Committee Members Present:

Maria Cardenas, Office of the City Administrative Officer (CAO), Chair
Gerry Miller, Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA)
Chris Espinosa, Mayor’s Office
John Lewis, Los Angeles Zoo

Others Present:

Lynne Ozawa, CLA; Claudia Aguilar, CAO; Renee Weitzer, Council District 4; Nick Pendorf, General Services Department (GSD); Jeb Bonner, Connie Morgan, Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association (GLAZA); Deanna Gomez, Mayor’s Office, Rebecca Abano, Lynette Howlett, Deborah Weintraub, Public Works Bureau of Engineering (BOE); Kyla May, Darryl Pon, Los Angeles Zoo.

Ms. Maria Cardenas called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

1. Minutes for Approval – Meeting of April 24, 2008

Mr. Chris Espinosa moved to approve the Zoo Bond Oversight Committee (ZBOC) special meeting minutes of April 24, 2008. Mr. Gerry Miller 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 2008, $100.2M has been expended of the $169M approved budget. The last revision to the program budget was approved in May 2007, with a program contingency of $500K, made up of Proposition CC funds. As directed at last month’s meeting, BOE has begun a cost-to-complete report, which includes the $2.1M cost savings of the Gorilla Exhibit project. The $169M approved budget has not been changed, but every Proposition CC account was reviewed to identify actual expenditure from the account. Some were spent on Infrastructure, some on the project itself. It also identified that appropriation from Proposition CC was greater than the reported budget for Proposition CC, because city staff and office supply costs had never been reported, which the bond has paid for in the past. The appropriation for the Rainforest of the Americas project under Proposition CC was less than the actual approved budget for Proposition CC.
A portion of the Gorilla project savings went to that appropriation for Proposition CC, and the rest of it went to reduce the 08-09 Municipal Improvement Corporation of Los Angeles (MICLA) funding for the Rainforest project. It still needs to be verified if other funding sources can be obtained, now that the dollar amount of $4.17M needed for the Rainforest project is known.

Mr. Espinosa asked if project savings of $2.1M had been found that could potentially be applied to the Rainforest of the Americas project. Ms. Abano replied yes, which would reduce the 08-09 MICLA requirement for the Rainforest project from $5.4M to $4.1M. Mr. Espinosa asked if the project was still in design. Ms. Abano replied yes, design will continue and be completed. At the time the project goes out to bid, the Class A estimate will determine the real construction cost of the project. Mr. Espinosa asked when that would be. Ms. Abano replied November or December 2008.

Ms. Cardenas asked if that was going out to construction. Ms. Abano replied completing 100% design documents and getting a new Class A estimate. Ms. Cardenas stated that the schedule would have to be adjusted if money was not found to go to construction on the Rainforest project this year. A lot of interest earnings haven’t been put into the program yet, and an arbitrage analysis will be done, to see how much has to be set aside. She hopes that the needed funds for the Rainforest project can be reduced to about $1M, at which point she might recommend going back to the City Council and getting authority, rather than waiting until the next budget cycle.

Mr. Miller asked if only $160K was left in program contingency. Ms. Abano replied yes. Ms. Cardenas stated that the only problem was that between 1999 and 2005, a budget of Proposition CC existed for the Rainforest project at a certain level, but the appropriations weren’t there, because it kept being spent. Infrastructure and staff costs kept being used; some years they were part of the project budget and some years they weren’t. By July 2008, it will have been determined exactly how much more MICLA is needed, and all the programs can be finished.

Ms. Abano added that the other thing done in the report was to use the recently done Class A estimate on the Pachyderm Forest project. If monies are moved around within program management costs and design, the Pachyderm Forest project will be able to be built within the budget, except that construction contingency only has $1.7M. This is less than 10%; normally BOE does not like to go out to bid with less than 15% in construction contingency. Mr. Espinosa asked if, as shown in the revised budget, the overall project budget is $38M. Ms. Abano replied yes, this was the approved budget. Mr. Espinosa asked if the total cost was $29M, including Phases 1, 2, and 3. Ms. Abano replied that building construction cost is $32.67M; the prepared estimate does not include contingency. Ms. Cardenas stated that the contingency may be more than 10% of just the Phase 3 construction costs, because Phases 1 and 2 will be behind us. Ms. Abano stated that Phase 3 is $25M, and $1.7M is all that is left for contingency, once General Services Department (GSD) has been paid for Phase 1, Middle Zoo demolition, and what GSD will be paid for Phase 2.
Ms. Cardenas stated that she thought a 10% contingency should be rolled into the July budget, and use the interest earnings to get to 10%.

