



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?

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

8:00 AM Henry Vilas Zoo, 702 S. Randall Ave., Madison, WI 53715

A. Call To Order

Others present: Ronda Schwetz, Joseph Darcangelo, Kristin Moala

A motion was made by ROSS that the Zoo Commission meeting be called to order at 8:07am.

Present 7 - TAG EVERS, JEFFREY GUNDERSON, SARAH JUSTUS, MICHAEL PETERSEN, ANNE ROSS, JASMINE BANKS, and ERIN WELSH

B. Consideration of Minutes

[2024](#)

[MIN-046](#)

Attachments: [2024 MIN-046](#)

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

[2024](#)

[MIN-047](#)

Attachments: [2024 MIN-047](#)

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

C. Action Items

[2024
RES-068](#)

AUTHORIZING TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES FOR STAFF MEMBERS FROM HENRY VILAS ZOO

Sponsors: RITT

Attachments: [2024 RES-064](#)
[2024 RES-068 FISCAL NOTE](#)

The commission discussed the importance of these opportunities for staff.

A motion was made by EVERS, seconded by PETERSEN, that the Resolution be recommended for approval. The motion carried by a voice vote.

D. Presentations

None

E. Reports to Committee

SCHWETZ gave an animal update - the zoo has welcomed a new male camel, 4 female meerkats, and some new insects since the last commission meeting.

Keeper staff are getting a Boys & Girls Club intern this summer. Both the operations and education departments will be getting a Centro Hispano intern this summer. The zoo is in the process of making an offer for the .6 FTE clerk position. The zoo's FTE clerk recently left for another opportunity, and the zoo is going to re-class that position to a clerk III because it handles payroll among other things. We expect it to take some time to get the re-class and interviews done for that position.

We are at the beginning of the 2025 budget request period. The zoo will need to show cuts or new revenue to include any new items in 2025.

Summer is event season for the zoo. For the second year in a row the zoo hosted a drag show to celebrate PRIDE month. The event was very successful and we had a lot of positive feedback about the stage/seating improvements made since last year. Staff are already looking at options for next year since we may have to move the location for the stage due to the new giraffe building construction. Feast with the Beasts, a new event for 2024, unfortunately had to be canceled due to flooding on zoo grounds and severe weather in the forecast. The flooding on zoo grounds receded and no animal facilities were impacted, but the ground is very saturated this year. We are working on ways to improve rain dates for future events knowing that our summers could continue to get wetter. The zoo's next after-hours event, BrewFari, will take place on Saturday, July 27th.

[2024](#)
[RPT-134](#)

Attachments: [2024 RPT-134](#)

AZA inspectors randomly selected 30 zoo staff, concessions staff, and volunteers to interview. 99% of those interviews had positive attitudes towards the zoo. Inspectors told zoo staff that the application that was submitted in March was "one of the best they had ever seen." Fourteen achievements were highlighted by inspectors. The report did not have any major concerns, but there were two "lesser" concerns listed. Zoo staff is confident in their current methodology to address those two concerns. Zoo staff is happy with the report and eager to carry this momentum into the last stage of accreditation at the AZA conference in September. Discussion ensued.

This resolution was approved

F. Future Meeting Items and Dates

The next Zoo Commission meeting will take place in-person on Tuesday, July 16th at 8am.

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 EVERS, seconded by JUSTUS, that the Zoo Commission meeting be adjourned at 9:25am. The motion carried unanimously.

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