

SALISBURY ZOO COMMISSION, INC.
Board Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2016

Members Present: Ron Alessi, Sr.: Chairman, George Mengason, Carol Scissons, Eric Pippen, Lee Beauchamp, James Maybury, Brian Raygor, Laura Mitchell, Karen Lutz, & Matt Likovich.

Staff Present: Ralph Piland: Zoo Director, Mary Seemann: Marketing and Development, Lisa Bower: Chief Accounts Clerk, Leonora Dillon: Education Curator, Amanda Pollack: DPW Deputy Director.

Ron Alessi called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon in the Zoo Education Building. George Mengason led the pledge of allegiance.

A motion was made by Carol Scissons to excuse Sarah Rayne from the meeting. Brian Raygor seconded and the motion was carried.

A motion was made by Carol Scissons to excuse Linda Wainer from the meeting. James Maybury seconded and the motion was carried.

Minutes: A motion was made by Brian Raygor to approve the minutes. Eric Pippen seconded and the motion was carried.

Financial Report: The financial reports were reviewed by the Zoo Commission prior to the noon meeting. A motion was made by Carol Scissons to approve the financial report. Lee Beauchamp seconded and the motion was carried.

Staff Reports:

Zoo Director Report: - Ralph Piland reported that the Zoo experienced a successful set of Critter Christmas events. Attendance was strong and the event was well received. Preliminary results indicate that this year's annual appeal should prove to be successful. AZA instituted a new award – the AZA Quarter Century Award. It recognizes AZA facilities that have been continuously accredited for 25 or more years. The Salisbury Zoo is one of the inaugural recipients of this award having been accredited since 1976. **Animal Care** - The Zoo received the histopathology report from Johns Hopkins on the death of Gritto. The report confirmed the diagnosis of our Vet and Animal Health Coordinator. Gritto suffered a stroke, and while the ultimate cause of the stroke was not discernible, this finding did support the determination that Gritto's prognosis was unfavorable and that euthanasia was the best quality of life option.

Communication & Data Systems – Work continues on improvements to the Zoo's communication and data infrastructure. Fiber optic cable and voice communication equipment installation has all been completed. A contract for the installation of a new paging system has been awarded. We are currently waiting for Comcast to install a new cable and upgraded data service for the system. We plan to complete the bid specifications for the final major component – a video camera system. Zoo staff continues to work on the implementation of a public Wi-Fi component. **Staff**

Happenings: The City Council approved a budget amendment to reorganize some duties within the Zoo's living collection. The Zoo has processed the following personnel changes: the Veterinary Technician position has been reclassified as Animal Health Coordinator; Ian Shelley has been selected as the Collection Registrar; Dave Williamson has been selected as the Lead Keeper. Selection of a new entry level Zoo Keeper is currently in process.

Strategic Planning – Work continues as funded through a Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant and DZS. General consensus has been reached on key design parameters and status reports have been given to key stakeholders including the Commission, staff, and docents. The plan has also been reviewed by the Mayor's office and by the Salisbury City Council. Zoo staff has begun some preliminary site preparation work to support the Discover Australia component. The Zoo has been closely involved in City planning efforts involving both the office of Mayor Day and the newly configured City Council. All have been very supportive of the Zoo's role within the City. We look forward to continuing this positive relationship.

