

## **EXCERPTS FROM BERVIE ZOOLOGICAL PARK'S RESPONSE TO W5**

### **Re: Bervie Zoological Park – W5 – Request for Response**

Thank you for your correspondence of October 6th and October 26th, 2022. We have been asked by the Bervie Zoological Park (the “Park”) to assist in responding. We appreciate the opportunity to have viewed the footage/photos yesterday and to receive your additional questions. In response we note:

**Interaction with Lioness:** The video appears to show interactions between the lioness and a Park staff member with his daughter. It appears clear from the video that safety was maintained at all times as the staff member is not in the enclosure and there is no possibility of any significant interaction given the protective enclosure. While government regulation (Section 7 of O. Reg. 444/19) requires that “(e)very primate kept in captivity must be provided with daily interaction with a person having custody or care of the primate” the Park believes it is beneficial to go beyond what it is required and interact regularly with other animals such as its lions. It seems clear that both the staff member and the lioness are enjoying the interaction. The Park also advises guests that this type of interaction is limited to staff members who are experienced and known to the animal. All guests are also directly supervised by a staff member throughout their visit to ensure safety. In more than 30 years of operation the Park has never had an incident or accident involving either its staff or visitors.

**Snow Macaque:** The video appears to show “Boogie” one of the Park’s snow macaques. Based on many years of experience working with Boogie and other snow macaques, it appears that she is being excited or somewhat overexcited by something occurring outside of her enclosure. It appears the footage was taken while guests were present. Guests are advised by staff that simple behaviours can cause certain animals to have responses. For example, while humans smile with at times their teeth showing, to certain animals including primates this is understood to be an attempt to show superiority by displaying larger teeth that could be used in an altercation. Guests are also advised to keep snacks etc. out of view as the normal reaction of any animal is to respond and become agitated if

they are unable to access what they perceive as a “treat”. At times, however, often inadvertently guests do cause this form of over excitement.

**Removal of Animals:** On April 29, 2022, animals were removed from a barn. It has now been acknowledged that the Park was given no notice and no opportunity to address any concerns. Once the Park was made aware they immediately addressed these issues.

The concern was also in relation to this single barn, which is no longer in use. The balance of the Park’s animals were determined to be properly cared for and remained on-site including the lions, tigers, watusi, water buffalo, kangaroo, yak, deer, black bear, serval, caracal, foxes, coatimundi, mara, ostrich, rhea, cranes, pheasants, parrots etc. In addition, Animal Welfare Services (“AWS”) in fact decided to leave eland and nilgai that were in the barn that day in the care of the Park. Since April, AWS has also returned a number of animals. This demonstrates that beyond this one incident which has now been addressed the Park is properly caring for the animals in its care. At the same time, as a result of the removal, two of the Park’s New Guinea Singing Dogs and a Crested Porcupine have died in the custody of AWS. The removal has also resulted in a detailed complaint involving the veterinarian retained by AWS for the removal. The College of Veterinarians of Ontario (“CVO”) investigation is ongoing.

Yours truly,  
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