

MINUTES

WAYNE COUNTY ZOOLOGICAL AUTHORITY

Tuesday, December 16, 2025 - 9:00 a.m.

Hearing Room 704, Guardian Building, 500 Griswold, Detroit, and on Zoom.us

A. Roll Call - 9:34 a.m.

Alisha Bell (C)	-	Present
David Katz	-	Present
Terry Marecki	-	Present
Mario Morrow	-	Present
Assad I. Turfe	-	Present

B. Morrow/Marecki **Approved.** The minutes from the June 24, 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

C. Unfinished Business – None

D. New Business

1. Katz/Morrow **Approved.** The contract with Lewis & Munday, PC. Motion carried.

Pamela Fordham, Commission Acting Clerk, explained that Commission staff was informed by the State of Michigan that the Zoological Authority and the Art Authority are eligible for benefits under the Small Business Taxpayer Exemption Program. The Zoological Authority's 2023 amount is approximately \$5,400. She stated that Lewis & Munday was retained to assist in securing the funds.

2. Marecki/Katz **Approved.** The Wayne County Zoological Authority amended budget for Fiscal Year 2026 Motion carried.

3. Update on Zoo Operations

Dr. Haley Murphy, Executive Director and CEO of the Detroit Zoological Society, and DeAndrea Matthews, Vice President of Access and Community Engagement, provided an update on Zoo operations, programming and community outreach. They reported that attendance was slightly below projections through November, due in part to the I-696 closure and broader economic trends, though revenues remained in line with budget and member attendance increased. Highlights included Wild Lights, recent animal births, including a giraffe, lion cubs and the Zoo's first gorilla born on-site, as well as the upcoming Fred and Barbara Erb Discovery Trails expansion.

Ms. Matthews also highlighted community partnerships, educational programming, Dream Night for families of children with chronic or terminal illnesses and Tri-County Senior Day, noting strong participation in both family and senior programs. Board members asked questions regarding attendance trends, free community access ticket distribution, Dream Night registration, and school partnerships. The Board expressed appreciation for the Zoo's conservation efforts, educational outreach and continued service to Wayne County residents.

- E. Such other matters as may be properly submitted before the Committee.
- F. Public Comments – Public comments were offered by Glenn Schwartz.
- G. Adjournment

Turfe/Katz

Adjournment at 10:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Octavia Hunter, Legislative Research Assistant