Marketing and Development Report: Annual Appeal: The Annual Appeal income is up to \$15,847 up from \$12,050 in 2015! **'bury Bear Project:** We are still receiving funding for the 'bury Bear Project and it will be an ongoing project. Calendar sales were slow; around 30 calendars have been sold. They will be available for sale at Alba's Birthday Party. **Gift Shop** – The gift shop did well during the two Critter Christmas event days but not as well during the weekdays. Orders are being placed for the spring season. **Beastro-** A new committee has been formed to support the growth of the Zoo's concession. This committee will advise on pricing, days of operation, increasing revenue and revenue opportunities. James Maybury, Jeff Gleason, Stewart Davis, Ron Alessi, and Ralph Piland will reside on the committee. They are looking for others with restaurant experience who wants to join the committee. There will be visits to other facilities that operate concession type businesses. **Greeters-** A meeting with senior staff will be scheduled to review the greeter program for the upcoming season. Our greeters will return in April. **Marketing: Advertisements:** Ads were placed in the Daily Times Gift Guide and Tidewater Trader, for Critter Christmas which featured the event, Zoo Gift Shop and animal sponsorships. **TV Spots:** The spots will run starting mid-April. We have changed some of the stations this year. **Press Releases:** The releases will go out for Critter Christmas & the gift shop holiday shopping. **Website:** The website has been updated with the 2016 calendar. **Email Marketing:** The Zoo spot is still running on various Comcast channels. We look forward to a new contract for the 2016 season. **Events:** The calendar of events has been completed and updated on the Zoo's website. It will be emailed to all of the Zoo Commissioners. Alba's 1st birthday will be celebrated on January 23, from 1 - 3 p.m. Mayor Day will present a proclamation in honor of Alba. Cakes by David are donating a cake. Zookeepers will do enrichment and give Alba her own cake. Docents will have a bear discovery station and 'bury Bear Project calendars will be on sale. Also, there will be a small activity for children. This celebration has been promoted on Facebook and our website. The City of Salisbury will do a press release. The Zoo Stampede and Earth Day will take place on April 16. Vernon Powell will be the sponsor again for the Stampede. Sponsor requests have gone out for Earth Day and we will focus on honeybees. Our new observation bee hive will debut. We are planning our 4th Friday activities for this coming season. We will partner with the Ward Foundation and Art Institute and Gallery. A brainstorming meeting was held with the Ward Museum and the Art Institute & Gallery to discuss ways to cross promote each other. We will continue to meet and give a report at the next Zoo Commission meeting.

Education Curator Report - Staff/Volunteers: Leonora Dillon reported that new interns will begin at the end of January. We will have 4 returning interns from the fall semester. During our slower season, part-time members of education will be working in committees to assist in a renovation of our enrichment program for the education collection, find and write grants to help in several programs areas, and update our training manual for interns and staff. **Scheduled Events:** Critter Christmas was well attended, with around 180 people participating. We will be meeting with partners this month in order to begin preparing for Go Wild about Reading. Also, we are working on partnerships for our 4th Friday events. **Program Information:** Over the winter months, staff will be trained for new programs being offered this year. We have already taken reservations for the field trip season. We are planning to receive 2 Hairy Screaming armadillos. Leonora Dillon will be testifying in Annapolis against MSDA cuts. If there are cuts it would affect funds for next year. Laura Mitchell suggested hosting a breakfast with the Eastern Shore Delegates to discuss funding.

Friends of the Salisbury Zoo: Eric Pippen reported that they held their annual meeting and the elected officers stayed the same as last year.

Docents: Karen Lutz reported that they are planning the Story Time program for this year. Docent elections took place the first Monday in January. Walt McCabe was elected President, Bridget Foster was elected Vice-President, and Claudia Sandberg was elected Secretary.

Delmarva Zoological Society: No Report

Education Committee: Brian Raygor reported that no meeting was held.

Public Relations: Mary Seemann reported that the committee will meet in February.

Finance and Budget: James Marbury made the current auditor's review available to the Commissioners. We will be able to go through the Community Foundation for stock donations. He will communicate with them and put something in writing. We can go through them for other donations as well, to get tax benefits.

Building and Grounds: Lee Beauchamp reported that he received the drawing from Becker Morgan for the Visitors Center. He suggested that we participate in the Taste of the Eastern Shore event in Annapolis. Laura Mitchell said we could share the table they already have at the event. Hopefully that would enable us to benefit from future funds for capital projects, etc. Laura Mitchell made a motion to proceed with this, Eric Pippen seconded, and motion was carried.

Old Business:

- Zoo Master Plan – See Zoo Director's Report

New Business:

- Annual Appeal
- Commission Liaison – Ron Alessi reported that Sarah Rayne will cover Halloween Happenings, Karen Lutz will cover Critter Christmas, and Eric Pippen will cover 4th Fridays.
- Beastro – Mary Seemann reported that a meeting will be held on January 16 to discuss the Beastro.
- PNC Bank - Ron Alessi reported that he would like to consider switching our business checking to First Shore Federal. Carol Scissons made a motion for Ron Alessi to proceed, Laura Mitchell seconded and motion was carried.

A motion was made by Carol Scissons to adjourn the meeting at 1:30 p.m., second by Brian Raygor and motion was carried.

The next scheduled meeting will be held March 16, 2016, at 12:00 noon, with financial review at 11:30 a.m. in the Salisbury Zoo Education Building.