Committee Members Present:

Patricia Huber, Assistant City Administrative Officer (CAO), Chair
Ivania Sobalvarro, Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA)
Deanna Gomez, Mayor’s Office
John Lewis, Los Angeles Zoo

Others Present:

Claudia Aguilar, Maria Cardenas, CAO; Renee Weitzer, Council District 4; Jeb Bonner,
Connie Morgan, Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association (GLAZA); Rebecca Abano,
Public Works Bureau of Engineering (BOE); Kyla May, Darryl Pon, Los Angeles Zoo.

Ms. Patricia Huber called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

1. Minutes for Approval – Meeting of September 24, 2009

Mr. John Lewis moved to approve the Zoo Bond Oversight Committee (ZBOC) special meeting minutes of October 29, 2009. No objections were made and the motion passed unanimously.

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 October 2009, $117.9M has been expended of the $172M approved budget. No changes were made to the total Program Budget to date. A detailed expenditure report is found in Section 3 of the Monthly Report.

Master Program Schedule

Through the end of October 2009, the Zoo’s three active projects are all on schedule. The overall program completes in June 2012.

Status of Active Projects

Pachyderm Forest

BOE has obtained all the Department of Building and Safety (DBS) signoffs for the project’s Phase II work.
All necessary paperwork has been submitted to DBS for the Certificate of Occupancy, which is anticipated to be obtained shortly.

Construction of Phase III work is 50% complete. Phase III activities include building up the India waterfall with shotcrete, constructing the new elephant barn and Cambodia and Thai viewing structures, continued excavation and grading of the elephant barrier foundation, as well as the elephant barriers. Ms. Abano introduced Mr. Sam Saifan, from the contractor AKG/Saifco Joint Venture.

**Rainforest of the Americas**

Portico continues with the design on the project. BOE is coordinating the lessons learned on the two other projects into the Rainforest design, such as geotechnical issues related to placing foundations on existing uncertified fill. This may move the design completion to a later date, but the recently approved schedule has float built in to accommodate that.

**Reptile and Insect Interpretative Center**

Construction is 6% complete. Royal Construction continues with demolition, excavation, grading, compaction, and underground utility work on this site. Unforeseen underground utilities and geotechnical challenges have been encountered, which are being resolved. These geotechnical issues will cause the construction completion to be extended. A time and materials change order has been issued to the contractor to resolve some of the geotechnical issues. Until the work is completed, it is unknown what the complete impact of that work will be on the project.

Ms. Abano concluded her report.

Ms. Maria Cardenas asked if Ms. Abano had an estimate on the geotechnical cost for the Reptile and Insect Interpretative Center project. Ms. Abano replied that BOE doesn’t think the cost will exceed $100K at this time. It’s more of time impact rather than a cost impact. Ms. Cardenas asked if the project had change orders. Ms. Abano replied not as of that day.

Mr. Sam Saifan, of AKG/Saifco Joint Venture, gave a slide presentation on the progress of the Pachyderm Forest project from September through October 2009. At that time 90% of Concrete Masonry Units (CMU) work had been finished on the elephant barn. The mezzanine steel floor embeds were installed. The shop drawings have been approved by DBS.

Mr. Saifan presented photos of the levels of the elephant barn construction from September 2009 to October 2009. A photo of the model for the India waterfall was shown for perspective, followed by a progress photo of the waterfall’s ongoing construction. The construction will include a platform for the Zoo’s visitors to have an overview of the waterfall.
The remaining foundations around the waterfall have been poured; plus a wall of the service tunnel behind the waterfall was poured. An additional foundation in the front was dug and poured. Scaffold was placed in preparation to form the tunnel roof, which is the top of the waterfall. Mr. Saifan detailed construction of the waterfall for the Committee.

The next photo shown was of the Cambodia structure. The east wall was formed, which is a retaining wall next to the visitors’ path. Foundations were poured to connect it to a bigger sump, and drains were installed for structural reasons. Once the waterproofing and drains were done, the shoring was removed. This was shown in sequential photos. Mr. Saifan described the excavation, preparation and construction of a deep basement to hold the big pool sump and its supporting equipment to treat the pool. This deep sump is thirty feet deep below grade, which required shoring. This was finished in September 2009. Mr. Saifan gave more details of the intricate construction of this portion of the project.

The Thai structure had its remaining retaining walls excavated, and foundations for the remaining walls were poured. The structure sits on piers; it is basically a shed structure overlooking Yard One of the exhibit.

Yard One, which is basically around the elephant barn, just had its many retaining walls 100% finished. Mr. Saifan showed a photo of the retaining walls’ rebar, prior to pouring concrete. He described the layout of the retaining walls around the yard.

The next structure shown was the north pool; the exhibit has two pools, north and south. The dirt from the excavations hindered construction movement, so the dirt was moved behind the retaining walls to open up the pool area. The neighboring Reptile and Insect Interpretative Center project received some of the dirt. Also, during excavation, an existing gas line was found to cross the pool and had to be rerouted.

Mr. Saifan concluded his presentation by stating that two weeks ago, the project was 50% complete schedule-wise. AKG/Saifco feels confident that they will finish the project on time. All this work would not be possible without the cooperation and help of all the team at all levels to resolve issues and make things happen.

Ms. Renee Weitzer asked how many square feet the elephant barn was. Mr. Saifan replied it was around 200 feet by 200 feet, almost 40,000 square feet. The Committee continued to discuss various elements of Pachyderm Forest project.

3. BOE to Report on Status of Gorilla Waterfall Issue

Ms. Abano reported that BOE is preparing the bid documents for this waterfall fix. Potential construction and house issues related to the fix need to be coordinated with the Zoo, such as where the contractor accesses the area and the laydown area. A visitor path will be taken out while this work is done, so BOE will have to coordinate closely with the Zoo.
Mr. Lewis stated that yesterday, he asked his senior staff if the waterfall needs to be fixed, or if instead some of the space could be captured for landscaping and then have some static pools within the exhibit. The fix is becoming very difficult operationally, not to mention the potential $300K cost. The problem with the Gorilla waterfall failure was recapped for Ms. Weitzer. Discussion ensued regarding the logistics of accessing the site for the repair, and the need for a waterfall within the Gorilla Exhibit.

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

Ms. Connie Morgan reported that GLAZA is now updating their donors with a written communication with photos on the progress of the Pachyderm Forest construction. She thinks the donors will be very excited to see how the elephant barn has gone up, how the pools are being formed, etc.

GLAZA recently received a $5,000 gift, has some requests in progress, and expects to be closing on a gift in December 2009.

Public Comment

Ms. Weitzer recounted visiting the San Diego Zoo recently and her disappointment with its new elephant exhibit, which she found to be a ‘city of steel’.

Next Meeting: December 17, 2009

Ms. Huber adjourned the meeting at 10:37 a.m.

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