Committee Members Present:

Miguel A. Santana, City Administrative Officer (CAO), Chair
Karen Kalfayan, Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) Office
John R. Lewis, Los Angeles Zoo

Others Present:

Maria Cardenas, Alma Gibson, CAO; Jeb Bonner, Connie Morgan, Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association (GLAZA); Rebecca Abano, Gary Moore, Public Works Bureau of Engineering (BOE); Kyla May, Darryl Pon, Los Angeles Zoo.

Mr. Miguel A. Santana called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1. Minutes for Approval – Meeting of January 27, 2011

Mr. John R. Lewis moved to approve the Zoo Bond Oversight Committee (ZBOC) special meeting minutes of March 31, 2011. Ms. Karen Kalfayan seconded and the motion passed without objection.

2. Bureau of Engineering Program Manager Status Report

Ms. Rebecca Abano reported on the progress of the Zoo’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Master Program Budget

Through the end of April 2011, $141.5M has been expended of the approved program budget. No changes are anticipated to the budget at this time. More details can be found in Section Three of the Monthly Report.

Master Program Schedule

The Zoo has two active projects and one repair project left to complete. Ms. Abano noted an error in the Monthly Report on Page 1.0-2 Section 1.2. It is stated that the CIP has three active projects, but it only has two active projects.

Through the end of April 2011, all three projects are on schedule.
Status of Active Projects

The Elephants of Asia

The project’s Phase 3 construction is complete and all Certificates of Occupancy (C/O) have been obtained. Change orders continue to be negotiated to close out the project. This negotiation is anticipated to be completed either within the current week or at the end of the following week. To date, 107 change orders have been executed totaling $2.66M. Three pending change orders are being processed, which may result in a net deduction of $23K. Exposure should be an estimated $2.63M out of the construction contingency of $3.01M.

Rainforest of the Americas

The project is still in the bid and award phase. As previously reported, seventeen bids were received on March 30, 2011. Metro Builders was the lowest bidder, with a bid of $11,411,707. BOE anticipates awarding the contract shortly and starting construction in July 2011.

Living Amphibians, Invertebrates and Reptiles (LAIR)

Through the end of April 2011, construction is 65% complete. Construction activities continue inside both buildings, as well as the project’s site. Ms. Abano distributed photos of the project’s construction progress, and described them for the Committee.

A photo of the project model shows the project’s two buildings, a crocodile pond, and an oak woodland pond. Photos from April 2011 showed construction progress of the LAIR’s main entry and donor wall, as well as the exterior and interior of the Reptile Building.

Photos from late May 2011 showed construction of the site entrance. A photo taken from the Zoo’s Carousel project site looks down on the Reptile Building. The photo showed that the oak woodland pond has been formed; the water testing has been completed. The Reptile Building roof is complete other than the green portion, and all the skylights are visible. A closer view showed completed installation of the life support equipment, and work being done on the connections.

A photo of the Reptile Building’s interior showed placement of rebar except shotcrete, the finishes for the exhibits, and installation of the glass partitions which will separate the different exhibits inside the Reptile Building.

Next, Ms. Abano described photos of the Southwest Desert Building. In April 2011, underground utility issues were still being dealt with, as well as framing for the drywall and the lathe and plaster inside the building. In May 2011, the photo showed the underground utility work was completed and the ground was closed up. The contractor is working on the building’s roofing and the lathe and plaster is now complete.
The contractor is a little behind than the Reptile Building, because the crew moved from the Reptile Building onto the Southwest Desert Building for the glasswork, the interior and the rebar.

The current construction completion date is now July 18, 2011. BOE is currently working on another time extension change order with Royal Construction. The previously issued change order taking the schedule to July 18, 2011 only includes delays through the end of February 2011.

To date, 47 change orders have been executed totaling $736K. Pending change requests are estimated at $350K, making the total change order exposure $1.1M, which is within the $1.3M construction contingency.

Ms. Alma Gibson asked if BOE had met with Royal Construction to request them improve their performance and speed up the work in order to meet the construction completion date. Ms. Abano replied that yesterday, Royal had given her a schedule, where they started to stack activities. BOE has questions on the duration of some of the activities, because now Royal is saying they won’t be done until the end of August 2011. BOE just received this submitted schedule and will have to review it before reporting back to the Committee. This submitted schedule is still within the approved Master Schedule.

Ms. Maria Cardenas asked if two contractors will be working in that Zoo area at the same time. This was an issue due to the Rainforest of the Americas project being scheduled after the LAIR to avoid causing a space impact within the Zoo. Ms. Abano replied that it’s okay, because the work that Royal has performed that impacts the Rainforest project is complete.

Mr. Lewis commented that the solar tubes being used as skylights in the LAIR are pretty cool. They are long reflective tubes passing from level on the roof down through the attic and into the space; they push a lot of light. The Committee briefly discussed the solar tubes.

Ms. Abano reported that the Gorilla Waterfall Repair construction contract was recently awarded to Blois Construction with their bid of $114,638. The City Engineer’s estimate for the repair was $135K. Construction is anticipated to start in July 2011, after the Zoo’s Beastly Ball.

Ms. Abano concluded her report.

3. Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association (GLAZA) to Report on Capital Improvement Project Fundraising Activities

Ms. Connie Morgan reported that the total commitment to the Elephants of Asia is GLAZA’s largest single commitment ever made to a Zoo project.
The total commitment is $19.3M plus, depending on the financing. GLAZA gave the City the first $4.8M a couple of years ago, shortly after a commitment to raise another $14.5M. GLAZA has been chipping away at the $14.5M and very recently made real progress.

Last month, Mr. Jeb Bonner reported that a $70K refund expected from a prior project was to be reallocated; that has been done. GLAZA also had two approximately $60K gifts that came from estates. GLAZA closed that week on an $800K gift to name the India Waterfall area of the Elephants of Asia exhibit. This area is one of the most beautiful spots within the exhibit and is incredibly enjoyed by school groups. The donor’s representative was present one day and saw that, resulting in the gift that just closed.

GLAZA has also been working on closing out an estate that was given. This has taken a couple of years to negotiate, and it will add $3.1M to the master plan to pay off the Elephants of Asia. At this point, GLAZA is getting close to $8M, and with that commitment, Ms. Morgan stated she is thrilled to start seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

Mr. Santana asked if any increase has been seen in enrollment. Mr. Lewis replied that Zoo attendance lost ground during the winter due to the heavy rains, but since then the Zoo has had a great spring break. Particularly now that schools are staggering the break, the Zoo had a whole month of great attendance. The Zoo is right at projections through April 2011 and is having a really strong May 2011. Also, concessions are always one month behind. The Zoo had a strong concessions month in April 2011, so when May 2011 comes in, the Zoo will probably be slightly above projections on attendance and revenue.

Mr. Gary Moore asked Mr. Lewis if the Zoo is doing constant surveys of the visitor experience, and asked if the Zoo’s visitors notice the difference since completion of several of the Zoo’s CIP projects. Mr. Lewis replied that the Zoo doesn’t have any formal surveys going on, but is receiving a lot more spontaneous feedback about the appearance of the Zoo; people really appreciate it. Ms. Morgan stated that the view of the Zoo from the Autry Museum across Zoo Drive is pretty awesome. Mr. Lewis added that those kind of responses helps with potential donors.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Mr. Santana adjourned the meeting at 1:14 p.m.

Next Meeting: July 28, 2011

Minutes prepared by Ms. Kyla May of the Los Angeles Zoo’s Planning and Development Division. Revised by BOE, CLA, CAO, and the Zoo.