

**San Francisco Animal Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 13, 2024**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Present: Chair Michael Angelo Torres; Vice Chair Irina Ozernoy; Commissioners: Lisa Fagundes; Mikaila Garfinkel; Michael Reed; Jane Tobin; Department Representatives: Natural Resources Manager Christopher Campbell, SF Recreation and Parks

Absent: Commissioner Dr. Brian Van Horn, DMV; Department Representatives: Deputy Director Amy Corso, SF Animal Care and Control; Dr. George Han, SF Department of Public Health: Officer Greg Sutherland, SF Police Department

2. General Public Comment

A member of the public commented on the limited and expensive state of emergency veterinary care in San Francisco.

3. Approval of the draft meeting minutes from May 2024 – Approved.

4. Chairperson and Commissioners Reports

- Commissioner Tobin reported the rise of bird flu and its presence in San Francisco wastewater.

5. New Business

San Francisco Animal-Related Matters (Discussion Item) (Commissioner Torres) Commissioners discussed animal-related matters at the SF Zoo, Chaparral Ranch/SF Department of Recreation and Parks' horse program, and the proposed glue trap ban.

RE: SF ZOO

- Chairperson Torres discussed San Francisco Zoo safety issues as reported in the media, and provided a brief update concerning the Mayor's Office and their work towards acquiring two giant pandas for the Zoo.
- Commissioner Tobin updated on Joint Zoo Committee discussions and shared information regarding upcoming meetings.
- Commissioner Torres reported on the campaign by organizations In Defence of Animals and SF Zoo Watch to bring awareness around the giant pandas and the SF Zoo.
- Commissioner Torres reported that over 9,000 emails came in on this issue.
- Commissioner Tobin reported that the AZA has internal investigations on 5-year accreditation. The SF Zoo is accredited through 2027. The last AZA accreditation took place in 2022.
- Commissioner Tobin requested that the Commission get the full picture of the SF Zoo, but reported that the Zoo is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
- Commissioner Fagundes discussed older animal welfare issues at the Zoo, and the personnel vote of no confidence.
- Commissioner Garfinkel commented that we need to keep animal welfare on the radar in addition to investigating the facts of the issues.
- Commissioner Ozernoy shared personal experiences growing up in San Francisco and her history with the SF Zoo.

RE: Horses at Golden Gate Park - Chaparral Ranch

- Commissioners Torres, Garfinkel, and SF DRP Representative Campbell discussed the history of awarding agreements to Chaparral Ranch and the recent termination.
- Commissioner Ozernoy asked where the horses had been sent.
- Commissioner Garfinkel asked about replacing Chaparral and the horse program.
- Commissioner Ozernoy - noted that the laws regarding human recreation (working animals) standards of care are minimal, and asked how can we make it so that the laws reflect the public's desire for a high standard of care.

RE: Glue trap ban

- Commissioner Ozernoy noted it's a difficult issue to push forward. Worried that the Board of Supervisors would not be interested in this issue.

Public Comment

A member of the public commented on the Tatiana incident in 2007 at the Zoo, the transferring of elephants to a sanctuary, and the Zoo's infrastructure status due to close proximity to the ocean.

Next Steps

- Issues involving giant pandas and horse-riding services will be discussed.
- Possible invitations to the SF Zoo, Department of Recreation and Parks, and Mayor's Office, as well as representatives from organizations like In Defense of Animals, and Zoo Watch.
- Commissioner Tobin suggested that the Zoo provide an impact analysis report on giant pandas, including the cost of lease, food, veterinary care, and the impact on other zoo priorities.
- Commissioner Ozernoy noted that the USDA can be called to inspect the Zoo at any time.
- Commissioner Garfinkel noted that revising the contract for the horse program is in the works therefore, immediate follow-up on the matter is needed.
- Commissioner Reed asked for documentation on current laws and how to improve the standards of care.

6. Items to be put on the agenda for next time

- Commissioner Torres covered possible follow-up items in the months ahead including the SF Zoo, horses in Golden Gate Park, glue trap ban, state trapping regulations, live animal markets and legislation concerning animal guardian requirements.
- Commissioner Ozernoy suggested we make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.
- Commissioner Fagundes suggested that we make our recommendations during election season as they will be more visible.

7. Adjournment - 6:27 PM