



City of Albuquerque
Cultural Services Department

**ABQ BioPark Advisory Group
MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, January 5, 2021 4:00- 5:00 pm
Via Zoom Video Conference**

Members Present

Christine Glidden
Jeremiah Gwin
Karl Horak
Adam Silverman
Kristina Chong
Christine Wilson

Staff Present

Stephanie Stowell, BioPark Administrator

Guests Present

JT Jones, Assistant Curator
Matthew Peterson, Botanic Garden Heritage Farm Manager
Marisa Ortiz, BioPark Project Coordinator
Brandon Gibson, Deputy Director Department of Arts and Culture

- I. **Call to Order** – Stephanie Stowell began recording and Adam Silverman called the meeting to order shortly after 4:00 PM. Meeting agenda shared on screen so board could review.
- II. **Approval of Agenda** – Christine called to approve agenda and Kristina seconded.
- III. **Approval of the Minutes** – Minutes from January 5th meeting were shared on screen to be reviewed. Jeremy Gwin moved to approve. Kristina Chong seconded.
- IV. **Public Comments** – Members shared brief introductions. Public guests introduced themselves.

- Katya asks for clarification regarding Heritage Farms and its purpose. Is husbandry the main focus?
- Sandy adds to this sentiment regarding the Heritage Farm at the garden. Would like to see more emphasis on plants at the garden.

V. Introductions and Reports

- **JT** begins report on Heritage Farms. Clarifies that there are three main concepts to the purpose of the farms. 1. Regenerative agriculture 2. History of NM 3. Conservation. He emphasizes the determination of embracing biodiversity. In highlighting practices he mentions that education, engagement, sustainability are all crucial for the comprehensive storyline. Things like water, soil health, and land management are all important in terms of youth education and sustainability. Marisa assists JT by guiding us visually with a site and base plan of the Farms. Through each area of the Farm JT describes the plans and current focus. Public engagement with animals is crucial while maintaining our own standards, quality of life as well as being AZA compliant.
- **Stephanie** clarifies that we are not expanding our permanent animal collections.
- **JT** confirms that we are not increasing the size of our permanent collection overall. He mentions we are not in the business of breeding animals but instead strive to highlight sustainable agriculture as we are an educational facility first and foremost. Heritage Farm plan included information about keeping the permanent collection essentially the same but occasionally expanding the footprint by bringing in loaned cattle and horses for shorter periods of time, which explained why the proposed barns spaces were so large.
- **Brandon** mentions that the indigenous design and planning aide came from professors at UNM and we are grateful for their education regarding accurate representation.
- **Marisa** relays question from public regarding how many animals the farm currently has.
- **JT** says he does not have exact number but we maintain AZA standards and NM Livestock standards with quality of care as a priority.
- **Marisa** reiterates that we do not slaughter animals.
- **JT** confirms. We promote heritage breeds that are regionally adapted and ecologically beneficial.
- **Jeremy** mentions concern that some of the animal breeds are being showcased exclusively for their value as being slaughtered as food. Is there a distinguishing purpose for why those breeds belong in the BioPark, rather than showcasing breeds that aren't raised for slaughter? We would want to be as sensitive as possible regarding how some BioPark guests might feel about showcasing

animals used for slaughter stock. Following up – Does BioPark give a lease or easement to MRGCD? Do we know total acreage?

- **Brandon** answers that there is a long standing intergovernmental agreement and it is currently in revision. Do not have total acreage number.
- **Judith Phillips and Sandy Barnett** both made comments during the meeting regarding support for preserving and re-establishing the Cottonwood Gallery, including restoration of the ponds, in the interest of the Nature's Notebook efforts to document impacts of climate change. Members of staff at some point later in the meeting. Staff expressed support of getting the Cottonwood Gallery back in shape.

Time check!

- VI. **Announcements/Ongoing Project Updates** – group decides to move Master Plan update to another meeting because of time.
- Stephanie gives updates regarding Strategic Planning effort. Utilizing Zoo Advisors firm to aide in leadership, programmatic and guest engagement workshops. This will go through July in a couple of phases. Information gathering is phase 1 and the Advisory Board will likely be a focus group along with other stakeholders. Hiring update – Matthew Peterson is welcomed! More key positions are being filled. Associate Director was posted and there are many well qualified applicants.
 - Jeremy inquires where further information regarding discussion today can be found.
 - Stephanie informs that any questions can be sent to her and she will forward to appropriate staff.
- VII. **New Business** – No new business.
- VIII. **Next Regular Meeting** – March 2, 2021 - 4:00 – 5:00 pm
- IX. **Adjourn** – Christine Glidden motioned to adjourn and Kristina Chong seconded. Meet was adjourned at 5:10 PM.

Approved: *christine glidden*
christine glidden (Mar 6, 2021 06:54 MST)

Christine Glidden, Chair

Mar 6, 2021

Date