



# 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?*

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Tuesday, January 7, 2025

8:00 AM

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#### A. Call To Order

*Others present: Ronda Schwetz, Joseph Darcangelo, Kristin Moala, Jess Thompson, Adrienne Bonow*

**A motion was made that the Zoo Commission meeting be called to order at 8:03am..**

**Present** 6 - JEFFREY GUNDERSON, SARAH JUSTUS, MICHAEL PETERSEN, ANNE ROSS, JASMINE BANKS, and ERIN WELSH

**Excused** 1 - TAG EVERS

#### B. Consideration of Minutes

[2024](#)  
[MIN-371](#)

**Attachments:** [2024 MIN-371](#)

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

#### C. Action Items

2. [2024](#)  
[RES-245](#) ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS TO SUPPORT EMPATHY EVALUATION AT HENRY VILAS ZOO

**Sponsors:** WELSH, ROSE, KRONING and BLAZEWICZ

**Attachments:** [2024 RES-245](#)  
[2024 RES-245 Fiscal Note](#)

**A motion was made by JUSTUS, seconded by BANKS, that the Resolution Requiring 2/3rds Vote be recommended for approval. The motion carried by a voice vote.**

#### D. Presentations

*None*

**E. Reports to Committee**

*The zoo recently received two cape porcupines that are going to live where the previous Indian-crested porcupines resided. We are preparing to move several of our female meerkats to other zoos this spring as the weather permits.*

*The open lead keeper position was just accepted and the new hire will be starting in February. That means the vet team and animal care team are now fully staffed. The next position the zoo will be looking to fill is a clerk III position.*

*Everything is on track with the new giraffe building. The architecture firm should have 95% construction documents for us by the end of January. Leadership is working with the new County Executive to get her up to speed on the new zoo non-profit that will be able to assist with fundraising. Other renovation projects scheduled for 2025 include the capybara exhibit, which will mean the capybara don't have to move to the Animal Health Center in the winter, remodeling the old penguin exhibit to accommodate an Arctic fox, and installing an all-season shade structure on the seal pool.*

*Zoo Lights is now over. Attendance was down a bit this year, which was attributed to much colder weather this year. The event is still the largest fundraiser for the zoo and the operations team is looking at ways to possibly move some of the dates up for 2025.*

*Jess Thompson introduced the education teams new outreach coordinator, Adrienne Bonow. She will be expanding education program access in 2025. The education team also submitted another ACE grant for 2025 to continue our work on empathetic messaging and amplify our community connections. We hope to hear back in February.*

**F. Future Meeting Items and Dates**

*The next Zoo Commission meeting will take place on Tuesday, February 11th.*

**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 WELSH, that the Zoo Commission meeting be adjourned at 8:56am. The motion carried unanimously.**

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