



# MINUTES

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

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 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  
Justin Mikita  
Elnie Vannatim arrived at 10:07AM

### VISITORS

None signed in

Karen Bass  
Mayor

### EX OFFICIO MEMBER PRESENT

Richard Lichtenstein

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 10:00AM.

Justin Mikita

Daryl Smith

### AGENDA ITEM 2

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF November 19, 2024

Commission President Winnick requested a Motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2024 meeting. Commission Vice President Silva so moved, Commissioner Mikita 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

No Comments

### NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

No Comments

### AGENDA ITEM 4

#### PRESENTATION - MONTGOMERY FIELD STUDIES PROGRAM - RED-LEGGED FROG PROJECT IN MEXICO

Animal Keeper, Luc Meyers gave the following presentation:



- Mr. Meyers discussed his trip to Fauna del Noroeste (Fauno) a Frog Habitat Restoration project in Northwestern Mexico. The organization focuses on preserving the flora and fauna in Northwestern Mexico through research, conservation and outreach.
- The California red-legged frog, the largest native frog in California, is a focal species; federally listed in 1996 and currently a state species of special concern.
- Fauno discovered a small red legged frog population in an unfinished pond leading to the creation of two new ponds in 2018. Since then have managed additional ponds and have been successful in translocating egg masses to other parts of Baja California.
- In 2024 these ponds yielded 268 red-legged frog egg masses. In partnership with USGS, Fauno was able to translocate 30 egg masses to California.
- While there are also successful breeding programs in Northern California, due to genetic similarities, the species of red legged frog found in Baja California have been determined to have the best chance to succeed in translocation efforts to Southern California.
- Much of the field work at Fauno involved Mr. Meyers working to maintain the ponds and prepare them for the breeding season. This included wading in the pond and removing vegetation called cattail, creating clumps for an ideal breeding environment.
- Fieldwork involves collecting amphibians from ponds, tagging and measuring frogs in order to monitor the population.
- They were able to maintain all three breeding ponds, removing at least 500 pounds of vegetation. Egg mass surveys will be conducted in January and February 2025.

## **AGENDA ITEM 5**

### **GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

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

Beth Schaefer, Director of Animal Programs provided updates which included the following:

##### **Sales/Loans**

- 0.1 Brush-tailed bettong on loan from Columbus Zoo in Powel, Ohio as a breeding recommendation.
- 0.1 Jaguar was donated to the Zoo from Zoo de Granby in Quebec as part of a breeding recommendation.

##### **Births/Hatchings**

- 0.0.26 Giant horned lizards that were bred for other zoos
- 0.0.2 Perentie

#### **b. GLAZA Updates**

Dawn Petersen-Amend, GLAZA Interim President gave the following updates:

- Restricted Gifts totaled over \$35,000 for the month including \$16,000 for conservation strategic plan implementation.
- 90% of the funds for the Zoo Director's priorities have been raised in the first four months of the fiscal year.
- Additional donations included \$10,000 for general education, \$5000 for the Betty White Zoo Pals Program and \$4,000 from animal adoptions.
- Membership revenue came in at 84% of budget; household count increased by 146.
- Fall acquisition will continue through December 2024.
- October Attendance came in at 93%, slightly below the 94% target for the budget year.

- October admissions revenue was 77% of the budget.
- Zoo Lights sales are exceeding expectations, with attendance 9% above budget and revenue 7% above budget.
- c. Zoo Director Updates
  - The Family Nature Club program in Griffith Clark reached over 30 new participants with positive feedback.
  - The recycled water program in partnership with Los Angeles Department of Water and Power has concluded, and the program provided 29,000 gallons of recycled water to 196 customers. The recycled water program will likely continue next year.
  - In partnership with Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) and JC Deceaux, the Zoo secured free advertisement space at LAX highlighting our mission with three posters on saving wildlife, enriching our communities and creating connections to nature. Posters are displayed in LAX's Tom Bradley International Terminal and in Terminals 1 and 2, with potential expansion to other terminals.
  - In the News
    - A Joint press release was released with our partners on Project Obscurus, the New Mexico Ridge-nosed rattle snake project and was featured in the *Daily News* and other news outlets.
    - The L.A. Zoo Lights LGBTQIA event attracted over 2,300 attendees and received positive media coverage.
  - The final report for the conservation strategic plan has been distributed.

**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 Mikita so moved and Commissioner Vannatim seconded; the motion passed by unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 10:33 AM.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESIDENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
SECRETARY