

**RECREATION AND PARK DEPARTMENT**

Minutes of the Joint Zoo Committee Meeting

March 27, 2014

San Francisco City Hall, Room 416

2:00 p.m.

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Recreation and Park Commissioner, Eric McDonnell, Chair  
Recreation and Park Commissioner Tom Harrison  
San Francisco Zoological Society (SFZS) Board Member, Wayne Reading  
San Francisco Zoological Society (SFZS) Board Member, Gail Secchia  
Committee Advisor, Sally Stephens  
Committee Advisor, Joseph Spinelli

**2. Joint Zoo Committee Meeting Minutes (Action Item) ACTION: MSA**

Adoption of Minutes of the February 27, 2014 Committee Meeting.

**3. San Francisco Zoo Administrative Report (Discussion)**

Tanya Peterson, Executive Director & President, SFZS.

Ms. Peterson reported that attendance for the month of February was 53,620 visitors versus budget of 63,000 and is under budget by 9,380 visitors. Year-to-date attendance is 607,972 and over budget by 66,172 visitors.

Peterson reported that this month, six winning students and their entire class came to the Zoo for a fun and educational morning as part of the 8th Annual Wild About Art and Science contest. Approximately 130 students and 30 teachers and chaperones experienced a one-of-a-kind adventure at the Zoo, including an award ceremony luncheon, up-close animal encounters, and a guided tour with our docents. This year, there were more than 600 total submissions.

In terms of animal updates, Peterson reported three non-releasable brown pelicans that were rescued are now safely living on exhibit by Eagle Lake. This particular rescue not only provides the pelicans a safe home but offers visitors an opportunity to see up close the same species that is frequently seen flying over Ocean Beach. Peterson next commented on recent euthanasia practices at the Copenhagen Zoo that has made international news. Although the Copenhagen Zoo has not violated any of its local ordinances, its recent activities are in contravention of what is trying to be achieved at the San Francisco Zoo. As such, Professor-in-Residence, Dr. Terry Maple, has been authorized to: (1) investigate the scientific evidence cited by the Copenhagen Zoo in defense of their practice; and (2) engage our European counterparts in a dialogue that hopefully results in better practices.

Peterson then acknowledged long-time horticulture volunteer, SFZ Docent, and Joint Zoo Committee member, Gail Secchia, who was featured in the San Francisco Chronicle's Bay Area section for her participation in Supervisor Katy Tang's Front Yard Ambassador program. This program aids SF residents living in the Sunset District by helping them remove concrete from paved over front yards and plant with drought tolerant natives, which helps reduce storm water run-off, in addition to greening the neighborhood.

In terms of events occurring in the Zoo, Peterson reported there will be two sessions of camp for children during spring break. The first week is for pre-k through 5<sup>th</sup> grade next week. The second session during the week of April 21<sup>st</sup>. Also, SFZ is proud to have been able to support and host a Family Day at the Zoo for residents of Delancey Street. Delancey Street Foundation is the leading

residential self-help organization for substance abusers, ex-convicts, homeless and others in need of assistance. By hosting local Family Days, the organization hopes to reconnect its residents with their families and, perhaps be inspired by the Zoo's mission.

The Zoo is often involved with community events and again this year made its second appearance in the City's annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. Children both young and old were delighted to see the Zoo's float pass by filling the air with bubbles and Irish folk music while Zoo staff and family handed out beads to the crowd. The crowds also enjoyed seeing the Zoo's costumed animal ambassadors-the polar bear, grizzly bear, lioness, and giraffe. For the second year in a row, the Zoo took home first place for best overall float.

Lastly, Peterson reported that the new red panda enclosure received an upgrade from the popular Animal Planet and Discovery Channel TV show *Treehouse Masters*. After watching a few episodes of the show, Zoo employee Eric Krussman sent the producers a note to see if they would be interested in creating a special home for the new animal. Master treehouse builder Pete Nelson and his crew agreed and the plans were drawn. The team had to fly in and get the job done in 48 hours. All are looking forward to introducing SFZ's new red panda to the enclosure soon and the seeing the show on TV sometime in May.

4. **Animal Transactions.** (Action Item) **ACTION: MSA**  
 5. Ingrid Russell-White, Curator of ACSP, SFZS  
 Discussion and possible action to recommend that the Recreation and Park Commission approve the following transactions:

**SAN FRANCISCO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS  
ANIMAL TRANSACTION RATIFICATION – March 2014**

DONATION TO	ANIMAL SPECIES	PRICE	TOTAL DUE
John Schwartzler 2299 Slinger Mine Road Greenwood, CA 95635	1.0 Horse <i>Equus caballus</i>	NIL	N/A
<b>DONATION FROM:</b>			
Sacramento Zoo 3930 West Land Park Drive Sacramento, CA 95822	1.0 Red panda <i>Ailurus fulgens</i>	NIL	N/A
Portland Aquarium 16323 McLoughlin Blvd. Milwaukie, OR 97267	0.0.5 Red-eyed tree frogs <i>Agalychnis callidryas</i>	NIL	N/A
Recycled Reptiles 2140 Valleywood Drive San Bruno, CA 94066	1.0 Bearded dragon <i>Pogona vitticeps</i>	NIL	N/A
Recycled Reptiles 2140 Valleywood Drive San Bruno, CA 94066	0.0.1 Legless lizard <i>Pseudopus apodus</i>	NIL	N/A

