

# Board Meeting

## December 28, 2023



**Board Members Present:** Dr. Ashley Malmlov, George Ellis, Joe Spahn, Maria Glover & Toni Scalera (Chair)

**Staff Members Present:** Pat Craig

### Acceptance/Changes

- I. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved with no changes.

### Approvals/Denials

- I. Members discussed and approved the upgraded fence project at the Craig, CO Horse Refuge. This half-million-dollar project will provide the corrals, pasture fencing and barn needed for receiving and working with mustangs. The project is being undertaken in cooperation with the BLM in order to increase adoption rates by pre-gentling mustangs prior to adoption events.
- II. Members discussed and approved the purchase of Lily Farms Event Center for 1.1 million dollars.
- III. Members completed and approved the Executive Director's annual review.
- IV. Members reviewed and approved the organization's annual compensation report, and upon further discussion, have approved the proposed increases for corporate officers.
- V. Board members discussed and approved the offer from IEAS Board to assume operational control of their staff and facility.
- VI. Members reviewed and approved the attached 2024 budget.

### Updates

- I. Successful rescues for 2023 included another trip to South Korea in order to rescue an African Serval, a major 5-month long rescue in Puerto Rico, a major rescue with the Virginia Attorney General's Office in Virginia, and a PETA cooperative rescue in Myrtle Beach, SC. 22
- II. The Board completed its own annual review and has scored in the excellent range for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row.
- III. More than 23 million dollars was raised over the past 12-months which is considered a major accomplishment given the status of the economy and general social turmoil that has escalated this year.
- IV. The Wild Horse Refuge has continued to rescue Colorado mustangs and is currently accommodating more than 110 mustangs on the property. The Craig, CO facility was approved for a minimum of 240 horses to date and the Refuge will continue to work with BLM officials to increase the capacity while maintaining the property in a responsible manner. Founders continue to purchase land for the horses at \$777 an acre. This program will continue until all of the acreage has been paid for. Executive Director, Pat Craig, will work with Land Trust organizations to explore Conservation Easements for this property as well.
- V. The Sanctuary was able to secure an additional 420-acres of land adjacent to the Keenesburg facility. Currently, there are no plans to expand habitats onto this acreage, as it needs to be reclaimed and have new grass seed planted, so that it will be in proper condition for use at some point in the future.
- VI. The 41-acres of land belonging to the International Exotic Animal Sanctuary has been successfully transferred to TWAS, which settles the outstanding debt that was owed to TWAS by IEAS. The accountants and auditors have reviewed the transfer and subsequently applied the credit toward IEAS's outstanding debt. With this transfer, IEAS no longer owes TWAS anything through the end of 2023.

### New Topics

- I. The Board discussed the concept of turning the soon to be acquired Events Center into an office for Sanctuary administration. Executive Director, Pat Craig, and Chief Administrative Officer, Michelle McGraw, will explore the costs and general viability of this proposal and get back to the Board members with more details related to this idea.
- II. The Board agreed to investigate and discuss further a possible retirement package for Executive Director, Pat Craig. The Sanctuary's Founder and Executive Director has no immediate plans for retirement but given his 44 years of service – which nearly half of which went unpaid – it is the desire of this Board to propose a fair and financially responsible plan to fund his retirement going forward.
- III. The issue of recruiting and retaining new hires was discussed at length. It is a pervasive theme among all businesses these days and it was a very important topic for the Board to discuss. Board members discussed numerous issues relating to both the need for candidates with the proper skills that are required for most positions within the organization, and the high turnover of recently hired staff. A solution to the issue of people failing to perform the duties of their position, as well as expecting

extremely high salaries for entry-level work, is desperately needed. Members chose to form a sub committee to explore options and potential solutions to this problem and provide a report at the next Board meeting in early 2024.

- IV. The IEAS Board of Directors has requested The Wild Animal Sanctuary assume operational control of their facility and fold their operations into TWAS on an official basis. This would include having the staff currently there becoming TWAS employees and our organization assuming all financial aspects as well.

### Assignments

- I. Executive Director, Pat Craig, will work with Michelle McGraw to determine the viability of converting the Events Center into a corporate Office.
- II. The Board's sub-committee on staffing solutions will work with the Sanctuary's HR Director, Natalie Winter, to explore creative avenues for successfully hiring and retaining from within the available labor pool and report back to the Board as soon as possible.
- III. Executive Director, Pat Craig, will continue to work with the Land Trust representatives to implement appropriate Conservation Easements on the Craig, CO property.
- IV. Board members will research the subject of non-profit executive officer retirement plans with the intention of creating a viable plan for TWAS to present to Pat Craig. Potential plans may include concepts such as catching up with a single lump sum payment or possibly utilizing short-term multi-year payments to fully fund the previously non-existing plan.

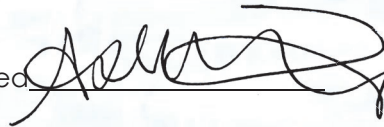
### Conclusion

- I. Meeting ended with no unfinished business.

So noted by the Secretary

Date: 12/28/2023

Signed



Dr. Ashley Malmlov, Secretary

