



**MINUTES**  
**BOARD OF ZOO COMMISSIONERS**  
**OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING\***  
**TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2023, – 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”*

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

Karen Bass  
 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  
 Daryl Smith

**VISITORS**

No response

**EX OFFICIO MEMBER ABSENT**

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 10:03 AM.

**AGENDA ITEM 2**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETINGS OF NOVEMBER 15, DECEMBER 9, AND DECEMBER 20, 2022**

Commission President Winnick moved to approve the minutes of the last three meetings. Vice President Silva so moved, Commissioner Smith seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**AGENDA ITEM 3**

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Phone ending in #09: Identified himself as Martin P., and animal activist. Discussed his involvement with elephant conservation. Suggested the L.A. Zoo do away with elephants in captivity and instead create an immersive guest experience.

**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 Aquariums

**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**

**PRESENTATION – SWAN LAKE PROJECT IN FOCUS**

Darryl Pon, Manager of Capital Projects, presented the new Swan Lake Exhibit.

- The current exhibit was built in 1977 as “Primate Island” and over the years the waterfall and rockwork have fallen into disrepair
- This exhibit will house trumpeter swans after renovations
- The reimagined exhibit consists of a replica 1900’s Mill Building with working waterwheel in place of the current waterfall and keeper area
- The exhibit will have a modern life support system (LSS) for water filtration of the pool (lake)
- Funding for this project was provided by GLAZA donors and State funds
- Currently awaiting permit approval from the Department of Building & Safety
- Plan is to begin construction in Spring 2023 with the exhibit opening to the public in Fall 2023

**AGENDA ITEM 6**

**PRESENTATION – UPDATE ON TAPIR CONSERVATION VETERINARY FIELD STUDY PROJECT**

Zoo Veterinarian, Dr. Jordan Davis-Powell discussed her October 2022 trip to Ecuador where she worked with mountain tapirs

- Traveled to the Llangantes National Park in Ecuador and worked with other zoo partners and local tapir conservationists
- Mountain tapirs are critically endangered
- Primary focus of the tapir conservation is: Ecology, Animal Health, Outreach, and Conservation Planning
- Once a tapir is tracked, the veterinarians tranquilize it, give the animal a complete medical exam, place a tracker collar on their neck, and release them back to the wild
- Dr. Davis-Powell and the team did local outreach by speaking at schools and a community center about tapir conservation

Dr. Davis-Powell discussed the importance of field work and how what is learned in the wild informs husbandry practices for the animals in our care. There are hopes to expand this conversation work into Colombia and Peru.

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

**A. Animal Updates**

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

- Incoming male blue-eyed black lemur
- Incoming red diamond rattlesnake that was part of a confiscation
- Incoming female ring-tailed lemur that was part of a confiscation

Vice President Silva asked about the death of the snow leopard and if the necropsy was back on Evelyn, female gorilla. Dr. Davis-Powell stated results for both are still pending; indicators are that the snow leopard was in renal failure and the Evelyn had a liver abscess.

**B. GLAZA Update**

GLAZA President Tom Jacobson gave the following update:

- Restricted fundraising for FY 23 is at 93% of goal
- Membership continues to be behind projections; currently just under 40,000 households
- One week left of Zoo Lights with added elements to celebrate the Lunar New Year
- Focused on Walk for the Wild and the Beastly Ball

**C. Zoo Director Update**

Zoo Director Denise Verret provided the following updates:

- Conservation and California condor staff held an event for Black Birders LA which was well attended
- Zoo was a site for Christmas tree recycling in partnership with the Bureau of Sanitation
- In connection with Council District 4, Learning & Engagement staff created a memorial for P-22, Griffith Park's mountain lion, at the Zoo's entrance for visitors to pay tribute
- This past Saturday the Department of Cultural Affairs kicked off Lunar New Year with an event at the front entrance of the Zoo; the Zoo will have daytime activities related to this cultural tradition

**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 Smith seconded. By unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 10:53 AM.

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESIDENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
SECRETARY