



City of Albuquerque
Cultural Services Department

**ABQ BioPark Advisory Group
MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, November 3, 2020 4:00- 5:00 pm
Via Zoom Video Conference**

Members Present

Christine Glidden
Jeremiah Gwin
Karl Horak
Adam Silverman
Kristina Chong

Staff Present

Stephanie Stowell, BioPark Administrator

Guests Present

Marisa Ortiz, BioPark Project

- I. **Call to Order** – S Stowell began recording and C Glidden called the meeting to order shortly after 4:00 pm. Meeting agenda was shared on-screen so board could review if necessary.
- II. **Approval of Agenda** – A Silverman moved to approve the agenda. K Horak seconded.
- III. **Approval of the Minutes** – No minutes from the last meeting. S Stowell informed members that she has been unable to locate minutes from the last meeting.
- IV. **Public Comments** – no public comments; no requests for public link to meeting.
- V. **Introductions and Reports** – Members shared brief introductions. All expressed enthusiasm for the future of the Board. This was both J Gwin and S Stowell’s first meeting with the Advisory Group. Marisa Ortiz, guest, also introduced herself.

VI. Announcements/Ongoing Project Updates

Chair Updates: C Glidden informed members of the updated City ordinance for alignment of boards and commissions across the City. The revisions will result in changes to membership composition – expanding the board from 9-13 members – one for each district 1-9, three at-large and one for a representative from the BioPark Society. The City is in the process now of working with City Council on how to transition current members into this new composition. Questions were asked about where to locate the new ordinance and if this overrides existing BioPark Advisory Group guidelines. Discussion about representation and questions about Society involvement were raised. Members expressed interest in more active engagement.

GRT Updates: M Ortiz provided members with an overview of both the Asia and Heritage Farm GRT-funded projects.

The site plan for Asia was shared. Most of the BioPark's Asian species will be relocated including orangutans, siamangs, tiger, snow leopards and Stellar's sea eagle. Plans also include an overlook to the elephant exhibit along with an informal event space (100ppl). Original total in master plan was \$24.8 M current construction alone is \$24M but not out to bid yet. Entry village will set the stage/transitional zone and establish story line: our animals, unique adaptations, how they coexist in habitats, wildlife trafficking and IUCN and conservation. Field camp will give guests an opportunity to explore and discover endangered species. Questions were asked about staff needs, in particular horticulture. S Stowell explained the sequencing related to species moves and how those moves then allow for future GRT projects to come online. Discussion around budget and impacts of COVID.

The site plan for Heritage Farm was shared along with the train plans for the Botanic Garden. Train will circumvent the Cottonwood Gallery and go through expanded Farm and offer guests new views into the BioPark. Education building and Cider Barn remain. Entrance to the Farm will remain largely the same. Cattle barn and guest interactive space will be expanded. Storyline is focused on historical influences on the legacy of New Mexican farming (Native, Spanish and Anglo influences). We will also be working with stakeholders to relocate Duranes Ditch. Questions were asked/discussed around wetland impacts in Cottonwood Gallery, flood irrigation in the orchard, placement of cattle barn and potential impacts to Japanese Garden and ideas for bringing guests closer to the experience. Stephanie explained that the Interactive Animal Barn is dedicated to bringing guests to the center of the animal experience with rotating animals and up-close interactive opportunities.

Other GRT projects were presented including: guest sidewalk improvements; improved entrance to polar bears, animal pools, Raptor Roost and Birds of the Islands.

General BioPark Updates: S Stowell covered a number of overarching BioPark updates. Leadership Changes – an overview of the updated senior leadership team structure of the BioPark was shared along with an update on hiring progress on key positions. Admission Contract – an update was shared that the City Council approved the RFP for the New Mexico BioPark Society and we are moving forward with contract development. AZA Accreditation – updated accreditation application has been submitted to AZA; unsure of timeline for current inspection cycle but looking like early in 2021.

- VII. **New Business** A Silver brought up functionality concerns for Hold My Ticket and integration opportunities to provide better service to guests. Visitation fluctuations and testing of different operating hours were also discussed. K Horak brought up the Group’s Annual Report and requested any minutes that could be found. J Gwin asked to discuss how the Advisory Group can bring more public input to the BioPark.
- VIII. **Next Regular Meeting** – January 5, 2021 - 4:00 – 5:00 pm
- IX. **Adjourn** J Gwin motioned to adjourn, and K Horak seconded. Meet was adjourned at 5:26pm

Approved: _____
Christine Glidden, Chair

Date