

NIABI ZOO OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES FROM JULY 25, 2016

PRESENT: Committee members . J. Taylor, J. Craver, T. Brahm, T. Jarrett, L. Jackson, M. Byrne, W. Nelson.

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT: Steve Ballard, Forest Preserve District President; Dan Meates, Assistant Zoo Director; Scarlet Behrens, Guest Services Manager; Hannah Frenell, Zoo Field Office Manager; Scott Hesselberg, Zoo Maintenance Superintendent; Catherine Grace, Schultz & Williams; Rick Biddle, Schultz & Williams; John Ferrell, Niabi Zoological Society; Scott Lohman.

Chairman Taylor called the meeting of the Niabi Zoo Oversight Committee to order at 5:30 PM on Monday, July 25, 2016, in the Education Room of the Administration Building at Niabi Zoo in Coal Valley, Illinois.

Roll was called:

T. Brahm, J. Craver, L. Jackson, T. Jarrett, J. Taylor, M. Byrne, W. Nelson.

Total Present 7

Total Absent 0

Chairman Taylor called for a motion approving the minutes from the June 8, 2016 meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Brahm moved to approve the minutes from the June 8, 2016 meeting. Mr. Jarrett seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Chairman Taylor called for a motion to approve the closed session minutes from February 16, 2016.

MOTION: Mr. Byrne moved to approve the closed session minutes from February 16, 2016. Mr. Brahm seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Chairman Taylor called on Mr. Ferrell to share his thoughts and ideas for the meet and greet for Mr. Jackson.

Mr. Ferrell stated that the Society was looking at two functions. One would be a smaller introduction to the business community, and the second event would be a fundraising meet and greet. There should be more information on those in a week or two.

Chairman Taylor called on Mr. Biddle, and asked if there was anything more as far as an update from Schultz & Williams.

Mr. Biddle stated that everything was covered in the previous meeting. There will be a document put together to summarize all that was discussed at that meeting.

Chairman Taylor called on Mr. Jackson for an update.

Mr. Jackson stated that were new reptiles added to the collection. Have been pursuing some temporary exhibits for next year including a stingray touch pool. Staff is also looking at the possibility for charging for parking, probably \$3.00 per vehicle, which would help generate some revenue. Shading for some animals has been an issue, and solutions for those issues are being looked into. The pond out in the front would benefit from a fountain; it would be a much more aesthetically pleasing for visitors. We're looking at something very simple for that. Would also like to propose raising the ticket price for the train to \$3.00 starting next year. Right now the closest place that has our model of train is the St. Louis Zoo, and they charge \$7.50.

Mr. Ferrell stated that if that were the case it would be good to raise the carousel also. Currently they are the same price, and they should probably continue to match each other. Will bring that up at the next meeting of the Society.

There was a brief discussion on the impact to the budget and the visitor experience, and what the most cost effective way would be for charging for parking.

Mr. Jackson stated that another fees adjustment that should be considered is the memberships. Would like to raise the Basic membership to \$45.00 from \$35.00, the Single Parent Family/Grandparent to \$65.00 from \$55.00, Premium Membership to \$110.00 from \$105.00, and add two new categories. Zoo Booster at \$250.00, which is Family or Grandparent Membership with five free guest passes they can use any way they'd like. The second is Zoo Benefactor at \$500.00, which is a Family or Grandparent Premium Membership and five free guest passes to use any way they'd like.

Mr. Brahm suggested adding in some recognition for the Benefactor Membership.

Mr. Byrne clarified that the membership increases would have to be approved by the Society since the memberships are done through the Society.

Mr. Jackson stated that he would be bringing this to the Society Board. Next issue to discuss is the toxoplasmosis in the soil at the Aviary Walk-Through. There is a possibility that it will be less expensive to fix than originally thought. More information on that when it becomes available. Senior Staff will begin sessions on the Master Plan for the zoo.

Chairman Taylor stated to let him know if the Bureau could provide any data that might assist in that endeavor. Then called on Mr. Ferrell for an update from the Society.

Mr. Ferrell stated that there were two documents to sign over to the zoo. One for the x-ray machine, and one for the gators. There is also a thank you letter to the donors for the gators. Society approved the fountain and \$10,000.00 for the reptile house. The playground is nearly done, and we're waiting on the word to release the remainder of those funds. The golf outing was successful. Pints for Preservation will be August 20th. Member's night is coming up soon. We've had one meeting with the Mallards to explore partnering with them. There will need to be a second meeting before any of that could move forward.

It was mentioned that Budgets would be going in front of the Forest Preserve Committee at the next meeting.

Mr. Byrne asked if the Oversight Committee could see the budget being proposed.

Mr. Jackson stated that a copy could be provided.

Mr. Byrne asked Mr. Ferrell if the Society could move their meetings to be closer to the Oversight meetings.

Mr. Ferrell stated that it could be looked into, but there would have to be a more consistent meeting schedule for the Oversight Committee.

Chairman Taylor asked for options for the next meeting of the Oversight Committee.

After a brief discussion the next meeting was set for August 8, 2016 at 5:30pm. It was also decided to try and get back to the previous schedule for the Oversight Committee.

Adjourned at 6:07 PM.

Submitted by:
Cassie Sullivan
Forest Preserve Administrative Assistant