**Master Program Schedule**

Ms. Abano continued with her report. The current Master Program Schedule, which was approved in June 2006, shows overall completion in September 2010. BOE has been monitoring the project schedules for the Rainforest of the Americas and the Pachyderm Forest projects. Two months ago, Ms. Abano reported that the architect, the Portico Group, sent a letter proposing new design delivery dates. Since that letter, the Reptile project has been on schedule per that letter. The current schedule is based on that letter for the Reptile and Insect Interpretative Center and the Rainforest projects.

Based on where the projects were at the end of April 2008, the timelines have been kept the same, but the endings will be pushed. Ms. Abano has since asked the architect to give her a revised design delivery date, because these three projects are still in the design phase and have not been bid. Ms. Abano has also asked the consultant to see what kind of activities can be stacked, and she is working with BOE and Public Works Bureau of Contract Administration (BCA) to see if the bid and award period can be shortened to save some time.

Mr. Miller asked if construction would start around April 2009 for the Rainforest project. Ms. Abano replied construction would start around late March or early April 2009. She added that she would have the consultant look at the schedules and come up with a hard-line schedule that she would then present to the Committee. Ms. Cardenas asked if the revised schedule would be ready by July. Ms. Abano replied yes. Ms. Cardenas stated that she wanted to target July for the revised schedule and revised budget. At that point, additional MICLA funds could be requested if needed to the Mayor and City Council, before the bid and award starts.

Ms. Claudia Aguilar revisited the program budget. She asked if contingency exists for GSD’s Phase 2. Ms. Abano replied that for the Pachyderm Forest project, the estimator put in the hard subcontract costs, as the subcontracts have all been awarded by GSD, who is moving on the project. Some cost overruns on some of the subcontracts have been included and projections have been made based on the labor impact on GSD.

Ms. Renee Weitzer asked if the Pachyderm Forest project would be completed in 2010. Ms. Abano replied yes, based on current timelines. Ms. Weitzer asked what it was supposed to be. Ms. Abano replied November 2009. Ms. Weitzer asked when Billy the elephant’s move was. Ms. Abano suggested that this be addressed in her ongoing report, during the next agenda item. Ms. Weitzer agreed.
Status of Active Projects

Pachyderm Forest

Ms. Abano continued with her report. The Pachyderm Forest is the priority project and is in both design and construction. Design on Phase 3 continues and the project is still in the Department of Building and Safety’s (BAS) plan check and permit process. BOE is assisting the architect with two outstanding issues.

One issue is disabled access for the new elephant barn; the architect has gotten an approval rejection from BAS and won’t be able to pull a permit for the barn. BOE and the Zoo are assisting the architect preparatory to going before the BAS Commission for a waiver of disabled access on the second floor of the barn.

The second issue is the height restriction on the Zoo’s zoning, which is a 35 foot limit of building height, so a variance for height from Planning will need to be obtained for the elephant barn. Ms. Weitzer asked how tall the new barn would be. Ms. Abano replied the tallest point of the barn would be 50 feet. Ms. Weitzer asked how long the variance process would take. Ms. Abano replied three to eight weeks, depending on any possible protests during the review period. Ms. Weitzer asked if a public hearing was planned. Mr. Lewis replied that the process has to be made available for comment for fifteen days to the neighborhood groups around Griffith Park. Ms. Weitzer expressed surprise that BOE didn’t know this restriction. Ms. Abano replied that BOE had urged the architect to resolution, but only heard last week from them on this issue. Ms. Weitzer asked if this would delay Billy the elephant's move. Ms. Abano replied no, this delays going out to bid.

Ms. Abano continued. GSD continues with construction of the Pachyderm Forest: excavation, grading and utility installation. Last month, Ms. Abano reported that GSD was delayed due to issuance on subcontracts; these issues have been resolved and Notices to Proceed (NTP) have been issued on all the subcontract work. Also, approval of all the submittals has been gotten, so installation of the caissons, which are the foundation for the elephant barriers, starts on the following Monday.

