



# MINUTES

## BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2024 – 10:00 AM

Los Angeles Zoo  
Grand Room  
5333 Zoo Drive  
Los Angeles, Ca 90027

*“Creating a just and sustainable world where people and wildlife, thrive, together.”*

Los Angeles Zoo  
5333 Zoo Drive  
Los Angeles  
California 90027  
323/644-4200  
Fax 323/662-9786  
www.lazoo.org

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen Winnick  
Bernardo Silva  
Daryl Smith  
Elnie Vannatim

### VISITORS

Patricia O’Riley  
Samuel Boyar

Karen Bass  
Mayor

### EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT

Richard Lichtenstein (arrived at 10:16)

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

### COMMISSION STAFF

Denise Verret  
Cristina Flores

### MEDIA

None signed in

Zoo Commissioners

Karen B. Winnick  
President

### ZOO GENERAL COUNSEL

Steve Houchin

Bernardo Silva  
Vice President

### AGENDA ITEM 1

#### CALL TO ORDER

Commission President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

Justin Mikita

Daryl Smith

### AGENDA ITEM 2

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF March 12, 2024

Commission President Winnick requested a motion to approve the minutes of the past meeting. Commission Vice President Silva so moved, Commissioner Smith seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Elnie Vannatim

Richard Lichtenstein  
Ex Officio Member

Denise M. Verret  
Chief Executive Officer  
& Zoo Director

### AGENDA ITEM 3

#### GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Patricia O’Riley

### NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

No Comments

### AGENDA ITEM 4

#### PRESENTATION – PROJECT POLLINATOR: ENGAGING ANGELENOS FOR CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION

Dr. Jake Owens, Director of Conservation made a presentation on the following:



- Project Pollinator is rooted in the California Conservation portion of the Conservation Strategic Plan. Programs such as Condor Recovery Program and the Southern Mountain Yellow Legged Frog Recovery Program are some examples of globally recognized programs that the Los Angeles Zoo is recognized for.
- Dr. Owens discussed that the Zoo plans to do even more for California Conservation by focusing on Biodiversity Hot Spots that are part of the California Floristic Province in accordance with the City's L.A.'s Green New Deal and as part of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums SAFE program which specifically links to our North American Song Birds and North American Monarch conservation efforts.
- Dr. Owens highlighted the work done to install the California Native Gateway Garden as part of a Turf Replacement program through the Southern California Water Smarts initiative.
- In an effort to collect all of these efforts into one that will help the Zoo increase our impact, Project Pollinator came to life. The Zoo created a central logo, project and message to help engage the public, provide information and collect data.
- Dr. Owens pointed out that there are many efforts to support pollinators such as Monarchs which are not doing well; however, many of the efforts are geared towards turf replacement and not everyone in Los Angeles has a lawn. In an effort to reach those who live in spaces without lawns, such as apartments, condos etc., the Zoo came up with the idea to have a space to showcase examples of how the public can help no matter what type of space they have.
- The Kids Corner space in the Children's Zoo has been transformed to create Project Pollinator HQ which showcases plant boxes, potted plants and a variety of examples that can be implemented in a variety of living spaces.
- The Zoo's Conservation, Construction, Grounds Maintenance and Custodial teams, along with many other Zoo employees and volunteers worked to create this space. The space includes more than 94 plants from 36 different species with the help of the Theodore Payne Foundation and some of which were collected from here in Griffith Park.
- This will be a space where Conservation and Learning and Engagement will be able to engage the public and provide various resources, messaging and activities to educate the community on how they can help with the conservation efforts.
- Project Pollinator HQ will launch April 20, 2024 featuring guest readers and presenters such as Stephan Reid, Huntington Gardens Curator of Roses and T'Essence Minnitee, of Outdoor Afro Southern California Chapter along with various activities. Project Pollinator HQ will have daily programs and activities for Zoo guests.

## **AGENDA ITEM 5**

### **GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

#### **a. Animal Updates**

- Two female babirusa will be going to Fresno Chaffee Zoo as part of an SSP recommendation
- Mexican Beaded Lizard going to Fort Worth Zoo under an SSP recommendation
- Catalina Island Rattle Snake, will be going to the Henry Doorly Zoo as part of an SSP recommendation.
- Albuquerque Biological Park in New Mexico will receive one Tamaulipan rock rattle snake, two Catalina Island rattlesnakes and a Gray-banded kingsnake as part of an SSP recommendation.

- The California Condors have produced nineteen eggs that we are waiting to hatch.
- b. GLAZA Updates
- Dawn Petersen-Amend, GLAZA Interim President, provided the following updates:
  - As of February, 66.5% of the funds have been raised for this year's goal. Two of the larger donations included a donation towards funds for the Zoo's second children's book and for the Peninsular Pronghorn Recovery Program.
  - Revenue goals were slightly below the goal for the month of February, which is attributed to the short month with significant rainfall.
  - Memberships have gone up with monthly Wild Weekends events which has increased the amount of memberships, with attendance at 12% above year to date projections.

Public Comment made by Patricia O'Riley

c. Zoo Director Updates

Zoo Director Denise Verret, gave the following updates:

- Ms. Verret provided more recent information on the California Condor program noting that five chicks have hatched with 14 fertile eggs still anticipated to hatch. These are part of the California Condor Conservation program some of which will be part of future releases.
- California Native Gateway Garden project discussed by Dr. Owens, will also have signage and information as it is located next to the bus circle. This area will also serve as a research area for the Teen Council for Conservation to see how the habitat has been affected by this project.
- Ms. Verret provided an update on the Safari Days Measure A program noting that the Zoo has welcomed 4,000 students so far and has reservations for 4,000 students for the remainder of the school year.
- Learning and Engagement team participated in the City of STEM Los Angeles Maker Fair at the State Historic Park and the Blessing of the Animals at Olvera Street.
- The Zoo hosted the Engaging Girls in STEM event in partnership with Los Angeles County Office of Education engaging middle school and high school girls in STEM careers.
- Visitor Engagement program has been back for a few months now, Ms. Verret shared a written note left by one of the Zoo guests with positive feedback noting the lovely experiences throughout the Zoo.
- The Zoo received media coverage for the Condor breeding season, nationally and locally by the Eastsider, NBC, ABC and Spectrum News. The California Native Gateway Garden installation also received local media coverage.
- The Zoo will continue to reach out to local media and work to expand the outreach to various publications.

**AGENDA ITEM 6**


**OLD BUSINESS**

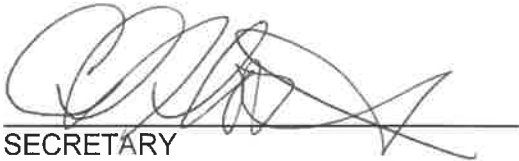
None

**AGENDA ITEM 7**  
ADJOURNMENT

There being no more business to come before the Commission, President Winnick requested a motion to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Smith so moved and Commission Vice President Silva seconded; the meeting was adjourned at 10:54 AM.

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESIDENT

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SECRETARY