Plaza de la Raza for this cultural event.

## **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 Hopkins seconded. By unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 10:48 AM.

### **ATTEST:**

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PRESIDENT

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SECRETARY