



GIANT PANDA ACQUISITION TASK FORCE

2010-11-09

3:00 p.m.

Toronto Zoo Administrative Boardroom
361A Old Finch Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M1B 5K7

MINUTES

Present: Dr. M. Cheung (Chair), Councillor R. Cho, Councillor G. Mammoliti,
Mr. J. Torzsok, Mr. B. Pitcher

Regrets: Dr. G. Chong, Ms. S. Chong, Mr. M. Cheung, Ms. G. Li, Mr. J. Man,
Mr. M. Rowswell, Ms. C. Yelle

Staff Present: Ms. S. Curtis, Ms. S. Gunton, Mr. R. Hale, Dr. W. Rapley,
Mr. J. Tracogna, Ms. S. Young

1. Minute Approval

On a motion by Councillor G. Mammoliti, the Giant Panda Acquisition Task Force minutes of 2010-07-08 were approved. **(Carried)**

2. Member's Visit to China Updates

Dr. M. Cheung explained there is a tentative agreement on pandas and noted there has been some confusion in the media. The consortium of Toronto, Calgary and Granby zoos were represented by their CEOs in Beijing. A Letter of Intent was signed by the Secretary General (CAZG) and the CEOs of the three Canadian zoos. The details of the agreement are being worked out.

This is a panda conservation and research program, first and foremost. A pair of pandas would come to Canada, first to the Toronto Zoo, then moving to Calgary and Granby zoos after a certain period of time. The male panda has been assigned, while the female has not been named or assigned. The conservation fee will go towards research and conservation for pandas in the wild in China.

Mr. J. Tracogna emphasized this is a cooperation agreement for a conservation exchange between the two countries. This needs to be explained at the November Board of Management meeting. Mr. J. Tracogna noted that the travel to China also included a stop at the Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding Centre and a panda facility at Ocean Park in Hong Kong.

Dr. Cheung explained about the sequence of moving the pandas to the next zoo if a panda is pregnant or has a cub. The animals' welfare will come first and all three zoos understand and agree that this may delay a move.

Councillor R. Cho thanked Dr. M. Cheung on behalf of the Board of Management and Task Force for his efforts in this process.

3. Next Steps

Mr. J. Tracogna explained that staff will be preparing a report to the Board of Management meeting of 2010-11-25, with an update.

Staff has been reviewing facility options and are confident with an estimate of \$10M for the facility costs. It should be noted that after the pandas leave we have a legacy facility that can be used for housing other animals.

Councillor G. Mammoliti explained that we should have a back-up plan in the event the other two zoos decide not to participate. Councillor G. Mammoliti advised that the Zoo should seek a private partner to fund the panda project. A recommendation will go forward to the Board on 2010-11-25.

Dr. M. Cheung raised the issue of having a single spokesperson on the panda project. This should be someone who can speak on behalf of the GPTF, who is clear and factual, and suggested that the spokesperson be Councillor R. Cho as Chair of the Board of Management. Councillor G. Mammoliti advised there are currently four spokespersons: Chair of the Fundraising Committee, Zoo CEO, Chair of the Board of Management and Dr. W. Rapley, Executive Director of Conservation, Education & Research. A discussion ensued and it was decided to keep the status quo. A briefing note should be prepared by staff and provided to all Board members prior to the November Board meeting. This will summarize the relevant information for Board members. In the future, if the media contacts a board member, the call should be referred to the CEO, to avoid confusion for the public.

Dr. M. Cheung advised that there would be a meeting of the Task Force when the agreement is signed back by the Chinese officials. We will let the members know when this will occur.

Dr. M. Cheung enquired if it would be possible to obtain an attractive preliminary design at this time? Mr. R. Hale said that it is a too early for a design, without having an agreement. If we partner with a company, they would be doing the design with our specifications.

4. New Business

No new business was discussed.

5. Next Meeting Date

To be determined.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:20 p.m.

A. Harris

Recording Secretary