



Dear Member of the San Francisco Zoo Community,

As many of you have seen from advertisements over the past few days, ABC-7 plans to air a story at 11 pm tonight about "zoo safety." While we do not know the specifics of the story, we understand that representative(s) from the union, Teamsters Local 856, will be appearing in the story as well as Zoo employees who also function as union stewards for Teamsters 856.

To put some context to this story, Teamsters Local 856 and Zoo management have been in negotiations since September 2013, and the collective bargaining agreement between the two parties has now expired. During negotiations, the Teamsters have sought to make dubious claims about Zoo safety procedures and sought to publicize these claims through the media, working closely with Channel 7 in San Francisco.

The Zoo was approached by Channel 7's "I-Team" but declined their request for an interview over concerns about the impact on confidential negotiations as well as creating a story of bias and sensationalism. The Zoo's Executive Director informed Channel 7's reporter that she would sit for an interview once negotiations have concluded, but instead, ABC-7 has chosen to proceed and air this story during the important "sweeps" rating week. Nevertheless, the Zoo has responded to the station's questions in writing and has provided requested documents.

Most importantly, the Zoo has full confidence in our safety procedures. We have been cited by fellow institutions as a model of emergency preparedness and safety, and we employ safety procedures above and beyond regulatory requirements. The Zoo has received full and complete certifications from all of our oversight organizations, including the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and the USDA.

Lastly, we are using a mediator next week in the hopes of making progress in our negotiations with the Teamsters. We believe negotiations conducted respectfully and privately between all parties are in the best interest of the entire Zoo community.

Again, thank you for being a part of our Zoo community.

The San Francisco Zoological Society

At the San Francisco Zoo, it's our mission to connect people with wildlife, inspire caring for nature and advance conservation action.

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