



Dane County

Minutes - Final Unless Amended by Committee

Henry Vilas Zoo Commission

Consider:

Who benefits? Who is burdened?

Who does not have a voice at the table?

How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

7:30 AM

A. Call To Order

Others present: Ronda Schwetz, Joseph Darcangelo, Kristin Moala

Present 7 - TAG EVERS, JEFFREY GUNDERSON, SARAH JUSTUS, MICHAEL PETERSEN,
ANNE ROSS, Supervisor CECELY CASTILLO, and JASMINE BANKS

B. Consideration of Minutes

[2023](#)
[MIN-396](#)

Attachments: [2023 MIN-396](#)

A motion was made by CASTILLO, seconded by JUSTUS, that the Minutes be approved. The motion carried by a voice vote.

C. Action Items

None

D. Presentations

None

E. Reports to Committee

Zoo Report:

SCHWETZ provided an update on the 2024 budget. The County approved the budget and the Zoo is very excited to be getting a FTE .6 keeper position as well as 2 .6 zoo attendants thanks to an addition by Supervisor Ritt. The full time vet position also went through, which is historic for the Zoo and will expand on-grounds capacity. We have already been able to purchase new medical equipment and our vet is helping prioritize those purchases. The Zoo recently filled its vacant keeper position. Still trying to fill the lead vet tech position. There is a national shortage of vet techs right now.

Capital projects - the Zoo works closely with Public Works for any projects that cost over \$40k. Work on the Aviary is underway and renovating the penguin exhibit space is next in the queue.

Animals - Our giraffe was successfully moved to Green Bay and is already fitting in nicely with the rest of their herd. We also have shipped several leaf-tailed geckos out to other institutions over the last few months. We are one of the few facilities successfully breeding them. We received a female capybara who is in quarantine right now. She will join the male capybara once she clears her health checks. We are scheduled to get two female rock hyrax in the coming weeks and are still working on getting a camel. We recently had 3 box turtles hatch. They are part of a DNR program and this is our first hatching.

Events - Brew Lights is this Friday. Ticket sales are going well. Zoo Lights begins the day after Thanksgiving. The Zoo is also hosting its third Dream Lights, which is a night for kids facing health challenges.

Operations - The Zoo is working on a strategic plan that will help shape the next 5 years of development. The Zoo will be able to share a draft in early 2024. Leadership is also working on core values with staff.

Discussion ensued.

F. Future Meeting Items and Dates

The next meeting will be held in-person at the Zoo starting at 7:30am on Tuesday, January 9, 2024.

G. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

None

H. Such Other Business as Allowed by Law

None

I. Adjourn

A motion was made by JUSTUS, seconded by BANKS, that the Zoo Commission be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously at 8:26am.

Respectfully submitted by Kristin Moala, pending approval by the Zoo Commission.