**PURCHASE FROM:**

SeaWorld San Antonio                      3.3 Scarlet ibis                                      \$75 each                      \$450  
 10500 SeaWorld Drive                      Eudocimus ruber

Brevard Zoo                                      1.0 capybara                                      \$100                                      \$100  
 8225 North Wickham Road                      Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris  
 Melbourne, FL 32940

Commissioner McDonnell question if the Legless lizard is actually legless or is that just the name. Russell-White responded that in fact the lizard is legless.

**5. Animal Updates.** (Discussion)  
 Ingrid Russell-White, Curator of ACSP, SFZS

ANIMAL UPDATES – FEBRUARY 2014					
DATE	SEX	ANIMALS	TRANSACTION		COMMENTS
<b>ACQUISITIONS</b>					
6	0.1	Reticulated giraffe	Birth		
19	1.0	Keel-billed toucan	Loan	Fresno Zoo	
19	1.0	Long-tailed glossy starling	Donation	Fresno Zoo	
19	1.0	Crested oropendula	Donation	Fresno Zoo	
23	0.1	Chacoan peccary	Birth		
25	0.0.2	American white pelican	Donation	Iowa State Rehab Center	
27	0.1	Slender-tailed meerkat	Donation	Tulsa Zoo	
<b>DISPOSITION</b>					
				<b>Age at Death</b>	
5	0.1	North American ruddy duck	Death	0Y, 6M, 16D	Pathology report pending
8	1.0	White-faced whistling duck	Death	14Y, 6M, 9D	Kidney failure, neurological disease
12	0.1	White-faced whistling duck	Death	14Y, 6M, 13D	Severe, progressive arthritis
19	0.0.10	Dart frogs	Donation		Fresno Zoo
19	0.0.6	Yellow-spotted Amazon River turtle	Donation		Fresno Zoo
23	0.1	Chacoan peccary	Death	0Y, 0M, 0D	Birthing complications

Committee Advisor Stephens questioned, regarding the Giraffe birth, if the animal would be staying at San Francisco Zoo or returned to San Diego. Russell-White answered that no decision has been made at this time and while she is nursing she would not be moved and that could be a couple of years. Committee Member Secchia asked the size of the herd. Russell-White stated that currently there are five females and one male.

**6. Animal Care: Latest Trends** (Information only)

**Debbie Marrin-Towey**, AC of Carnivores & CZ, SFZS

Assistant curator, Debbie Marrin-Towey, gave a presentation on the Benefits of Advanced Training in a Carnivore Breeding Program.

Member of Public Colonnese stated that in earlier years there was some behavior training performed at SFZ; however, the tactics used at that time would be considered inhumane by

current standards. He wanted to complimented Marrin-Towey and staff on the current training program. Committee Member Secchia commended and thanked staff as well. Committee Advisor Joseph Spinelli seconded the compliments on this program and stated not only is this training needed for health issues but it creates an environmental enrichment which enhances the animals' quality care.

7. **Announcements** (Information only)  
None
8. **Chair's Announcements.** (Information only)  
Chair McDonnell asked Director Peterson if capacity sales have been reached for the upcoming *ZooFest* event. Peterson responded that capacity has almost been reached.
9. **Old Business.** (Discussion)  
None
10. **New Business/Future Agenda Items.** (Information only)
11. **Public Comments:**  
Member of Public Colonnese stated that he is disappointed that this year's committee meetings are not being held at the Zoo as he feels participation would be greater.  
Member of Public Jenkins spoke on concerns of the Code Red Safety System at the Zoo reiterating points commented on at the December meeting. [inaudible exchange]  
Lamar Harris, Operations Manager, SFZ, testified about the process of testing the alarm system at the Zoo.  
Debbie Marrin-Towey, AC of Carnivores & CZ, SFZ, commented that the alarm sounds but does not state the problem occurring. She stated that the radios, which every keeper carries, are the first line of defense and communications. In trips to other zoos throughout the country she has found that the radio system is the preferred safety system in use.  
Commissioner Harrison asked what occurs after the alarm is sounded. Harris responded that the computer automatically sends a signal to the alarm system.  
Commissioner McDonnell asked how frequently the system is tested. Director Peterson stated that originally the testing occurred quarterly but now is performed monthly. Peterson also noted that another system with GPS tracking is being considered.
12. **Adjournment.**  
Meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.