



MINUTES
BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Monday, July 28, 2008
10: 00 AM
CITY HALL
200 N. Spring St., Room 1070
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Commissioners: Tariq Khero, President
Kathleen Riordan, Vice-President
Glenn Brown
Irene Ponce
Archie J. Quincey, Jr.

COMMISSION MEETING

Commission Vice-President Riordan called the Commission meeting to order at 10:25 AM. Present were Commissioners Riordan, Brown, Ponce and Quincy, Jr.

1. ORAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Spay/Neuter Clinic Evaluations: The Department received proposals in May for our Harbor, West LA, North Central, and East Valley Spay/Neuter Clinics. We are in the process of concluding our evaluation of the proposals and we plan to bring recommendations for awards to the next Commission meeting. We will also be submitting a request to get the RFP back out on the street as soon as possible to solicit vendors for any remaining Clinics after this process is complete.

North Central Clinic: FixNation has vacated the clinic (12,000 cats altered).

Pet Health Insurance: Proposals are in and they will be heard next Tuesday, July 29.

Microchip RFP: Two proposals were received. An evaluation panel has been established and they will meet to review the proposals in August.

Licensing: Department representatives met with the Office of Finance on July 17 to establish process to send late license renewals to an outside agency for collection. On Tuesday, July 22, the Department resumed mailing City Attorney letters (third notices) to dog owners who did not respond to the first 2 renewal notices.

"A House is Not a Home Without a Pet": After further discussions with Pet Care's attorney and the City Attorney, it was decided to make this program available to Real Estate agents directly and let them work out the tax benefits from participating in this program with their own accountants.

New Hope Program Revisions: The approved and revised forms were sent to New Hope partners for them to update their information and begin their monthly reporting beginning with June.

Fee Study: The Commission approved the department submitting a fee study to the CAO for review in December. We have received some indication that the first level of CAO review is now complete. It is our hope that this means the study will be forwarded to the Finance Committee for approval. The CAO based this year's budget on revenue projections recommended in this Fee Study. We are now into the current budget year and the fee study is still not approved or implemented.

Beverly Hills contract: the first level of CAO review has been initiated.

Registry Solicitations: The Department is advertising for dog and cat breed registries and associations who need to be recognized by the Board in accordance with our new spay and neuter law. Applications are coming in and we will have a list of registries in August for the Board's review.

Medical Program: The two 4th-Year Students from Western University have been a tremendous assist to our medical program over the past several weeks. Another student will be starting her four-week session on August 4.

Our fifth Veterinarian, Dr. Lynn Whited, started this month and is already making her mark in helping us to treat wildlife in the Centers. We are in the process of interviewing candidates for our Chief Veterinarian position and hope to be able to make our announcement this week.

Monthly vaccine clinic at East Valley. Total: 279 individual vaccinations with 151 patients, 5 microchips and 24 licenses.

Field Operations: Permit Officers participating in a large animal handling training program conducted by LA Zoo.

Reviewing and updating Pet Store Requirements. Hope to post these and make them available to all Pet Stores later this week.

Volunteer Division – The Volunteer Program Manager position has finally been unfrozen. Personnel Department is certing a list for us and we hope to begin interviewing in the next couple of weeks to finally staff this critical position.

I want to commend all the Center Volunteer Liaisons who have really pulled together to maintain their volunteer programs at the Center level.

Bottle Baby/ Foster Program- LAAS have received more than 4,000 unweaned kittens since January 2008. That is an increase of 1,000 unweaned kittens compared to the same 6 month period in 2007. As the kittens continue to be turned in, New Hope/Bottle Baby Coordinators continue to seek more foster parents to foster neonate kittens. New Hope Coordinators continue to recruit more foster parents and conduct orientations. More sustainable kittens and queens with kittens are being sent to Mission center until they are weaned and can be returned to the centers for adoption.

Special Events –

- August 2nd Found Animals Foundation Event, The Big Lick WLA (possible to include all of the centers)
- August 2nd and 3rd Taste of San Pedro Adoption event

Please join us at our website: www.LAAnimalServices.com

West Valley has moved all of the rabbits back into the rabbit area and have obtained two portable air coolers to adequately maintain the temperature in the rabbit area. Alive! Newsletter the All Cities Employee's Club, will feature 5 adoptable animals from one of our shelters each month. For September, the Newsletter will feature the animals from the West Valley Center.

North Central will host the next in-house vaccination clinic on August 28th. We are progressing in converting a storage room into an x-ray room to support our medical team.

Mission Continue to modify guidelines for animals transferred to Mission Center to fully utilize space and reduce inventory at Centers

- Mission capacity was established at 100-120 animals
- Queens with litters and Personal Property, when animals will be kept for lengthy periods of time, are now transferable
- Mission's current inventory is 96 animals

Harbor has had the Misting system installed. The misters automatically turn on when the temperature reaches 85 degrees.

