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CITY OF SANTA ANA

20 Civic Center Plaza • P.O. Box 1988
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August 9, 2007

Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Dear Chairperson:

The Santa Ana Zoo at Prentice Park, a division of the Santa Ana Parks, Recreation & Community Services Agency, has reviewed the findings of the Orange County Grand Jury, specifically F-1 of the report released on April 23, 2007. The report stated that the Santa Ana Zoo has no formal written training plan for zoo keepers. It relies on the ability to get new employees trained either by existing staff and/or the courses/seminars offered by AZA. This could lead to problems in the proper care and feeding of animals if the key staff were to leave.

Although the Santa Ana Zoo does not have an adopted formal written training plan for keepers, the zoo does have a written keeper training manual and a training plan outline for probationary keepers at the family farm and main zoo. We are currently reviewing the keeper manual to expand, update, and revise it as necessary. In addition, we are incorporating monthly training sessions for keepers into our veterinarian rounds with our contract veterinarian for topics pertinent to veterinary care, zoonotic diseases, and veterinarian technician procedures. We are also instituting training topics into one of the weekly keeper meetings each month. The zoo also regularly sends keepers to training seminars and classes conducted by outside agencies, including the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK), for training in such topics as chemical capture and restraint, operant conditioning and animal enrichment, and animal management and husbandry. The formal written training plan is scheduled to be completed in 90 days.

With respect to animal care the Grand Jury should be aware that all of the keeper positions at the Santa Ana Zoo have prior animal experience and educational requirements as part of the minimum qualifications to be eligible for hire, which along with our in-service training and supervision by senior and curatorial staff ensures consistent quality care for the animals in our collection.

Your comments and concerns for the care of the animals at the Santa Ana Zoo as well as those at the Orange County Zoo are appreciated and you are to be congratulated for your diligence and thoroughness of your investigation.

Sincerely,

Ronald J. Glazier
Zoo Manager
Santa Ana Zoo at Prentice Park

Gerardo Mouet
Executive Director
Parks, Recreation & Community Services Agency