



MINUTES

BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023 – 10:00 AM
IN-PERSON MEETING
Los Angeles Zoo
Grand Room
5333 Zoo Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90027

*“Creating
dynamic
experiences
to connect
people and
animals”*

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Karen Bass
Mayor

Nithya Raman
Council Member
4th District

Zoo Commissioners

Karen B. Winnick
President

Bernardo Silva
Vice President

Mark Gonzalez

Daryl Smith

Elnie Vannatim

Richard Lichtenstein
Ex Officio Member

Denise M. Verret
Chief Executive Officer
& Zoo Director

COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS WILL BE HEARD ONLY AT THE TIME THE RESPECTIVE ITEM IS CONSIDERED. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON ALL OTHER MATTERS WITHIN THE SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION OF THE BOARD WILL BE HEARD DURING THE “PUBLIC COMMENTS” PERIOD DESIGNATED ON THIS AGENDA. THE PUBLIC IS REQUESTED TO FILL OUT A SPEAKER CARD TO ADDRESS ANY AGENDA ITEMS.

Note: Sign Language Interpreters, assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability, you are advised to make your request at least 72-hours prior to the meeting you wish to attend. For additional information, please contact the Commission office at (323) 644-4218. TDD available at (323) 644-6688.

1. CALL TO ORDER – President Winnick called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF April 18, 2023
Commission President Winnick requested approval of the minutes of the last meeting. Vice President Silva moved, Commissioner Smith seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote

3. PUBLIC COMMENT
Public comments are limited to a total of three minutes per person.

No Comments

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL COMMENTS

Discussion with Neighborhood council representatives on Neighborhood Council Resolutions or Community Impact Statements filed with the City Clerk which relate to any agenda item listed or being considered on this agenda.

No Comments

4. ZOO COMMISSIONERS PRESENTATION OF APPRECIATION
President Karen Winnick recognized and welcomed new Commissioners, Elnie Vannatim and Mark Gonzalez, and recognized outgoing Commissioners, Margot Armbruster and Christopher Hopkins
 - Commissioner Smith and Vice President Silva added comments of appreciation for outgoing Commissioners.



5. PRESENTATION – KOMODO SURVIVAL PROGRAM

Senior Animal Keeper Byron Wusstig discussed the Komodo Survival Program and work with Komodo National Park

- Mr. Wusstig shared photos and findings from his trip to Indonesia's Komodo National Park in February and March of 2023, detailing how the Park uses traps and cameras to monitor the population
- Over seven and a half days of setting traps and processing dragons the team was able to process 22 unique dragons.
- Komodo National Park's conservation approach includes education for researchers and children. While Dragons are the priority, nature in the area also benefit as part of the conservation efforts
- The Komodo Survival Program is funded by AZA, EAZA and the Indonesian government, with the Los Angeles Zoo still contributing the largest amount making up 60% of the funding by zoos.
- Los Angeles Zoo has had Komodo Dragons since 1997, producing 53 offspring and has worked with 74 to date.

6. GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

a. Animal Updates

Director of Animal Programs, Beth Schaefer, provided Animal updates:

- A few years ago, the LA Zoo became the first zoo in the Western Hemisphere to successfully raise Grays Monitors. In an effort to continue to further this species, one of those will now be going to the Gladys Porter Zoo in Brownsville, TX on a breeding loan.
- Birth of 4 Bighorn Sheep Lambs, 2 males and 2 females
- California Condor Program has recently resulted in 9 chicks with 4 eggs that are still anticipated to hatch soon.

b. GLAZA Updates

GLAZA Associate Vice President for Advancement, Janet Dial gave the following update:

- With two months left in the fiscal year, the annual goal of \$2.3 million goal has been exceeded by more than \$500,000
- An \$88,000 donation from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service was just received for the California Condor Program
- Memberships are over 40,000 households through March and revenue exceeded the goal by over \$62,000
- Attendance Revenue is at 129% of the goal for March
- Beastly Ball is in its final stages of preparation and is on schedule for June 3rd. Honoree's will be GLAZA Trustee Diane Kim and the late Councilmember Tom LaBonge

c. Zoo Director Updates

Zoo Director, Denise Verret gave the following updates:

- Animal News
 - Four new baby Lambs

- Koala joey was born to first time parents Maya and Bura, making its debut on Wild Koala Day, May 3rd. The Koala joey was born in August but has recently emerged and is now visible.
- Conservation
 - AZA North American Song Bird SAFE program has partnered with Theodor Payne foundation, identifying native plants that can be planted to contribute to this project. In partnership with the Zoo Magnet School, the Zoo's Conservation and Learning and Engagement departments planted a bird friendly native garden at the front of the Zoo on Earth Day supporting the North American Songbird SAFE Program.
- Partnership Outreach & Engagement
 - The Zoo participated in the 2023 Engaging Girls in STEM with Los Angeles County Department of Education (LACOE). The Zoo hosted this year's event, where girls in grades 6 – 12 had the opportunity to participate in various STEM activities and were able to engage with 25 female STEM ambassadors.
 - The Zoo participated in the Natural History Museums STEM event, the Zoo provided a booth sharing information about Zoo conservation, careers and various Zoo stories.
- In the News
 - Koala Joey story was featured across the country
 - Associated Press did an extensive story on our role in the California Condor Recovery Program also highlighting the Avian Influenza virus that is currently impacting the Arizona population.
 - Los Angeles Daily News covered the migrating bird population being monitored and tracked at Bear Divide in San Bernardino Mountains, mentioning our new MOTUS system.
 - Los Angeles Daily News featured LA Zoo Magnet School which is a partnership with North Hollywood High School. The Zoo Magnet received Dr. Ronald P Simpson 2023 Merit Award of Excellence, the highest honor for Magnet Schools in America. This award is presented to those committed to diversity, academic excellence and curriculum innovation.
- Vice President Silva inquired about the status of the Vision Plan, Ms. Verret reported that she expects it to be presented to City Council before the July recess.

7. OLD BUSINESS

None

8. ADJOURNMENT – 10:58

There being no more business to come before the Zoo Commission, President Winnick asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting; Vice President Silva so moved, and Commissioner Smith seconded. By unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 10:58 AM