South Los Angeles has converted their grooming room into an additional cat room to provide more space for the large number of cats being turned in. SLA staff is planning an adoption event, "Hot Dogs, Kool Cats" in September.

East Valley Reviewing Rabbit Area at East Valley for improvements, considering reptile room.

West Los Angeles Found Animals Foundation is sponsoring "The Big Lick" an adoption event at WLA on August 2nd.

The Department wide Adopt-a-thon on July 19th and 20th was extremely successful all of the centers exceeded their goal of 20% more adoptions than the previous weekend. To celebrate this achievement a few department managers paid for a pizza party at each of the Centers for all the employees and volunteers.

Several of the local media stations aired the event and continue to do follow up on various animals that came in during the event. The grand total of animals adopted during this time was 539 adoptions. The most animals adopted during any event. A total of 316 animals were impounded during this same timeframe.

Creating a Humane LA: The first Humane LA Workshops has been scheduled for August 6th (11 workshops at various centers over the next 6 months).

Department has a count down clock on its website, counting down to the enforcement date of the Spay/Neuter Ordinance. We are working feverishly on ensuring the infrastructure exists to implement this ordinance come Oct. 1st.

Working with the Mayor's Office, BOE, and the architects and staff on the new South LA Center Design to make sure we apply lessons learned from all of our other Center designs.

Public Comment

Phyllis Daugherty: The Harbor Shelter is great. The way you go into the shelter is through a manual door. If an animal gets out of its kennel, there is no way to stop the animal from escaping directly to the street. There needs to be a fence across the front of the shelter. In so far as a "House is not a Home" program she hopes licensing information is provided in the packet.

2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

C. Election of Officers for 2008-09 (Taken out of Order)

Commissioner Quincey nominated Commissioner Glenn Brown for President. Commissioner Ponce seconded the nomination. Commissioner Brown was elected President of the Animal Services Commission for 2008-09 by a vote of 4-0

Commissioner Ponce nominated Commissioner Kathy Riordan for Vice-President. Commissioner Quincey seconded the nomination. Commissioner Riordan was elected Vice-President of the Animal Services Commission for 2008-09 by a vote of 4-0

Commissioner Ponce was appointed Appeals Commissioner for 2008-09.

A. Approval of the Commission Meeting Minutes for June 9, June 30 and July 14, 2008

Commissioner Quincey made a motion to adopt the minutes for June 9 with the noted changes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riordan and approved by a vote of 4-0.

Commissioner Ponce made a motion to adopt the minutes for June 30 with the noted changes and commented that suggestion by Phyllis Daugherty, on page 5 of the minutes, had merit. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riordan and approved by a vote of 4-0.

Commissioner Ponce made a motion to adopt the minutes for July 14 with the noted changes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riordan and approved by a vote of 4-0.

B. Oral Report by the Commission on Meetings and Events attended.

Commissioners Brown and Quincy had nothing to report.

Commissioner Ponce met with Barry Hall, CFO of Earthlink regarding a fund raiser. She also met with a music producer to cut an album.

Commissioner Riordan attended an event at the home of Robin and Tracey Torme in support of Humane Farming.

3. GENERAL MANAGER RECOMMENDS FOR BOARD ACTION

A. Mandatory Collection of the One-Time \$5.00 Cat Registration Fee for New Adoptions and Owner Redemptions (Continued from the Meeting of July 14, 2008)

That the Board reconsider and approve making mandatory, collection of the existing one-time voluntary \$5.00 cat registration fee, payable at the time of adoption or reunification only, and direct the General Manager to implement this policy effective immediately.

Commissioner Riordan thanked members of the community for sending their e-mails concerning the cat registration fee. Commissioners suggested that public comment be heard before deliberation by the Board.

Public Comment

Mary Catalano: Commented on all the e-mails by the rescue community who are against the registration of cats. Most people who rescue animals have full time jobs and do not have time for the additional paperwork or pay extra money. The Department is not doing its job in collecting licenses for dogs. This would be a burden on the rescue community.

Jackie Dehaviland: Commented on how difficult is to come down here for Commission meetings as most have full time jobs. Indicated that adoptions went up when costs were reduced. The City will not make money off the backs of cats. When the \$5.00 goes into effect the number of cats who die will increase. The City will spend more to house and euthanize cats than they will make. Does not want to see another cat hung by collars used to hang tags. Licensing dogs will make more money. Need to deal with cat limit issue.

Phyllis Daugherty: Has a different position on this issue. This is not about the rescue groups, but is about cats. Cats have no value. Cats have to have the same value as dogs. A cat hanging itself is very, very rare. Presently they are getting run over or starve by the thousands. Must make cats important to the public and not just the rescue community.

Kim Carnochat: Not a rescuer just a person who is interested in animals. \$5.00 is a punitive measure. The Department should get it together and increase adoptions. Can't even enforce the Spay and Neuter Ordinance. Go after backyard breeders. Rescuers are over burdened.

