

Dane County
Henry Vilas Zoo Commission
Minutes

Zoo Administration Building
7:00am, January 8, 2019

Members present: Jonathan Becker, Chuck Erickson, Sarah Justice, Jeff Gunderson and Anne Ross, Tom Hanson (in place of Chris Henderson)

Also present: Alison Prange, Ronda Schwetz, Joseph Darcangelo, Erik Anderson

Members Absent: Chris Henderson, Sarah Justus and Alan Arnsten

Meeting called to order by Anne Ross at 7:05 a.m. in Zoo Administration Office.

Motion by Jonathan Becker and seconded by Jeff Gunderson, to approve amended minutes from November 13, 2018. Minutes were unanimously approved with edits.

Reports to Committee:

Ronda Schwetz, Executive Director of the Zoo reported Zoo updates: Animal updates included update on denning behavior of female polar bear, Berit. Plan to let her wake up and then introduce to male polar bear, Nuniq. Two penguin chicks hatched and are doing very well. Zookeeper Gary Hartlage is in Africa helping penguin conservation efforts of nonprofit SANCOOB. Vet Tech Angie Sutton and Volunteer Coordinator, Nikki from the Society spent 3 weeks in Vietnam helping a nonprofit set up their animal hospital to help wildlife in that region. Reviewed 2018 budget and talked about 2019 planned capital projects to replace the Herpetarium and Aviary roofs. Went over animal welfare improvements that were mentioned in the accreditation process and talked about the upgrades to their exhibits and giving them more choices. New Deputy Director, Joseph Darchangelo introduced himself and started in November. General Curator position is open but in recruitment.

Alison Prange, President of the Zoo Society reported: Mentioned that the 2018 books were closing that week. Even though grounds revenue was down they had a good fundraising year. Visitation was also down presumably from the wet weather in the summer. Selected Baker Tilly as their new accounting firm. Tom Hanson will be taking over as the Board Chair in January, 2019. Zoolights was very successful at over 30,000 visitors. Looking at ways to drive guests to the zoo in the off seasons.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 16, 2019, at 7:00am in the Zoo Administration Building.

Minutes taken on, January 8, 2018 by Ronda Schwetz and subject to final approval by Zoo Commission.