SALISBURY ZOO COMMISSION MEETING

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes January 20, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Clifton Griffn, Karen Lutz, Lorraine Bozman, James Maybury, Brian Raygor, Jack Heath, Linda Wainer, Don Pulver, Dave Harris, Don Pulver

MEMBERS EX-\*OFICIO PRESENT: Ben Baker, Field Operations

MEMBERS EX-\*OFICIO NOT PRESENT: Tom Stevenson, Director of Field Operations, Andy Kitzrow, Deputy City Administrator Mayor’s Office

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Melissa Cervantes, George Mengason, Ron Alessi, Linda Wainer

STAFF PRESENT: Leonora Dillon, Mary Seemann, Chuck Eicholz, Mary Poudel

Clifton Griffin called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon. Due to Covid 19 all meetings will be done via internet using Zoo until further notice. Clifton Griffin led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes**: The minutes of the November 2020 meeting were presented by Karen Lutz, Secretary. A motion was made by Don Pulver to approve the minutes, James Maybury seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

Leonora introduced Chuck Eicholz, our new COS Lead Keeper and Mary Poudel our new Education Curator

Clifton Griffin is eager to assume his position as president and serve as the primary advocacy role. Clifton asked Jack how to proceed as there were no other nominees. Since there were no other nominees, Clifton would assume the position by default. All of the other Zoo Commission members agreed to continue in their roles. The vice president position would then be open. Don Pulver said he would be interested in becoming vice president and was willing to serve. No other members were interested in the vice president position. A motion was made by the secretary to select the nomination of one ballet of the slate of officers presented. Dave Harris made the motion, Brian Raygor seconded the motion and all agreed in favor for the nominees.

**Financial Report:**

James noted, that with the large estate donation and the $80,000 from the state grant for payroll has helped in balancing the budget. He mentioned that the Annual Appeal donation where were up from the previous year and for what was budgeted in this year’s budget. The other large donations have helped as well. Leonora asked when doing the City budget, should she account for the Zoo Commission salaries in that budget for the next fiscal year. This question would be best answered by Andy. Mary was wondering how will the city budget for administrative services? Clifton said that 80% of administrative costs are funded from donations. These donations are given to the Zoo, not the City, how will the change in budget affect donors perception, giving to the Zoo or giving to the City? James said that they needed to schedule another meeting with Andy to discuss these complexities. In the meantime, budget as it is. They will schedule a budget meeting in the next month or so to discuss. James asked if there were any more questions about the budget. Brian made a motion to accept the budget and Don seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

**Directors Report**

Leonora is working on the City budget items to project vet cost. Tameeka Williams, the Zoo’s veterinarian is working with her to come up with a comprehensive veterinarian medicine budget. Leonora mentioned ~~the~~ that the Zoo’s oldest Spectacled owl had passed. She was twenty-three years old. Clifton asked if they could have the Zoo’s animal inventory sheet. She told the Zoo Commission that she would email that to them. She mentioned that the jaguar Species Survival Plan (SSP) had found a location for our jaguar and that she would be going to Lee Richardson Zoo in late February. Tameeka and keepers are preparing for the disposition with blood work and crate training. Keeper Jess is working on finding sloths and bobcats. The Zoo’s Pathways mentor with AZA, concluded that the current jaguar exhibit was an adequate size for the smaller cats. Bobcats are readily available from rescue preserves. The monkey exhibit remodel has been completed. Jess has reached out to the spider monkey SSP coordinator to see if they will be able to acquire a troupe to fill the exhibit. There has not been an answer as of yet. Chuck will help if an alternate species needs to be found. Leonora stated that they needed to take a hard look at the collection to determine what is sustainable with AZA accreditation. Steve, the Zoo’s Pathway mentor will visit the Zoo on February 12th for a walk thru inspection. He will arrive at 9:30am and do the walk thru with her, Tameeka and Chuck. After lunch Steve will meet with Zoo Commissioners. She will meet with the City’s executive team on the 28th to discuss the outcome of the walk thru. The hopes is to get a realistic view from Steve. She mentioned that with each new director plans change and that wants to have an animal collection that they can successfully manage with AZA’s expectations. Clifton asked if a group of commissioners could get together with staff to help with this process of finding what the Zoo’s end goal is.

**Marketing**

Mary mentioned that they had received the grant for video equipment from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore (CFES). This equipment will be used for the education department to create video of their programs for the schools and other organizations. This will help bring in much needed income to that department. She said that the Zoo Commission had received the $80,000 from the Maryland Seri grant for payroll. There are a few other grant opportunities that she is working on, the Community Needs Grant – vet equipment with CFES and – educational funding with Nora Roberts. Mary and Chuck are working on asks for donations from Owens Corning for shingles and wood from 84 Lumber for a hay storage building. WBOC TV did a piece on Sinchi’s first birthday with keeper Jess. Mary has working with Give Sine up a funding resource that helps non-profits fundraise their events. She is creating a website through this resource for the Zoo Stampede 5K. Vernon Powell Shoes has agreed to sponsor the event. It will be Virtual this year which is a little different.

**Education Report**

Kirby is working on education videos and placing them on the Zoo’s YouTube account. Both Mary P. and Kirby are working on the Virtual Leaf program with the Wicomico Board of Education, thanks to Brian and Dave for their support. The new camera equipment has made it much easier to develop virtual programs for the education department. Docent training will begin in February using Zoom. At this time 5 have signed up. They did their first live presentation to Laura Mitchells grandson’s class.

**ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS**

**Friends of the Salisbury Zoo –** No report – FOSZ meetings have been suspended due to COVID 19

**Docents –** Karen mentioned that docent hours are down as many of the older docents a weary of COVID.

**Lower Shore Herb Society at the Salisbury Zoo** – No Report

**Education Committee**: - Dave met with Mary Poudel last week to welcome her to the Zoo. Brian has helped with getting LEAF program organized with the WBOE.

**Public Relation Committee:** See Mary’s report

**Finance Committee:** No further reporting

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Cookies with Santa went well thanks to docents and staff. A part time AmeriCorps member to start in the education department soon.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Sinchi and mom are doing very well.

The Animal Health Clinic needs funding to purchase much needed equipment and a tree removed in front of the Animal Health Clinic. These funds would come out of the mystery donor’s donation. The mystery donor gave permission for the funds to be used.

Mary asked for help in finding red cedar trees for furniture in the bear exhibit as well as some of the other exhibit. Don suggested to call Matt Herd with DNR and Tommy Johnson from Eastern Shore Forest Products. Jack said he would get up with Andy to talk with James and Leonora about the budget.

A motion was made by James to adjourn the meeting at 1:00 p.m. Brian seconded, motion carried.

The next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, March 17, 2021, at noon, Zoom at the Salisbury Zoo.

**Director’s Report**

March 16, 2021

Animal Collection:

-Jaguar- Kaya has left the zoo. Transport out went well. Her training with Brinkley and Kate paid off. They did not have to knock her down (dart her/tranquillizer), she went into her crate willingly.

- Jessica reached out to the Bobcat SSP. The coordinator also manages Lynx and asked if we would consider Lynx due to the number of cats they need to place. With the management requirements being very similar she thought we would be able to accommodate them. After several discussions it was determined we should be able to work with the Lynx in the exhibit. This will assist us and AZA, which is a double plus for us. We are waiting on preliminary medical paperwork and confirmation from the home facility. It is a mother/daughter pair that has been designated. If all goes well, we are looking at April for them to be at the zoo.
-The pelicans will be leaving the zoo. After numerous attempts to try and prevent them escaping into the city park, we have determined it can’t be done. Our waterway isn’t conducive to house them and there is not another water area that is large enough to house them. Jessica has found a facility that will take all of them as a group. This will happen sometime in April if all goes well.
-I have meetings scheduled with Chuck and keepers to evaluate the collection plan as it is written. Keepers will research the animals indicated in the plan for their areas and provide information on the any restrictions we would face with AZA regulations. We will determine the sustainability of maintaining those suggested animals’ long term and being able to maintain accreditation. A revised collection plan will be born from those meetings.

Exhibits:
-Updates/fixes for the new Lynx exhibit are already underway. Shelving, pools, electric, HVAC system and building repairs are all being examined and worked on. Appropriate FO areas have been contacted for assistance in evaluating plumbing, drainage, and electric.
-Prairie Dog- Chuck has been able to secure sponsorship for glass panels for the front of the prairie dog exhibit as well as the board walk. Chuck is working with the Kappa Sig fraternity at SU to create a schedule for them to assist in reconstructing the exhibit over the next few weeks.
-NEW Alpaca yard- Field Ops guys came out and removed the culvert in the old Cavy yard, brought out a variety of machines to help level the ground, remove the asphalt (back) path from Sand Hill Cranes to the back of Burrowing Owls so we can extend that yard to the new foot path. Fencing will be going in shortly, moving us one step closer to moving the alpacas into their new home.

Grounds:
-FO guys brought in mesh and lots of truckloads of dirt, stone and asphalt like material to establish staff parking (that won’t sink) around the admin building.

**Marketing and Development Report**

Current projects

Animal Grams

This is a new fun fundraiser on our website shop page. One can choose from a list of animals, education and exhibit animals that they would like for their personalized animal gram. They can be themed for birthday, anniversary, get well etc. It includes a video with a keeper/ed staff and chosen animal. The customer is allowed up to 30 words for their greeting. The cost is $25, includes the video with the customer’s message. The video will be emailed to the customer, who will then email it to their special person. Orders are to be placed on Monday’s and will receive the video the following Monday.

Online Fundraising Campaign for a New Ed Animal Holding

Working with Mary Poudel on a campaign to raise money for a new education animal holding. This campaign will feature a call to action to the public from the Education ambassador animals via a website fundraising program Givesignup. This is the same program we are using for the Virtual Zoo Stampede 5K. It is a not for profit web based fundraising platform. We will create fun Facebook posts from our education animals asking for help with this project.

New Zoo mobile application

We are creating a new mobile app for the Zoo as our old one is out of date. The old one was created by two UOM grad students. We are working with D3Corp, our website designer and making it a web based app using barcodes. The cost should be very minimal as we have hours on our contract with D3 Corp to help produce the pages. With this format we will be able to edit ourselves when things change in the exhibit.

Gift Shop to Open

The gift shop is opening the first weekend in April. We have been busy buying merchandise for the the spring season, making sure we keep inventory tight but also able to receive free shipping.

Greeters

We will be losing two of our greeters so we are in the process of hiring for those positions.

Grant from CFES

Finished writing the Community Needs Grant with the Community Foundation the middle of February. We are waiting to hear if it was approved. The grant written was for a small sonogram and microscope for the Animal Health Clinic

Signage for Morgan Center and donor signs

Now that the Mata Mata exhibit will be up and running soon, we are finishing up the ID signs for the spotted turtle and the yellow banded poison dart frogs. Small donor signs will be placed by the hang like a sloth sign, alligator bench and step ups.

Events:

Virtual Earth Day and Zoo Stampede – April 24,

Preston Automotive Frog Exhibit ribbon cutting in Mid May.

TBD Preston Amphibian Day in June