Commissioner Quincey commented that the fee will bring in very little money. Currently the City loses 6 million dollars by not licensing dogs, and this is a law. Commissioner Riordan indicated that there is no competition with regard to dog licensing; it is a guarantee income source for the Department and we should focus on that. Buying a cat at the shelter is an elective market and there are others places people can go where they will not be obliged to license their cat. Commissioner Riordan agrees with the comment that it is not merely about money but is also about bond and responsibility of having a cat. She agrees that there is a problem of cat redemption and believes the reasons why are not clearly known. With the economy the way it is, \$5.00 will make a difference in the redemption / adoption of cats. Comparing this to Laffer's curve, this could result in loss of revenue, not to mention loss in lives. Department presently has ability to register cats on a voluntary basis. Commissioner Brown asked if the issue was making the \$5 mandatory. Attorney Lesel clarified the basis of the \$5 fee regarding cats in that it covers both adopted and redeemed cats. The funds collected go to the City's general fund. This would have to go to the Council for approval before implementation. AGM Davis indicated that the adoption fee for cats is presently \$68. Commissioner Riordan felt this was a slippery slope and would lead to the licensing of all cats. Commissioners Riordan and Brown engaged in a discussion of the potential of cats accidentally hanging themselves and the

product liability regarding break-away collars. Commissioner Riordan commented that if this passes people will go to other places, such as pet stores, the newspaper and venues. Less than half leave the shelter alive. Commissioner Quincey commented that most people get their cats from the neighbors in the neighborhood. Is all you are going to do is run away adopters. Management Analyst Ross Pool commented that the fee was recommended by the Mayor and CAO. This is an opportunity to raise revenue. Commissioner Quincey indicated that the 6 million in lost dog licenses is lost. Commissioner Riordan said that the reason we adopted over 500 animals during the past weekend was because the Department lowered the fees. Jackie Dehaviland presented additional testimony. She indicated that, between the three-rescue groups, about 25 cats annually are rescued by her at accost of \$28. She has to raise the money and spends \$300 to \$500 to vet each cat. Commissioner Riordan indicated that she has heard from numerous groups that they would cease their rescue efforts from LAAS Shelters if this is approved. Commissioner Brown asked that additional groups could be asked to comment before a vote. Mary Catalano commented that she has been at the shelter when people redeem animals. People do not look for cats in less than four days. Public will not pay to redeem an animal.

Commissioner Brown motioned to make mandatory the \$5.00 fee for the redemption or adoption of cats. Commissioner Quincey seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and ended up with a vote of 2-2. The motion failed due to its failure to receive 3 affirmative votes.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

None

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - (Comments from the public on items of public interest within the Board's subject matter jurisdiction and on items not on the Agenda.)

Mary Catalano: Spay and neuter fees area burden for many rescuers, So many animals are being dumped and euthanized. Paid \$40 to save a kitten the other day. Isolation doors were locked. There were cats in the lobby due to the number of cats being dumped. Love to see the staff recommend two cats or two kittens when adopted.

Phyllis Daugherty: Surprised that a public issue regarding responsible cat ownership turned into a rescue issue. If a person is not willing to pay the additional \$5, they should not have an animal. Lawsuit pending for rescue group who tried to take an animal after adoption. The court appear to be leaning toward the pet owner.

Teri Auston: Asked that an item be placed on the agenda for the mobile spay and neuter program. There has been no renewal of the Amanda Spay and Neuter Contract that expires in October. Although promised that she would be paid, also knows that without a contract no one can make that guarantee. Her employees are full time employees. Only vendor to meet the numbers set forth in the proposal. Work in the lowest income areas. Urge the Department to act quickly. If she has to disband her team they will take work with other groups.

Kim Carnochat: Does not know how \$5 will make a difference in adoptions. Staff does not even know how to give information regarding microchips. Asked Commission how much time they spend on a Saturday afternnon in a shelter and watch what is going on. Believes GM does not know what is going on in the shelters. The public is "supid" and does not get it. Look at animals as used furniture. Must increase education and train staff better.

Jackie Dehaviland: Works in law. Contracts by rescue groups are air tight. Have to change public perception of animals. Pulling animals out of buildings due to the housing crisis. People are taking their

frustrations out on animals. The additional fee will cause people not to adopt. People who adopt from rescue groups know that the animal does not have issues.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Ponce requests discussion of the Amanda Foundation contract.

Commissioner Brown would like to continue addressing the issues on the list of outstanding agenda items. Always interested in the dog fighting. Asked that any additional discussion of cat registration be coupled with a discussion of number of cat ownership.

Commissioner Quincey asked that a canvassing program be instituted.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Ponce made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Quincey and the motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

Next Commission Meeting is scheduled for 10:00 A.M., August 11, 2008, at Los Angeles City Hall, 200 North Spring Street, Room 1060, Los Angeles, California 90012.