Also, the architect wasn’t able to secure plan check for the temporary shade structure for Billy until last week, which means GSD only just pulled the permit, has ordered the materials and is starting to dig up the foundation for that temporary shade structure. Ms. Weitzer asked how long that would take. Ms. Abano replied that is parallel with the installation of the barriers, but connections exist between the barriers’ completion for the gates to work with that structure. Some delay is being experienced. The power for Phase 2 is coming out TS14, which is the replacement transformer which will also power the Golden Monkey Exhibit. The Department of Water and Power (DWP) has installed the transformer and the switchgear. They have pulled in new conduit and wiring from the Zoo's Boneyard to the new place.
They are hooking up all the power and testing the equipment; they have told Ms. Abano that they will be done within the next two weeks. Mr. Lewis noted that the Boneyard is one of the Zoo’s central service yards.

Ms. Cardenas asked when Billy would be moving into the temporary shade structure. Ms. Abano replied September 2008, which is GSD’s estimate. Ms. Weitzer asked for confirmation of this date. Ms. Cardenas asked Mr. Nick Pendorf when this would be done. Mr. Pendorf replied that GSD will try their best to speed it up; certain things done by the subcontractors are out of GSD’s direct control. Mr. Lewis asked if the Zoo could do anything to help increase access to the site for the contractors. Mr. Pendorf replied he would look into that and ask. Ms. Weitzer asked whether the Zoo’s Front Entrance needed a height variance. Ms. Abano replied yes. Ms. Weitzer suggested that BOE call her office if any issues arise with Building and Safety or Planning. Ms. Cardenas requested Ms. Abano to meet with Ms. Weitzer to give her a full briefing on these issues, to see what assistance she can provide. Ms. Cardenas asked Ms. Abano if these issues impact the move to the temporary site and if anything could be done to speed this up. The Committee briefly discussed case management and the need to confer and resolve issues expeditiously.

Rainforest of the Americas

Portico is in the construction document phase. Portico will complete design depending building on the MICLA funding. The project may proceed into construction or be shelved until funds are obtained.

Reptile and Insect Interpretative Center

BOE has completed a review of Portico’s 100% construction documents. Portico is revising the documents in preparation for bidding. The documents are also going through BAS plan check approval. The project is anticipated to go to bid in July 2008.

The Golden Monkey Exhibit

Ms. Abano noted that DWP is doing two transformers, one of which is TS1A, which is replacing the current transformer sitting inside the elephant barn. DWP is in the procurement process for that transformer. They anticipate getting the transformer within the next few weeks.

Ms. Abano concluded her report.


Mr. Lewis reported that the only status change since last month is the Zoo signed an amendment to the agreement with the Chinese government. The amendment states that once the permits have been obtained from both the Chinese and United States governments, the monkeys will be here within thirty days.
The Zoo’s permit from U.S. Fish and Wildlife service had expired; as soon as they sign and send it to the Zoo, the Zoo will forward that on to China, which will then give their export permit. The Zoo’s permit has moved at a much faster pace than most institutional permits do.

Ms. Cardenas asked Mr. Lewis if he had a template for a timeline on when the exhibit would open to the public. She also asked when the Certificate of Occupancy would be obtained for the project. Ms. Abano replied within the next couple of weeks. After the new equipment is tested, the BAS inspector will sign off and the Certificate will be obtained the same day. Ms. Cardenas asked if it was feasible to put another monkey in the exhibit until the golden monkeys are received. Mr. Lewis replied no, the current hope is to have the animals in the exhibit by August or September 2008. The recent earthquake in China was not a help; a trip to hand deliver the permit was cancelled due to the earthquake. Mr. Lewis stated that the process was moving. He doesn’t want to put another species in the exhibit because the Zoo doesn’t have any on site. He doesn’t want to bring something in for a short-term exhibit and then have to move the animals out again.

Mr. Miller suggested that if the permit hadn’t been obtained by the next meeting, then the Committee talk about other ways to secure it.

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

Ms. Connie Morgan noted that as reported last month, the funds have been transferred. Ms. Aguilar stated that the funds have been received; she will be sending GLAZA a print screen showing the account.

Ms. Morgan stated that GLAZA is finishing up the last gifts to complete the fundraising process for the Pachyderm Forest.

Next Meeting: Ms. Cardenas stated that a tentative meeting is scheduled for July 2008. If any issues arise on the Pachyderm Forest project, the Committee will meet in June.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Ms. Cardenas adjourned the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

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